A CORPUS OF

REMBRANDT PAINTINGS

Stichting Foundation
Rembrandt Research Project

A CORPUS OF
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PAINTINGS
III
1635–1642

MCMLXXXIX
MARTINUS NIJHOFF PUBLISHERS
Dordrecht • Boston • London

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A CORPUS OF
REMBRANDT
PAINTINGS

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Frontispiece:

Detail of no. A 106, *John the Baptist preaching*, Berlin (West),
Staatliche Museen Preussischer Kulturbesitz, Gemäldegalerie



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Preface

This volume is something of a Siamese twin to the one preceding it. The period it covers is, despite unmistakeable changes in Rembrandt's style, so closely connected with that of the previous years that it is only when one surveys the whole of his first ten years of activity in Amsterdam that the cohesion in his work becomes really clear. This is why in Volume II we summarized the characteristics of his portraits from those years, while in the present volume the same is attempted for the history paintings. Many of the catalogue entries that follow were written at the same time as those for Volume II; in this respect as well there is no real break between the two.

This is not to say that Rembrandt research has stood still since 1986 (when Volume II appeared). Christian Tümpel has published a monograph in which, while the main stress is on iconographic interpretation, a critical stance is taken on the matter of attributions. This is indeed something that has over the last few years been seen on a far greater scale than before; our approach to the subject may have contributed to this change - at all events it naturally had a bearing on the way our publication was received. The deattribution by the West-Berlin Gemäldegalerie, supported by thorough technical investigation, of their *Man in a golden helmet* has been the most headline-catching example of this new trend in recent years[1]. As the present volume was going to press the National Gallery in London, which enjoys a well-merited reputation on the matter of scientific research combined with a critical attitude to its own collection, organized an exhibition on *Art in the making. Rembrandt*; the catalogue for this[2] was available just in time for us to incorporate a small number of changes in the text of our own entries.

A slightly different viewpoint is provided by the study of Rembrandt's pupils and what they meant for the production of his workshop. Time and again, recognizing the hand of a studio collaborator can help in delimiting the autograph work of the master. Werner Sumowski has in the past few years published the second and third volumes of his *Gemälde der Rembrandt-Schüler*[3], which has already become an indispensable aid in studying the work, especially the mature work, of Rembrandt's various pupils. The exhibition announced by the Musée du Louvre of paintings by Rembrandt's pupils and drawings done by himself and his followers[4] unfortunately came too late to be taken into account. One of the introductory chapters of the present volume is indeed, continuing from what was said on the matter in Chapter II of Volume II, devoted to the problems of the workshop production. A special place goes here to the landscapes traditionally attributed to Rembrandt, which at the start posed considerable problems in respect of their relationship, attribution and dating; we believe we have found satisfactory answers to some of these - but only by focussing our attention also on the later work of Flinck and, especially, Bol.

The basis for selecting the material to be considered was again, as for Volume II, Horst Gerson's *Rembrandt paintings* of 1968. Only two paintings, both formerly belonging to the Lanckoronski collection in Vienna (Br. 219 and 359; Gerson 225 and 224), cannot be traced and could therefore not be covered. The number of works rejected or omitted by Gerson but accepted by us, totalled four in both Volume I and Volume II; this time there is only one — a painting that Bredius, too, did not include in the Rembrandt canon (our no. A 130). The number of unsolved attribution problems — the B-numbers — come to four, and in each case this classification is due to the difficulty of assessing the painting in the condition in which it has survived. Among the C-numbers a dozen paintings can with a greater or lesser degree of certainty be linked with a known pupil, while in a number of other cases groups of two or more works can be ascribed to a single but as yet nameless hand. We are well aware that many problems still remain in this area. It is after all easier to define the personality of a pupil as this can be seen in his maturity than as one may or would like to imagine it during his learning years. In the case of a particularly adaptable artist like Ferdinand Bol, especially, the assumptions and suggestions advanced here about the part he played in the production of the studio occasionally offer a far from homogeneous picture. A stronger personality like Carel Fabritius, on the other hand, can be recognized with remarkable certainty from the very first works he produced in Rembrandt's studio. Among the colleagues with whom we have had fruitful discussions on this and similar problems, special mention must be made of Frits J. Duparc of Montreal and Martin Royalton-Kisch in London.

We have once again made grateful use of technical information made available to us by a variety of persons and institutions. On one particular point the interpretation of this information has undergone a change; as explained in greater detail in the *Table of dendrochronological data*, a modified view of the origin of the wood used for the panels has led to different conclusions being drawn from the measurements made, and thus to somewhat different datings. For these reasons, we give a table summarizing the dendrochronology findings not only from the panels discussed in the present volume but from those in Volumes I and II as well.

We are as grateful as before to all the experts and bodies who have given us vital support in the scientific sphere, for the generosity they have shown in placing the results of their research at our disposal. This applies in particular to the Central Research Laboratory for Objects of Art and Science

in Amsterdam (which has moreover been housing the Project since 1985), the Hamilton Kerr Institute of the University of Cambridge, the Scientific Department of the National Gallery, London, the Ordinariat für Holzbiologie of the University of Hamburg, Marco Grassi of New York and Maria del Carmen Garrido of the Prado Museum in Madrid.

As with the first two volumes, a great many people helped to make the appearance of this book possible. First of all, of course, we must mention (by its new name) the Netherlands Organization for Scientific Research (NWO), which not only for years on end bore the cost of the research work but has also provided a special subsidy for the publication of Volume III. The Prins Bernhard Fonds, Amsterdam, made an invaluable contribution by taking on part of the costs. Thanks are once again due to the owners, public and private, of the paintings discussed in this volume for the readiness with which they granted us facilities and assistance in studying their property. Only a small number of them were regrettably not prepared to consent to photographs of their pictures being reproduced; in these cases we have had to resort to old (and inevitably inadequate) reproductions. Among the many colleagues who helped us we must, in addition to those already mentioned in Volumes I and II, offer special thanks to Albert Blankert, Lizzie Boubli, Francis Broun, Peter Day and Bert M. Meijer. Cynthia Schneider we mention once again, for being kind enough to make available to us a version of her as yet unpublished book on Rembrandt's landscapes.

Within our own closer circle, all honour goes to those whose help and care were vital for the writing and production of the book. Mr Jacques Vis contributed substantial parts of the text, including the majority of the entry for the *Night watch*. The translator, Mr Derry Cook-Radmore, was as always a model of devotion and of care for accuracy that extended to perfection in the wording, and Mrs L. Peese Binkhorst — assisted at particularly tense times by Mrs D. Adang-Dhuygelaere — kept all the editing, organisational and administrative reins in a firm hand. Their task was made none the easier by the fact that from the very earliest stages of preparing the book one could sense not only the blessings but also the problems that were going to flow from technical advances. The publisher, finally, watched with the care already familiar to us over the production of what is in many respects a most demanding kind of publication.

It is likely that this volume is the last to be dealt with by the writing team as this is constituted today. It has been obvious for some while that the time the project is taking makes it necessary to bring in younger blood, while keeping as far as possible the experience already gained. The authors are confident that answers to the problems this presents have been or will be found.

October 1988

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Introduction

Chapter I

Stylistic features of the 1630s: the history paintings

When summing up the characteristics of Rembrandt's portraits from the 1630s we believed we could detect a guiding principle that applied not only for the portraits, and said: '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. (. . .) 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.'[1]. The consequences of this artistic vision are of course a great deal more complicated where the history painting is concerned; the problems involved in bringing light and colour, plasticity and depth into tune with each other are more complex, and the solutions to them therefore more varied. The fact remains that this principle seems to have been a quite conscious concern of the artist, in both the small-scale history paintings of the kind he painted in his Leiden years and the ones with larger-scale figures that he began to produce only in Amsterdam, in the mid-1630s in particular. The programmatic nature of this approach is confirmed by the comments of Samuel van Hoogstraten on Rembrandt's handling of light, when (admittedly only later, in 1678) he wrote: 'Wherefore I recommend you not to jumble lights and shadows too much together, but to join them up pleasingly in groups; let your strongest lights be amicably coupled with lesser lights; I assure you that they will shine the more finely; let your deepest darks be ringed round with clear browns, so that they may all the more powerfully show up the force of the light. Rembrant held high this virtue, and was fully versed in the placing-together of kindred colours.'[2] A much later generation was — mistakenly, but not entirely incomprehensibly — to imagine that this 'joining up shadows and light' could be explained as the result of the fall of light inside the mill where the miller's son was at work.[3]

Who led Rembrandt to this selective handling of light is not really clear. Some works by Lastman and his associates — especially a number of early works by Claes Moeyaert — have the beginnings of a more concentrated fall of light, but the variegation of colours within the lit areas still prevents any significant contrast between light and dark. The same may be said, though to a lesser degree, of the Roman-period work of Caravaggio and (more important in this context) of his Utrecht imitators. Their handling of chiaroscuro, directed mainly towards a sculptural modelling of the human figure against a darkish background, left plasticity and local colour basically intact. Their influence is more clearly apparent in the early work by the young Jan Lievens than it ever was in Rembrandt, but Lievens already took a step towards greater pictorial freedom at the expense of solidity of modelling, even though initially keeping a remarkably colourful palette. The latter feature is also true of Rembrandt's earliest work of 1625 and 1626, where the use of colour is just as varied as in Lievens', but where the scale of the figures is that of Lastman's history paintings and not that of Lievens' large knee-length works. One can see in the subsequent stages of Rembrandt's work in Leiden how he gradually came to his new style. There was already a substantial reduction of the colour range in 1627, in the Stuttgart *S. Paul* (no. A 11) — a first essential if the shadow is to become the active counterpart of the concentrated light. In 1628 (soon after something comparable was seen in landscapes like those of Jan van Goyen, who was then also working in Leiden) Rembrandt first introduced a diagonal fall of light slicing through a space that, in both the foreground and the background, was otherwise in shadow; the *Two old men disputing* in Melbourne (no. A 13) is of decisive importance in this respect. The fall of light marks out the difference between the planes, but also sets limits to the use of colour. Far from tending towards the monochrome, this results in a brilliant effect of a lit zone built up of tints of equal brightness contrasting with the 'clear browns' and 'deepest darks'. Because, in the light passages, a variety of 'kindred colours' are as it were flooded with light, one gets the impression of a dazzling degree of overlighting; and in this — in close and, one may assume, mutually fruitful contact with Lievens — the pictorial refinement is enhanced by subtle differentiation in the texture of the paint surface that produces a constantly-changing relationship of tension and complicity between the handling of paint and the suggestion of plasticity.

1 See Vol. II p. 13.

2 S. van Hoogstraeten. *Inleyding tot de hooge schoole der schilderkonst . . .*, Rotterdam 1678, pp. 305–306 (Book 8, 7th chapter, entitled 'Schikking van schaduwen en lichten' — Disposal of shadow and lights): 'Daerom beveele ik u niet te veel lichten en schaduwen dooreen te haspelen, maer de zelve bequamelijk in groepen te vereenigen; laet uwe sterkste lichten met minder lichten minlijk verzelt zijn; ik verzeeker u, dat ze te heerlijker zullen uitblinken; laet uwe diepste donkerheden met klaere bruintes omringt zijn, op dat ze met te meerder gewelt de kracht van het licht mogen doen afsteeken. *Rembrant* heeft deeze deugt hoog in top gevoert, en was volleert in 't wel byeenvoegen van bevriende verwen'.

3 J.B. Descamps, *La vie des peintres flamands, allemands et hollandais . . .*, Paris 1753–1764, vol. II, p. 92; J. Smith, *A catalogue raisonné . . .* VII, London 1836, p. xiii. See R.W. Scheller, 'Rembrandt's reputatie van Houbraken tot Scheltema', *N.K.J.* 12 (1961), pp. 81–118, esp. 86–87. See also E. Kolloff, 'Rembrandts Leben und Werke nach neuen Actenstücken und Gesichtspunkten geschildert', *Historisches Taschenbuch herausg. von Friedrich Raumer*, 3rd series V, Leipzig 1854, pp. 542–543: 'Reynolds will bemerkt haben dass die Venetianischen Maler auf ihren Bildern durchgängig blos ein Viertel dem Lichte, ein anderes Viertel dem stärksten Schatten und das Uebrige den Halbtönen einräumten; dass Rubens mehr als ein Viertel von seinen Gemälden dem Lichte auszusetzen pflegte, Rembrandt hingegen viel weniger, nämlich höchtens ein Achtel'.

Fig. 1. Rembrandt, *Judas, repentant, returning the pieces of silver*, 1629. England, Private collection (no. A 15)



Fig. 2. Copy after Rembrandt, *The parable of the labourers in the vineyard*, 1637. Leningrad, The Hermitage Museum (no. C 88)



One finds something of this principle, applied with varying degrees of success, in most of the works — especially the history paintings — from the final Leiden years. The artist was apparently trying to find a chiaroscuro effect and distribution of colour that would match the effect of depth; the part that swelling contours still play in the Melbourne painting in tracing out fields of contrasting tone rapidly lessens, probably because it could not be reconciled with a growing need to produce a feeling of three-dimensionality without detracting from the plastic independence of figures and objects. In the various stages the *Judas repentant* (no. A 15; fig. 1) went through before it was completed in 1629, one can sense Rembrandt's changing insights, not so much in respect of colour — the observations and radiographs can tell us little about what this initially looked like — as of chiaroscuro. In the painting's first state this must have been determined to a great extent by dark repoussoirs with animated contours (a curtain to the left, and a standing figure seen from behind) set against a light rear wall in front of which a main figure (the high priest) was enthroned. Rembrandt's drawing done in preparation for a revision of the painting (see no. A 15 fig. 7) makes clear the dominant place that chiaroscuro held in his thinking: individual forms are only partially legible, and the stress is on a division into planes marked by differences in tone. Besides this, the drawing gives us an idea of the importance Rembrandt attached to adding or altering one or two architectural features as a means of reinforcing the structure of his three-dimensional composition; but as that and no more — in Rembrandt one detects no interest in architectural form for its own sake. In its final state the painting offers a fall of light that is subdued almost everywhere, and a correspondingly muted colour-scheme, in which the figures help us, through their foreshortening and the sheen of light on their clothing, to sense the space in which they are gathered around a central void. The light rear wall is toned down, and the highest light falls, curiously on an open book part-hidden by a repoussoir figure and on a bright yellow tablecloth on the extreme left[4] — a passage in which the contrast effect is greatest and where the accent is on rich texture and (as in the past) on the liveliness of the contours. Similar tendencies and a similar end result mark the stages, linked to even more drastic alterations, by which the Los Angeles *Raising of Lazarus* (no. A 30) was produced, one may assume around 1630/31. A simplified variation, in respect of lighting, is in a sense seen in the *Christian scholar in a vaulted room* of 1631, known from a copy in Stockholm (no. C 17), where however the addition of a visible light source made it possible to frame the depiction of space with a darkish zone round all four sides.

There was ample reason to dwell for some considerable time on the genesis of the *Judas repentant*, for that painting contains, both in the nature of the successive changes and in the final result, features that one finds to be regular components of the small-scale history paintings from the 1630s. This is of course most evident when the scene is set in an interior, as for instance in the *Parable of the labourers in the vineyard*, known from a workshop copy in Leningrad (no. C 88; fig. 2) the lost original for which was probably done in 1637. There are a number of evident differences — the light source is included in the picture, as it was with the *Christian scholar*, so that a murky framing of the lit main scene may also continue on the left, in front of the window. Nonetheless the similarity with the

4 One may wonder if there is not some iconographic reason for the emphasis on the open book; the readings given so far of the text depicted (Vol. I, p. 193) do not point to this. Possibly one ought to think in terms of a prophesy of the betrayal by Judas; the most likely text for this would be Zachariah 11:12–13, which reads: '. . .So they weighed for my price thirty pieces of silver. And the Lord said unto me, Cast it unto the potter: a goodly price that I was prised at of them. And I took the thirty pieces of silver, and cast them to the potter in the house of the Lord'.

Fig. 3. Rembrandt, *John the Baptist preaching, c.* 1634/35. Berlin, Staatliche Museen Preussischer Kulturbesitz, Gemäldegalerie (no. A 106)



Judas repentant is striking in many ways: the volumes of the figures, bales, chests and books here leave empty a space in the centre broken up by steps (the curved step in the *Labourers in the vineyard* runs exactly as, judging from the X-ray, that in the *Judas* originally did!), and on the right the dark room stretches off into the distance in a way that is again strongly reminiscent of the *Judas* (especially the drawing). The expressive gestures and poses tell the story across the full width of the scene, from the repoussoir figure at the table on the left to the high adjoining room on the right; the various actions going on are separated from each other by degrees of lighting and the main action, closest to the window, is in the strongest light.

The horizontal format as seen in the *Labourers in the vineyard* was used more sparingly by Rembrandt after 1640, but in the 1630s there are various examples in which, though they are quite different in subject-matter, one can see an application of the same principle where the role and function of light and colour are concerned, and where that principle undergoes the same change as it did in the *Labourers*. Since we are considering here, without exception, scenes set in the open air, it is clear at once that the principle is scarcely compatible with daylight in the out-of-doors; right into his landscapes — until a later development was to make the little 1646 *Winter landscape* in Kassel (Br. 452) a possibility! — Rembrandt continued to manipulate light in a way that can be done only in the imagination. He must have very quickly realized that he had no use for the blue of a cloudless or lightly clouded sky; his Susannas and Bathshebas would have to appear in almost nocturnal gardens. One already discerns this tendency in the otherwise relatively colourful *Rape of Europa* of 1632 (no. A 47), where in a rather lighter range of colours the light is distributed on the same principle as in the *Judas repentant*: against the matt grey of the distant view and sky, the foreground and right background are in the dark and the highest light is on the middle ground and, especially, on the far left on the main actors in the little drama going on there, though without the dramatic link between the action on the left and the terror of Europa's companions being very strongly felt. In that respect the remarkable painting of 1634 at Anholt with two Diana episodes (no. A 92) is more successful, both in the coordinating effect of the diagonally-placed lit zone and the actions of the figures, most of which underpin the dynamic of the diagonal[5].

In the two major grisailles from the middle and later 1630s, the Berlin *John the Baptist preaching* (no. A 106; fig. 3) — probably started as a cartoon for an etching, but later enlarged and promoted to the status of a monochrome painting in its own right — and the Rotterdam *Concord of the State* (no. A 135) — a sketch, for a purpose unknown — the lighting (virtually identical in both) naturally plays a leading role in creating spatial relationships and contrasts, and in suggesting a wealth of more or less graphically drawn detail extending to the darkest and furthest corners. In both instances the painted surface was extended at a late stage, one result of which was a wide, dark and partly empty foreground area, very much as in the *Judas repentant* and similar compositions. The borders of light and dark are enlivened at various places by dark repoussoirs and light accents that, placed against a dark empty space, 'all the more powerfully show up the force of the light', to use the words of Samuel van Hoogstraten. The degree of freedom of action Rembrandt allows his figures is amazing; he has an inexhaustible imagination in finding a totally original management of groups of figures and of individual figures within the groups. One way of achieving great naturalness in such scenes is the use of apparently arbitrary overlapping of figures; the result can be bodies without (or with faceless) heads, or formless and partly hidden figures seen from behind. Quite striking in this respect is the figure, seen only as a lap with closely detailed hands, found on the right behind the group of Pharisees in the *John the Baptist preaching*. The fact that this highly personal

5 It does seem surprising that not a single drawing for all these nude figures in complicated poses has survived. Drawings used as a model can at all events be assumed for the dogs depicted here, since they recur exactly the same elsewhere in work by Rembrandt and his studio. The two dogs seen fighting on the far left, one standing over the other lying on its back, are found in the Berlin *John the Baptist preaching* (no. A 106) and, in reverse, in a drawing attributed to Titus van Rijn in the Duits collection in London (see A. Welcker in: *O.H. 55*, 1938, pp. 268–273, fig. 4; Sumowski *Drawings* IX, no. 2208). The barking dog on the left by Actaeon's right leg recurs on the right in the *Night-watch* (no. A 146). For further cases of animals that recur, see the comments on *Joseph telling his dreams* (no. A 66), *John the Baptist preaching* and the *Parable of the labourers in the vineyard* (no. C 88). The Rembrandt inventory of 1656 mentions 'Een dito [i.e. a book], vol teeckeninge van Rembrant, bestaende in beesten nae 't leven' (A ditto, full of drawings by Rembrant comprising animals done from life; Strauss *Doc.*, 1656/12 no. 249).

Fig. 4. Rembrandt, *Christ in the storm on the Sea of Galilee*, 1633. Boston, The Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum (no. A 68)



and apparently arbitrary arrangement, in which compositional relationship seems to be counteracted by features intersecting or running in the opposite direction, does not result in chaos is due mostly to the order created by the lighting.

The extent of illusionism and meticulous detail that Rembrandt was willing and able to bring in his small-scale history paintings is shown by the *Christ in the storm* of 1633 in the Stewart Gardner Museum (no. A 68; fig. 4). Without descending into over-minute detail, Rembrandt has given every part of the composition a considerable degree of modelling. In the case of the billowing clothing of the figures this leads to the leather-like characterization of the material depicted, something that is also typical of the paintings from the Leiden period. The light local colours in the strongly-lit group around the mast have been deliberately made this pale so as to show the lighting off to full advantage by means of the 'kindred' cool and warm tints. Subdued cool tones predominate in the shadows — heads and hands are integrated with great care into the tonal nature of the various passages. And yet the paint itself never gets lost in the illusion — relatively thickly applied in the lit zones, it contributes, by catching the light, to the luminosity of these areas. The thinner painting of the more flatly treated shadow areas ensures that the link between the various elements in these parts is maintained. The central theme of the apostles fearing for their lives in the tempest is portrayed with a wide variety of action and expression, in line with Rembrandt's sole (and constantly quoted) comment in 1639 about 'die meeste ende die naetuereelste beweechgelickheijt' (the greatest and most natural emotion and animation) — that he had observed in two of his Passion pictures[6], and the 'affectum vivacitas' (power to move the spirit of the viewer) that Huygens admired in the *Judas repentant*[7]. There is more in common between that painting and the *Christ in the storm*, than one might think at first sight. Both works are marked by the way strong light falling from the left is immediately reflected, in the lefthand part of the composition, onto the open book in one case and the breaking wave in the other. In both cases the main actors, Judas and Christ respectively, are placed off-centre in moderate lighting as a final stopping-point for the eye as it is led from left to right; the view into the distance, as the next stage in the process of scanning the picture, is clearly employed as a deliberate means of calling the viewer's attention back and focussing it on the main figure in the scene — but it does so in such a way that the eye as it were continues to search among the surrounding reddish-tinted forms immediately close to the main figure. This deliberately-stimulated mobility of observation of a picture in which at the same time unity is being sought through the handling of light and colour seems to provide a key to Rembrandt's multi-figure history paintings. It is obvious from the 1634 grisaille (no. A 89) for the *Ecce homo* print — the only grisaille that was taken as far as an etching — how consciously Rembrandt must have used this device. One can see very clearly in the print how, just as the function of the boathook stands out against the dark background in the *Christ in the storm*, the lit hand of the Pharisee gesturing towards the crowd is touched by the light as this flows through space. (The tassel hanging down at the left of the table in the *Judas repentant* plays a similar role.) In the *Ecce homo* grisaille Rembrandt once again adopts the device of placing the main figure, that of Christ, in subdued light so that the eye, roving among a mass of more immediately noticeable detailed features, does not find it at once. In the etching this effect is to a large extent lost because of the strong lighting of Christ — a change in design that may have been deliberate, in view of the emphatic way that in, for example, the Passion series painted for Frederik Hendrik Christ is always the most brightly lit figure.

As well as in the *Christ in the Storm* and the *Ecce homo* Rembrandt's ambition as a dramatic narrator manifests itself during the 1630s in the five Passion

6 H. Gerson, *Seven letters by Rembrandt*, transcription I.H. van Eeghen, translation Y.D. Ovink, The Hague 1961, p. 34. See also Vol. II, p. 285.

7 See Vol. I, pp. 192–193.

pictures (nos. A 65, A 69, A 118, A 126 and A 127) produced in 1632–39 — together with compositions with a similar subject and treatment such as the *Adoration of the Magi* of *c.* 1632 that has survived as a copy (see no. C 46), the Moscow *Incredulity of Thomas* of 1634 (no. A 90), the London grisaille of the *Lamentation* of *c.* 1634/35 (no. A 107) and the *Risen Christ appearing to Mary Magdalene* of 1638 in Buckingham Palace (no. A 124). As to the Passion pictures, one may of course wonder whether, once the Stadholder's commission had been given, the framework within which a more or less homogeneous series was to be supplied did not place a certain constraint on the artist, one that hampered a further development of his style. This idea finds support in the slow rate at which these were delivered in spite of the pressure from his customer evident in Rembrandt's letters to Constantijn Huygens during the years 1636–39[8]. Scholars have often distrusted Rembrandt's pleading of his 'stuijdiose vlijt' (studious diligence), and thought that he worked on the series with increasing distaste, or indeed completed the last two paintings only because he needed the money[9]. Such a state of affairs is however not all that plausible — one knows from a number of instances that, certainly during his time in Leiden, Rembrandt made numerous and sometimes quite radical changes precisely in works of a particularly prestigious kind (the *Judas repentant* and the *Raising of Lazarus*) and could evidently spend a long time working on a single painting. There is considerably less evidence of this kind for the Passion-series paintings, and indeed least of all for the last two, the *Entombment* and *Resurrection*. In so far as, with the very poor condition of the paintings, the X-rays can allow any conclusion, the *Resurrection* especially has undergone a number of alterations but by no means so drastic as to suggest a complicated genesis. The *Ascension*, completed in 1636, presents one clear pentimento — the figure of God the Father — and the X-ray suggests rather indistinct changes in the lower half. The most extensive alterations are in the first work in the series, the *Descent from the Cross*, which was completed in 1633 after having been under way for certainly some considerable time. The changes in the *Raising of the Cross* are unmistakeable but not really radical; nonetheless Rembrandt did, it appears from the drawings connected with the composition (see no. A 69 figs. 5 and 6), occupy himself with the subject for some years. Providing cohesion within the series does appear to be something that gave Rembrandt concern; this one can gather from his first known letter to Huygens written early in 1636, in which he says that the *Entombment, Resurrection* and *Ascension* 'ackoordeeren' (match) the *Raising of the Cross* and *Descent from the Cross*. This match will, aside from matters of format and type of composition, certainly have related to a careful and highly-finished execution. The lively, graphic treatment seen in the lit centre of the *Incredulity of Thomas* must not be looked for in the Passion works any more than the rapid and rather flat rendering of form around the periphery of that painting or of the *Risen Christ appearing to Mary Magdalene*, let alone the almost brutal, sketchlike treatment found occasionally in the big grisailles.

Given the for the most part exceptionally poor state of the Munich Passion paintings, one can do hardly more than suspect that the subtleties in them — probably once similar to those in the *Christ in the storm* for instance — have suffered badly through extensive restorations. Everything suggests that they originally had normal degree of detail that can be extrapolated from other paintings. There is still a little of it to be found in one or two passages, for example in the carefully modelled figures in shadow in the *Raising of the Cross* and *Resurrection*; in the close attention to sheens of light in a shadowy surrounding they remind one of the — no less painstaking — execution of the *Judas repentant* of ten years earlier. More importantly, the underlying principle of managing the action on a shallow 'stage' by means of concentrated lighting still makes itself felt in these relatively tall compositions, albeit with variations and with increasing 'illogical' liberties; it is at its most innovative in what must have been the earliest work in the series, the *Descent from the Cross*. Though Rembrandt here worked Rubens' prototype into his portrayal of the body of Christ, he moved radically away from it through his dramatic lighting and the consequent emphasis on the diagonal thrust of the composition.

Incontrovertible evidence that fundamental changes are involved in his small-figured history pieces is not found until the Detroit *Visitation* of 1640 (no. A 138); this has a change in the lighting and another in the use of colour — changes that are naturally linked directly one with the other. The sky

8 For a survey of these letters, see Vol. II, pp. 284–285.

9 Gerson (op. cit. p. 9) wondered 'Had he really required three years to reproduce "the greatest and most natural movement" (. . .) in these pieces? Had there been other difficulties? Or had Rembrandt been preoccupied with other commissions in these years?'. Schwartz pointed out that early in 1639 (i.e. when he was in need of money for the house he had just bought) Rembrandt — after three years of silence — announced to Huygens the completion of the *Entombment* and *Resurrection*; the same author believed that far from working on these paintings studiously and industriously, Rembrandt finished them off over-hastily and 'delivered them before they were properly dry, so that the fresh paint never had a chance to stick to the ground fully', and considered this an explanation of the poor state of conservation of the Munich paintings (Schwartz 1984, fig. 114 and p. 116). This final conclusion is unlikely from the material viewpoint, but it is quite possible that there is a connexion between the completion of these two paintings and Rembrandt's financial circumstances. This was also the view of Tümpel, who felt that Rembrandt's explanations of the long wait for the two works betray a not entirely easy conscience (Tümpel 1986, p. 137).

Fig. 5. Rembrandt, *A young woman (Esther? Judith?) at her toilet, c.* 1632/33. Ottawa, The National Gallery of Ottawa (no. A 64)



acting as a dark canopy remains, but beneath it the light has become diffuse and the colour, without becoming variegated, takes on a new intensity. This ushers in a period of widely fluctuating practice: the comparatively fixed pattern that marked the 1630s is not superseded by another one in the 1640s, but rather gives way to a constantly changing use of chiaroscuro without this necessarily being at the expense of colour.

Though the small-figured history paintings lead directly on from antecedents in the Leiden years, Rembrandt's move to Amsterdam in other respects meant a new beginning. The most obvious is of course the sudden start on producing portraits, though this has to be seen not so much in terms of an artistic choice as of his response to the market potential for a new product, probably connected with Rembrandt's activity for or with Hendrik Uylenburgh's business. Somewhat later, possibly prompted by similar considerations, he began to produce large-scale history paintings, ranging from single-figure works to ambitious compositions with numerous figures. Both new types of picture called for an approach for which the years in Leiden had provided scarcely any precedent. In the case of the portrait Rembrandt was able, as we have seen, amazingly quickly to make a dexterous adaptation to his new task[10]. Production of the large-scale history paintings started later, and he adapted to them more gradually. Little by little, however, the large works with figures seem to come up to the artist's ambition; they form a relatively homogeneous group in which one can, in the prolific years 1633–36, trace a clear line of progression.

The first signs of an interest in this direction appear in 1632, in connexion with the knee-length portraits from that year. In the *Man in oriental dress* in New York (no. A 48) the task set has obviously been mastered with complete ease. A large part of the figure is in shadow, and appears dark and outlined by a lively contour laced along with constrictions and drawn against the light background; the same is the case with the San Francisco *Portrait of Joris de Caullery* of the same date (no. A 53). As in the latter painting the colour is limited in the areas where the head and bust catch the full light to a flesh colour, a warm golden brown and cooler grey. A lively paintrelief in the lit passages and a certain translucency in the dark ones play their part in a brilliant solution to the problem of giving convincing form to the bulk of a lifesize figure set in a surrounding space felt as atmospheric. But it was a narrow-based solution: it depended on sacrificing a great deal of colour and plastic detail to a shadow effect corresponding to that seen in small-scale compositions from the same period such as the *Descent from the Cross* — it could hardly be used successfully once a more thorough definition of form was called for. This is evident from the Stockholm *Apostle Peter* also dated 1632 (no. A 46), where a similar chiaroscuro effect applied to the dominant brown of Peter's cloak gave a rather dreary look to the whole (which in the recent literature has even led to the painting being rejected[11]).

In 1633 one detects the first signs of a new approach, in the Ottawa *Young woman (Esther? Judith?) at her toilet* (no. A 64; fig. 5) probably dating from 1632/33 and the New York *Bellona* dated 1633 (no. A 70). The former, the scale of which represents only a first step towards the lifesize figure paintings, is in many ways still closely allied to work from the Leiden period. The design of the *Artist in oriental costume* in the Petit Palais, Paris (no. A 40) — a painting that Rembrandt probably revised in 1633 — seems to form the basis for the handling of light and depth, though the lighting is rather more sparse and in that respect too the painting foreshadows what was to come. As in the earlier work the figure is bordered by moderately contrasty contours and, along the bottom, by deep cast shadows, and the light glances gently off the heavy red and thin, light shiny materials and makes the jewels and gold embroidery sparkle. In the rather chaotic use of highlights in the latter one senses a certain confusion, such as providing the detail in a more than half lifesize figure might cause in a newcomer to

10 See Vol. I, p. 9 and Vol. II, p. 3.

11 Gerson regarded the painting in Stockholm as a copy. Schwartz and Tümpel did not include it in their books of 1984 and 1986, respectively.

the task. For the rest, one can only note how successfully a design originally conceived on a much smaller scale here forms the starting-point for a convincing portrayal in which the bulky figure, through the axes of its movement and placing in space, lends a convincing solidity to the structure of the composition; the light remains wholly responsible for the management of muted and mostly warm local colour on the one hand and a coloristically neutral twilight on the other.

The year 1633 however also brings the virtually lifesize *Bellona*, and with it an unmistakeable shift; in many respects this painting sets the tone for similar works in the years to come. The goddess is not only seen knee-length, but the forward thrust of the figure is coupled with a far stronger emphasis on plasticity and a greater measure of independence for contrasting local colours. Against this, the light can maintain its dominant position only by on the one hand allowing part of the figure (the arm on the left) almost to disappear in the shadows, and on the other setting up dazzling highlights on the armour. The artist has in fact come to this singular, hardly subtle and not entirely satisfactory solution only gropingly. So far as one can work out from the drastic changes in composition described in the entry for no. A 70, these did not involve only a switch in the positions of the sword and shield — it is also likely that the cuirass, with its strong reflexions of light, was not always present, and the background originally had a lighter hue. This painting could thus, in the course of its genesis, have reflected in many respects a shift in stylistic approach; in its final form it still occupies a kind of intermediate position between the later work — in particular because of the strong and rather unatmospheric lighting that dramatizes plastic form — and the Ottawa painting, of which one is reminded by the incoherent scattered golden yellow highlights in the red velvet skirt. There can be hardly any doubt that the change — nowhere more plainly manifest in 1633 than in the New York *Bellona* — is the outcome of Rembrandt's competing with contemporaries attuned to the Flemish style. It is not quite so certain that Rubens was the direct influence in this; if he was not, then it will have been Jacob Backer, whose arrival in Amsterdam in 1633 brought a Flemish note into the city's artistic life[12].

What the *Bellona* lacks is most clearly seen if one compares it with the knee-length works depicting other female figures from mythology or classical history that Rembrandt painted in 1634 and 1635. One notices then how, with increasing mastery, he used light falling from the left to define unequivocally the figure's volume and spatial positioning, as well as to give an illusionistic suggestion of deep hollows or of features projecting

12 See Vol. II, p. 330.

Fig. 6. Rembrandt, *Flora*, 1635. London, The National Gallery (no. A 112)



forward. The Leningrad *Flora* of 1634 (no. A 93), though similar in type to the *Bellona*, already quite obviously has a clearer structure and three-dimensionality, combined with a new measure of refinement in the colours of a glossy light green satin and a controlled wealth of tints in a gold brocade. In the London *Flora* from the following year (no. A 112; fig. 6) Rembrandt manages to coordinate the lighting and pose of the figure in such a way that, with a further reduction in local colour to a handful of colour accents in a whole made up of creamy tints, browns and grey, the distribution of light and the individual borders that mark out chiaroscuro contrasts a perfect definition of the figure's volume. The figure turned a little to the left, is lit frontally, and this creates a light band rising from left to right against which, in the middle of the composition, the hand projecting forwards and holding the flowers stands out dark. Furthermore (and far more strongly than in the 1634 Leningrad *Flora*) the sculptural modelling of the broad form is combined, at the very points where there are the most animated contrasts of chiaroscuro and colour, with a lively brushstroke whose graphic rhythm makes a major contribution to the dynamic of the whole. The adventurous effects that light and dark, backlight and cast shadow within a single figure are able to provide reach a high point in the *Standard-bearer* of 1636 (no. A 120), a painting that certainly

Fig. 7. Rembrandt, *Abraham's sacrifice*, 1635. Leningrad, The Hermitage Museum (no. A 108)



cannot be seen as a companion-piece of the *Flora*, yet in a way shows a link[13] and very close resemblance with it in the significance the chiaroscuro has in creating space and volume, and even in suggesting a wealth of colours where there are in reality only light green and yellow sheens set in a whole dominated by browns and greys. The formal energy that these figures radiate stems in part from the modelling expressed in chiaroscuro and the illusionistic effect of greatly foreshortened forms in the centre of the composition. To this however must be added the striking pattern of the forms, deep cast shadows especially, that wind along lit shapes with a characteristic rhythm that is to a high degree the special feature of Rembrandt's large-scale work from the mid-1630s.

The multi-figured history paintings, full- or knee-length, kept pace with this rapid development of the single figures in the years 1634-36. Closely akin to the heavy and rather static form and soft half-tints of the 1634 Leningrad *Flora* is the Munich *Holy family* (no. A 88), where the light has a similar broad modelling function and the dynamic lies mainly in the skilful way the axes of movement in the figures describe a variety of diagonals in shadowy space. The sculptural effect of the figures and the softly billowing draperies, whose rhythm is accentuated by incisive dark shadows, is found again in the Madrid *Sophonisba* (no. A 94) and the *Cupid blowing a soap bubble* in the Bentinck Collection (no. A 91). The features these works share make one realize what a range of opportunities were available to an artist who within the same year produced the *Ecce homo* grisaille and the *Incredulity of Thomas*, with their comparatively nervous hand.

In 1635 we find a remarkable diversification in the large-scale history pieces that can be interpreted as a sign of mastery achieved. The static, almost statuesque rendering of individual figures like that in the *Sophonisba* is pursued in a similarly subtle colour-scheme not only in the *Minerva* (no. A 114) but also in the Berlin *Samson threatening his father-in-law* (no. A 109), which may be termed remarkable as a dramatic group of essentially static figures comparable to the *Judith* composition hidden under the London *Flora*, and in the scarely less remarkable Dresden *Rape of Ganymede* (no. A 113) — all works in which a relatively bold handling of paint does not fight shy of illusionistic effect but also achieves great refinement in suggesting depth and texture. Something of this can be found at some places in the (undated, but probably also 1635) painting of *Belshazzar's feast* in London (no. A 110), in which perhaps for the first time Rembrandt was dealing with dramatic action at life-size in a composition with knee-length figures. Pictorially the result was almost disjointed incoherence, perhaps because of the strange lighting that the subject entailed and that precluded the unifying effect of the usual shaft of light. Most unambiguously recognizable as characteristic is the way the composition — which can hardly be called balanced — is held together by Belshazzar's outstretched arms in a way that is reminiscent of the other ambitious history painting from 1635, the Leningrad *Abraham's sacrifice* (no. A 108; fig. 7). This picture otherwise represents in virtually all respects the opposite extreme of the possibilities open to Rembrandt at that moment. Against the incoherent composition of the *Belshazzar* this painting offers, with the intersecting diagonals described by the angel and the body of Isaac and linked by Abraham's arms, an extreme clarity of construction; against a colour-range based on mainly warm tones and a glowing red it has a colour-scheme of cool tones alternating with browns and greys; and against confusing lighting effects there is a well-planned interplay between contrasting high-lights and reflections and deep hollows, brought about by skilful management of the light from the left.

In contrast to the stylistic variety that proved possible within the year 1635 — and that also exists

13 Both were reproduced in Rembrandt's workshop by the same hand, in a drawing probably intended for sale. See no. A 112 fig. 6 and no. A 120 fig. 4.

between, for instance, the firmly modelled *Sophonisba* and the Prague *Scholar* (no. A 95), also from 1634 and executed with more freely placed brushstrokes — one can describe 1636 as a year of very homogeneous production. What one finds in concentrated form in the *Standard-bearer* in terms of virtuoso use of chiaroscuro contrasts and reflexions of light, juggling with bulky and foreshortened forms, subtly apportioned indications of depth and compelling dynamic brushwork recurs in the two large (and originally equally large!) history paintings from the same year, the Frankfurt *Blinding of Samson* (no. A 116) and the Leningrad *Danae* (no. A 119), even if in the latter this contrasty character has been partly nullified by later autograph overpainting. It is thus mainly in the *Blinding of Samson* that the drama — not so much that of the story as of the pictorial performance — recurs in various ways: in the flaming red of the Philistine set as a silhouette against the incoming light; in the broken tints, glistening in the light, of draperies and flesh areas in the centre; and in the reflexions of light on the dark armour on the right. In terms of composition, too, the *Blinding of Samson* forms, in the way the figures for the most part move along diagonal lines around an empty central space, a logical connexion to and almost a summary of previous works, in particular the Munich *Holy family* and the Leningrad *Abraham's sacrifice*.

A turning-point, with a shift to a warmer colour-scheme and a lighting aimed more at atmospheric effect than at contrast, first becomes fully evident in a work such as the Dresden *Wedding of Samson* of 1638 (no. A 123; fig. 8). It is perhaps significant that this has figures at under half-lifesize scale; just as the series of large-scale figure works was opened with the Ottawa *Young woman at her toilet*, so it closes with the Dresden *Wedding of Samson*. After 1636 and right into the 1650s there are really only two paintings that can claim to continue the lifesize scale series: the first of these, perhaps already begun in 1635, is the *Prodigal son in the tavern* in Dresden (no. A 111) — probably only a fragment, and possibly even a fragment (deliberately isolated by Rembrandt, and expanded later) of a composition designed for a horizontal format. The fact that in that instance the artist met with problems might be linked with the subtle colouring and relatively modest contrast effect that are characteristic of the painting and that would hardly be up to giving a work of that size its convincing three-dimensional structure. Only once did Rembrandt succeed in this at an even larger scale, in the *Night watch* (no. A 146) on which he must have made a start possibly already in 1639 but certainly in 1640. Here he combines his use of atmospheric effects from these years in the figures in subdued light further back, with contrasts of colour and light and repoussoir effects such as he had employed in the middle 1630s. In this sense the artist was, in the group portrait that the *Night watch* represents, behaving entirely as if he were producing a history painting. And immediately after this was completed in 1642 he must have revised his *Danae*, leaving large areas with accessories intact or enlivening them with one or two retouches, but raising the lighting level on the background and nude in an entity now aimed very much at a uniform luminosity. Even if — as is still all too often the case — one regards the 'baroque' Rembrandt of the large figure paintings of the 1630s with some disapproval, one can still see in this evidence that these works too, with their dramatic contrast, formed a necessary link in the chain, and formed a starting-point for his work in the 1640s and beyond.

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

Fig. 8. Rembrandt, *The wedding of Samson*, 1638. Dresden, Staatliche Kunstsammlungen Dresden, Gemäldegalerie Alte Meister (no. A 123)



Chapter II

Studio practice and studio production

General

As we pointed out in Chapter II of the Introduction to Volume II, it is already plain from documentary evidence that the number of pupils working in Rembrandt's studio must have been considerable. Attention was drawn to the status of these young artists as 'leerjongens' (apprentices) or 'knechten' (assistants), and their potential importance for the output of the workshop. Following on from the conclusions and suggestions put forward concerning works produced in Rembrandt's studio by Isack Jouderville and Govaert Flinck in the early 1630s, the present chapter will deal with the workshop production of the years 1632–42 and, where directly connected, with the work of his pupils after they had set up on their own. Besides the various types of workshop piece, we shall consider the part played in this production by identifiable hands.

It must be amitted that our knowledge of what went on in Rembrandt's workshop is still meagre, and rests largely on circumstantial evidence of widely differing kinds. As we said in Volume II, one does have some general idea of the formal aspects of the workshop under the surveillance of the guilds that continued to exist in the 17th century, and of the status of apprentices as it appears from indenture papers that have survived. On the nature of the training given, which was one of the raisons d'être of the workshop, one can extrapolate relatively vague notions from what occasional comments can be found in theoretical writings of the period — from Van Mander, Goeree and Hoogstraten — and from what little reliable information pictures of studios have to add to these. Where Rembrandt's studio in particular is concerned, we do have a few incidental reports — in particular the frequently quoted statement by Sandrart about the 'fast unzahlbaren fürnehmen Kindern' who came to Rembrandt to study and whose work he sold — as well as biographical information on individual pupils and, last but not least, a large number of works that for more or less valid reasons may be seen as done in the workshop. In the following pages we shall try, taking various examples, to look at the workshop production in the scarce light that this information of different kinds is able to shed.

It can reasonably be assumed that (certainly in the 1630s and '40s) Rembrandt's workshop differed from the average studio not only in the number of pupils — which struck Sandrart forcibly — but also in the high proportion among them who were not there to learn the basics of their craft but who wanted, after having already being trained by another master, to absorb Rembrandt's style from the man himself. Arnold Houbraken was later to write disparagingly, in his biography of Aert de Gelder, 'As something novel at the time Rembrant's art had general approval, so that artists were obliged (if they wanted to have their work accepted) to become used to this manner of painting; even though they themselves had a far more commendable style. For this reason Govaert Flinck and others joined Rembrant's school. They included my fellow-townsman Arent de Gelder [of Dordrecht] who, after learning the basics of Art from S. van Hoogstraten, went to Amsterdam to learn Rembrandt's way of painting . . .'[1]. Indeed, most of the Rembrandt pupils we know of — i.e. pupils in the broadest sense of the word, including advanced assistants — had acquired the 'basics of Art' elsewhere. Govaert Flinck from Kleve (Cleves) had already studied with Lambert Jacobsz. in Leeuwarden when at about 18 years of age he came to Rembrandt in, probably, 1633. Ferdinand Bol of Dordrecht was about 20 years old after studying with or in the circle of Abraham Bloemaert in Utrecht, and Carel and Barent Fabritius were aged about 19 and 22 respectively and had studied with their father in Midden-Beemster. Hoogstraten will probably have been only 14 years old when, presumably following the death of his father, the painter Dirck van Hoogstraten, he left Dordrecht to go and work with Rembrandt in Amsterdam, and only Maes seems to have been 12 years old (the normal age for starting an apprenticeship) when after learning the art of drawing with 'a common master' he made the move from Dordrecht to Amsterdam. It is thus quite natural that in Rembrandt's case the balance, between an unproductive learning component concentrated largely in the early stage of the apprenticeship, and

1 A. Houbraken, *De groote schouburgh der Nederlantsche konstschilders en schilderessen* . . . III, 2nd edn The Hague 1753, p. 206: 'De Konst van Rembrant had als wat nieuws in haar tyd een algemeene goedkeuring, zoo dat de konstoeffenaren (wilden zy hunne werken gangbaar doen zyn) genootzaakt waren zig aan die wyze van schilderen te gewennen; al hadden zy zelf eene veel prysselyker behandelinge. Waarom ook Govert Flinck (. . .) en anderen meer, zig tot de school van Rembrant begaven. Onder deze was ook myn Stadtgenoot Arent de Gelder die, na dat hy door S. van Hoogstraten in de gronden van de Konst was onderwezen, mede naar Amsterdam vertrok om Rembrants wyze van schilderen te leeren . . .'

2 On this balance, see Vol. II, p. 53.

3 *Joachim von Sandrarts Academie der Bau-, Bild-, und Mahlerey-Künste*, A.R. Peltzer ed., Munich 1925, p. 203.

4 See, for example, Blankert *Bol*, p. 19.

5 The differences between Rembrandt and Rubens, and the practices in their respective studios, have long been commented on in the literature and interpreted in widely varying ways. See, for instance, Sumowski *Gemälde* I, p. 14, where stress is placed on the importance Rembrandt is supposed to have attached to individuality of execution ('Rembrandt war ausserstande . . . zwischen Invention und Ausführung . . . zu unterscheiden. Für ihn war die handschriftliche Materialität konstituierendes Element des Bildes'); see also S. Alpers, *Rembrandt's enterprise. The studio and the market*, Chicago 1988, pp. 59ff., who thinks in

involvement in the profit-earning production of the workshop that might be expected especially in the later stage[2], was tilted very strongly towards the latter. This can explain Sandrart's indignation at the fact that Rembrandt charged even his more advanced assistants the fee of 100 guilders a year and on top of that took in a good 2000 to 2500 guilders a year from the sale of their paintings and etchings[3]. Most of all, however, this arrangement was of course of immediate importance for the output of the workship — a not inconsiderable proportion of this will have been the work of young painters who had already learned their trade but were acquiring the style of the master. Rembrandt's studio has consequently often been likened to that of Rubens[4]. There is naturally a similarity between the two, dictated by their traditional features; but in terms of production methods and product there must have been an appreciable difference. In Rubens' case — like that of, for instance, Raphael — there was a well-developed allocation of tasks, and a sizeable part of the output was designed and prepared by the master himself but actually executed by his assistants. One gets the impression that in Rembrandt's studio the assistants produced work of their own under a certain amount of supervision, and although corrections by the master and collaboration between master and pupil or between pupils themselves cannot be discounted from the outset effort by several persons on a single work played nothing like the role it did in Rubens' workshop. Even more, the farming-out of the execution of large works to colleagues working on their own account (as Rubens did with the canvases ordered by the Spanish king for the Torre de la Parada) seems quite inconceivable with Rembrandt[5].

While most of his pupils were thus far from raw beginners when they arrived in Rembrandt's studio, they had come to learn, and one may expect to find in their production works that correspond to progressive stages of their training, albeit with the accent on the later stages in which the young painters enjoyed a degree of independence within the limits set by the master's style. One finds that at certain points in the 1630s and '40s there are concentrations of particular kinds of workshop product that seem to be absent at others. This may come about through the material that has survived being incomplete, but may also be due to the fact of the successive activities in the workshop not forming a curriculum applying to each pupil individually, but having rather been imposed on all of them at the same time. On essential points such as this we have too few facts to be able to do much more than speculate.

Drawn copies

There was of course a great deal of drawing done in the studio. Not only was drawing highly regarded as one of the foundations of the art of painting, but more particularly the making of drawn copies formed a routine part of a young painter's training. After the elementary skills needed to construct a head, Goeree writing in 1670 discusses as a second step the drawing of copies from drawings and prints (the former in particular must have been very common in Rembrandt's studio[6]), and as a third step the making of drawings after paintings[7]. The advantages of the latter, which is what concerns us here, he describes as providing practice in reducing (or enlarging) the picture being copied, and especially in teaching how to render by quite different means the forms defined in the painting by using differences of colour and tone. A number of drawings of this kind from Rembrandt's workshop have survived, most of them dating from two short periods — the first around 1635/36 and the second around 1646/47 — at least if we are right in linking these drawings chronologically with their prototypes.

A first group comprises first of all reproductions of three of the large half-length figures characteristic of Rembrandt's production in the mid-1630s: the *Minerva* now in a private collection, Tokyo (no. A 114) and the London *Flora* (no. A 112), both from 1635, and the privately-owned *Standard-bearer* of 1636 (no. A 120). The *Minerva* drawing in Amsterdam (see no. A 114 copy 1 and fig. 6 there) carries a probably later and perhaps non-autograph inscription *F:bol.fc*, but an attribution to this artist (who may be assumed to have come to work with Rembrandt soon after

terms of their respective temperaments ('The record of Rembrandt's dealings with possible patrons, and actual mistresses, suggests he was not a man who got on easily with others as Raphael and Rubens did. Rembrandt's pictorial personality makes a clear claim to individuality and even separateness'). An explanation of the differences mentioned needs to come from an analysis of various kinds and conditions of artists and their workshops compared to what they produced and for whom.

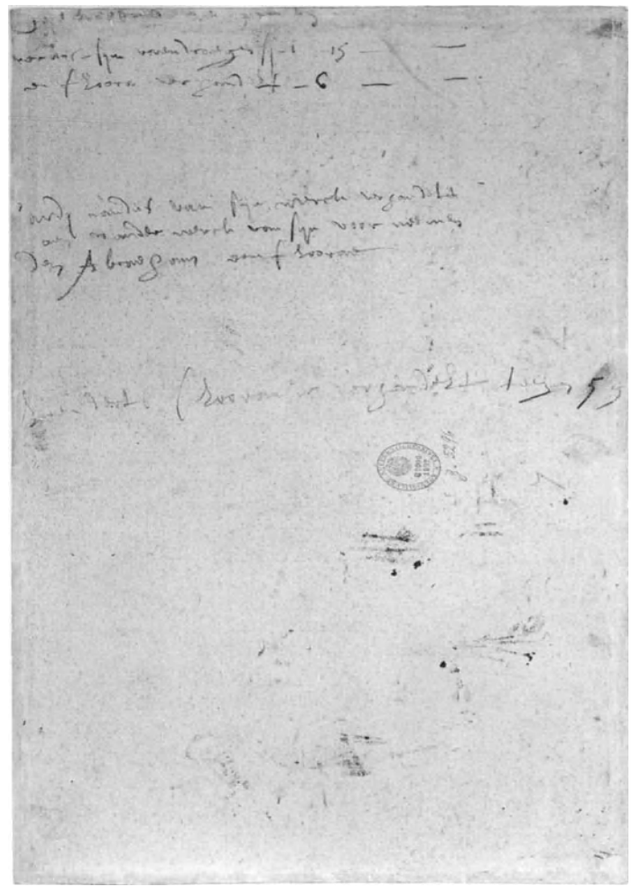
6 This may be deduced from the repeated occurrence of the same composition in more rembrandtesque drawings, of which one was sometimes regarded as Rembrandt's original. See, for example, Sumowski *Gemälde* I, pp. 11, 22 notes 17–20, 24–31, and P. Schatborn, *Tekeningen van/Drawings by Rembrandt, zijn onbekende leerlingen en navolgers/his anonymous pupils and followers*, The Hague 1985 (Catalogus . . . Rijksprentenkabinet . . . Amsterdam IV), nos. 74 and 75. Drawings produced in Rembrandt's workshop from prints appear mostly to follow Italian prototypes; they include one after Mantegna's *Entombment* engraving now in a private collection (Ben. A105a), and a sheet bearing three studies after two main figures from Marcantonio Raimondi's engraving of Raphael's *Descent from the Cross* previously in the Norton Simon Foundation (Ben. 934); the identification of the prototype in the last case is due to Colin Campbell (*Studies in the formal sources of Rembrandt's figure compositions*, typewritten Ph.D. thesis, University of London 1971, p. 90).

7 W. Goeree, *Inleydinge tot de algemeene Teykenkonst . . .*, 3rd edn Amsterdam 1697, pp. 28ff and 33ff.

Fig. 1. Rembrandt workshop, drawing after Rembrandt's *Flora* (no. A 112), pen and wash 21.9 × 17.3 cm. London, The British Museum



Fig. 2. Note in Rembrandt's handwriting on the back of his drawing after P. Lastman's *Susanna at the bath* (Ben. 448). Berlin (West), Staatliche Museen Preussischer Kulturbesitz, Kupferstichkabinett (KdZ 5296)



December 1635[8]) would fit in well with the date of the original and with the relatively clumsy copy of it — just as one might expect from a newcomer schooled elsewhere. The mixed technique with which the sheet is drawn, with wash in grey and black over black chalk, was obviously meant to cope with the tonal gradations in the painted prototype, and is characteristic of these drawn copies. It is applied with far greater virtuosity in the London drawings of the *Flora* (fig. 1) and *Standard-bearer* (see nos. A 112 copy 1, and A 120 copy 1 and fig. 4 there), and these are obviously from the same, extremely competent hand. Both carry on the back, in fairly old script, the name 'Rembrandt', and it must be seen as not impossible that they were sold under this name very early on, perhaps even by Rembrandt himself. One is reminded of the famous note, in Rembrandt's hand, on the back of a drawing by him after a painting by his own master (!), the *Susanna at the bath* (now in Berlin) by Pieter Lastman, recording that a 'vaendraeger' and a 'floora' had been sold for 15 and 6 guilders respectively, together with work by 'ferdijnandus' [Bol] and 'Leendert' [van Beyeren] (fig. 2)[9]. The prices (especially the first) seem however to indicate that — as is generally supposed — these were painted copies[10], particularly as painted copies of both paintings are known, and at least one after the *Flora* was most probably done in the studio.

It is already likely because one hand worked from more than one original, that drawings of this kind were indeed made in the workshop; this is confirmed by a singular piece of evidence. Another mixed-technique drawing, after the Frankfurt *Blinding of Samson* of 1636 (see no. A 116 copy 2 and fig. 8 there) depicts the original in a state which the X-rays show to have been prior to its completion. Like a painted copy that will be discussed below, the drawing shows a configuration of the dagger used to

8 According to documentary evidence published by Blankert (*Bol*, p. 71) Bol appeared as a witness in Dordrecht in December 1635, and on that occasion was described as a painter. The *Minerva* drawing is in fact not mentioned by Blankert.

9 On the back of drawing Ben. 448 in Berlin; Strauss *Doc.*, pp. 594–595. The transcription runs (after the first illegible line):
verkoft syn vaendrager synt 15 —
en floora verhandelt 6 —
fardynandus van sijn werck verhandelt
aen n ander werck van syn voorneemen
den Abraeham een floora
Leenderts floora(..) is verhandelt teegen 5 g
The most probable date for the drawing on the recto is 1636, when Rembrandt was occupied with the Susanna theme (see no. A 117).

pierce one of Samson's eyes, the contour of the arm of the soldier blinding him that is intersected by it, and Samson's knee, that Rembrandt subsequently revised (probably to improve the three-dimensional clarity of an area that was crucial from the dramatic viewpoint). The fact that drawn (or painted) copies reproduce the original in a state that was later altered by Rembrandt himself provides incontrovertible evidence that they were made in the studio.

It would be wrong to believe that the careful mixed technique used in such drawings points to a single author. Ferdinand Bol is often credited with drawings of this type, with the London *Flora* and *Standard-bearer* just mentioned[11] but also with, for example, a drawing after a lost original (that has also survived in painted copies) of *Zacharias in the Temple* that probably dates from 1634[12], i.e. well before Bol entered Rembrandt's studio. One would have rather to imagine this technique as having been used by a variety of pupils, and having to do with what Goeree describes as the teaching purpose of such copies, to train them in 'de schikkinge, vaste omtrek, actie, dag en schaduwe, enz.' (the composition, firm outline, action, light and shade, etc.)[13]. A careful execution may of course also have been important for the saleability of the product. That this product was sold under Rembrandt's name is admittedly hardly more than a surmise; Rembrandt's image as a draughtsman — which for us is determined almost entirely by a sketchlike technique — was at all events already by 1700 (and perhaps even earlier) including such fully-worked drawings. This is evident not only from the inscriptions already mentioned on the two London drawings, but also from, for instance, the fact that Valerius Röver believed he owned originals in two drawings done after paintings, the portrait of Rembrandt himself (which he described as 'A° 1634') and that of his wife, 'soo uitvoerig en konstig geteekent als iets van hem bekent is' (as thoroughly and artfully drawn as anything known by him). As Schatborn[14] has convincingly shown, these can be recognized in two drawings in black chalk on Japan paper in Teylers Museum in Haarlem (fig. 3) — one after Rembrandt's *Portrait of the artist as a burgher* of 1632 in Glasgow (no. A 58), the other after the *Bust of a young woman* in Milan regarded as a workshop piece

Fig. 3. Attr. to D.P. Santvoort, drawing after Rembrandt's *Portrait of the artist as a burgher* (no. A 58), black chalk heightened with white 27.9 × 19.4 cm. Haarlem, Teylers Museum



and bearing the same date (see no. C 57, copy 1 and fig. 4 there). Both drawings carry signatures that have not unreasonably been ascribed to Dirck Dircksz. Santvoort. He was five years younger than Rembrandt and certainly familiar with the latter's early work. The paintings that show this, paraphrases on Rembrandt's *Supper at Emmaus* of *c.* 1629 in the Musée Jacquemart-André (no. A 16)[15], exhibit however a far from rembrandtesque treatment, and it is doubtful whether Santvoort was ever numbered among Rembrandt's close collaborators[16]. It is perhaps because of this that the Haarlem drawings bear Santvoort's signature (though Röver unhesitatingly called them Rembrandts!), just as for that matter do the paintings

10 For example Hendrick Uylenburgh (together with a certain F. de Kaersgieter) gave a valuation of exactly 15 guilders in 1640 for 'een doeck een samson naer Rembrant' (Strauss *Doc.*, 1640/10).

11 As in Sumowski *Drawings* I, nos. 127 and 128.

12 Ibid. no. 124, which also gives detailed information on two painted copies, one now in the Mecklenburgisches Landesmuseum in Schwerin (see also Sumowski *Paintings* I, p. 22 note 22 and p. 34) and another in private ownership (Br. 542).

13 Goeree, op. cit.[7], p. 29.

14 P. Schatborn, 'Van Rembrandt tot Crozat', *N.K.J.* 32 (1981), pp. 1–54, esp. 40. Attribution to Santvoort in Sumowski *Gemälde* I, p. 83.

15 One in the Louvre, signed and dated 1633 (Sumowski *Gemälde* I, p. 87 note 37 and p. 110) — with Lazarus's sword (taken from no. A 30 in reverse) on the wall! — and the other signed and dated 1642 in a private collection (ibid., p. 83). Two small paintings in the Museum Boymans-van Beuningen in Rotterdam, a *Young shepherd* and *Young shepherdess*, date from 1632; they are wholly un-Rembrandtlike, and seem rather to have been inspired by a Haarlem variant of the caravaggesque movement. The signature on the first of these (*DVS*, with the *V* and *S* interlaced) is, like that on the Teyler drawings, written in small capitals.

16 On the possibility that Santvoort also produced rembrandtesque paintings, see below under *Tronies*.

just mentioned after Rembrandt's prototype. In their subject-matter, too, the drawings stand to some extent on their own — most of the drawings we can confidently look on as workshop products reproduce large figure compositions. The only other self-portrait that was reproduced (probably in the studio) in a fully-done drawing was that of 1640 in London (no. A 139)[17].

Somewhat unusual, for different reasons again, are two drawings made not after completed paintings but after grisailles by Rembrandt that were probably preparations for etchings and do not have the stamp of highly finished products done for sale. Both reveal, this time unmistakeably, the hand of Ferdinand Bol as we know it from a number of his later drawings, in particular the drawn modello for the *Moses descending from Mount Sinai* made for the Amsterdam Town hall[18]. One of them, in the H. van Leeuwen collection, reproduces the Amsterdam grisaille of *Joseph telling his dreams* which probably dates from about 1633 (no. A 66). Bol must have owned this grisaille himself later on[19], and it is quite conceivable that the drawing was produced only after he had left Rembrandt's studio in probably 1640/41. With the other drawing, made after the grisaille of the London *Lamentation* (no. A 107), matters are however rather different; the drawing shows a stage in the complicated genesis of the grisaille that terminated with an enlargement, which can be put at probably no later than 1637[20]. This makes production of the two Bol drawings in Rembrandt's studio more likely, though they were probably done as exercises rather than as reproductions intended for sale.

This is also true for a number of sketchlike drawings done after the Kassel *Half-length figure of Saskia* (no. A 85) and illustrating different phases in the long and complicated genesis of that painting (see no. A 85 copies 1–3 and figs. 7–9 there). The most interesting thing about these drawings is that two of them (differing widely from each other, but both in their time called Rembrandts) can be attributed to Flinck and Bol respectively in the time when they were working in Rembrandt's studio — the one in 1633/34 and the other in the late 1630s.

After 1636/37 the production of workshop drawings done after paintings seems to have stagnated, and not until ten years later was it revived with a number of thoroughly-done drawings after paintings from 1646/47. The names of Nicolaes Maes and Barent Fabritius are linked with these[21]; they both probably came to work in Rembrandt's studio in 1646[22]. The drawings need not concern us here, but it is worth mentioning that one of them is on vellum, thus emphasizing the precious character given to these carefully-done drawings, obviously with commercial intent.

Painted copies

There can be little doubt that the painting of copies, too, had a dual purpose — didactic and commercial. Just as for the drawn copies, the originals employed varied widely, from complicated large-scale compositions to working documents in the form of grisailles; and here again the commercial interest will have been in proportion with the product's format and artistic and technical ambitions. It is obvious from the repeated mention of paintings 'naer (after) Rembrandt' that contemporaries were, even if only at the beginning, well aware of there being something like a workshop production — though the expression probably covered more than just copies in the strict sense of the word[23]. But when it comes to distinguishing workshop copies from the undoubtedly large number of copies of a later date, surviving written evidence only seldom provides any help[24]. We have to rely mostly on recognizing in a work enough of a rembrandtesque quality to make an origin in his studio acceptable, if hardly ever provable. One of the rare items of solid evidence has already appeared in the case of a drawn copy after the *Blinding of Samson*: even a painted copy may reproduce the original in a state that was subsequently altered by Rembrandt himself. Other possible evidence can be obtained through physical investigation of the canvas or panel used — though in the case of copies, in particular, this has been exceptional; this can point indubitably to a painting having the same origin as works generally accepted as by Rembrandt or from his workshop.

Where the term 'copy' is concerned it has to be said that in the 17th century this had a rather wider meaning than it has usually been given subsequently. This will be evident from the material quoted below, and may perhaps also be deduced from what Goeree had to say about the making of

17 Sumowski *Drawings* I, no. 142 (as Bol).

18 Ibid. no. 120.

19 Described in Bol's inventory at the time of his second marriage in 1669: 'daer Joseph den droom uytleijt, van Rembrandt' (where Joseph explains the dream, by Rembrandt)(A. Bredius in: *O.H.* 28, 1910, p. 234; Blankert *Bol*, p. 77).

20 A paraphrase by Govaert Flinck dated 1637 (Von Moltke *Flinck*, no. 59; Sumowski *Gemälde* II, no. 612) seems to be based on the grisaille in its enlarged state. See further the comments under no. A 107.

21 This relates to two drawings after Rembrandt's 1646 *Holy family with the curtain* in Kassel (Br. 572) attributed to Nicolaes Maes, one on vellum in Oxford and another (incomplete) in London (Sumowski *Drawings* IX nos. 1791 and 1790; to a drawing in London (ibid. no. 1792), also ascribed to Maes, after the 1646 Munich *Adoration of the shepherds* of 1646; to a drawing in Brussels also probably attributable to Maes, after the lost *Circumcision*, that already carried the name of Eeckhout in the Valerius Röver collection (Sumowski *Drawings* III, no. 709 as Eeckhout); and to a drawing in Budapest, first ascribed to Barent Fabritius by Wegner, after Rembrandt's Berlin *Susanna at the bath* (Br. 516) in a version preceding the completed state of 1647 (Sumowski *Drawings* IV, no. 823).

drawn copies after prints. His advice is that the master 'as to the manner of Drawing, and treatment, ought not to be too strict in imposing this on all his Disciples, as if it were a trick performed or a set rule, but should rather be somewhat indifferent, and leave some freedom that, while remaining within the laws of Art, best accords with the temper of the Disciple'[25]. In Rembrandt's case this kind of freedom led to the painted copies seldom displaying the accuracy that one expects today and indeed finds in later copies. Within the framework of a rembrandtesque interpretation of the original an individual hand may be plainly evident, not to mention deliberate changes in colour and composition of the kind we shall discuss below.

Besides a few copies after works from Rembrandt's Leiden years that are not considered here[26], there is from the end of this period (or the very beginning of the Amsterdam period) one quite unequivocal example of a copy that can be attributed with certainty to his workshop. This reproduces Rembrandt's painting of *The artist in oriental costume* in the Petit Palais, Paris (no. A 40), and can be termed noteworthy on more than one count (fig. 4)[27]. It is executed, obviously freehand, on a slightly larger scale than the original on a panel 4 cm taller, and the manner of painting follows that of the prototype at some distance. It displays a number of features – the overemphasis on ornamental strokes and spots and sheens of light done as hatching — that we know from the work of Isack Jouderville[28]. These characteristics, which for instance make the eyes appear as over-contrasty accents in the face, leave little doubt about the work being by this pupil, who must have followed Rembrandt from Leiden to Amsterdam in 1631. There is welcome support for this attribution in the fact that one can prove in other ways that the painting came from Rembrandt's workshop (though there has been no dendrochronology investigation of the panel). Here, just as with the *Blinding of Samson*, the copyist recorded how the original looked before Rembrandt himself twice made changes to it in trying to solve the problem of the relationship between the legs and the (relatively small) head. This is of course most obvious from the absence in the copy of the poodle that Rembrandt added later. This addition was however, according

Fig. 4. Rembrandt workshop (I. Jouderville), copy after Rembrandt's *The artist in oriental costume* (no. A 40), panel 70.4 × 50.2 cm. Whereabouts unknown



to the X-rays, the very last alteration, which entirely hid the legs from sight; before this Rembrandt had tried a less radical way of achieving his aim by shortening the legs, but was evidently not satisfied with the result. The copy shows the legs in their first state, before Rembrandt's first attempt at a correction, probably in the year 1631. One can hardly imagine a better proof of the work having been done in the studio. It is all the more interesting to see how a copy like this was done — freehand, as has already been said, but moreover in mainly opaque paint that at places where in the original the paint layer allows the ground to show through imitates the effect of translucency by means of an admixture of light paint. One would hardly expect such a way of working, differing so markedly from the master's technique, in a copy done in the workshop.

22 J. Bruyn in: *O.H.* 101 (1987), p. 225, and *O.H.* 102 (1988), p. 328.

23 See E. van de Wetering in Vol. II, pp. 48–51.

24 Cf. however what is said below about Bol.

25 '. . . aangaande de maniere van Teikenen, en behandelen, niet soo stipt moet staan om die alle Discipelen, even eens als een kunsje of maatwet, op te dringen, maar liever wat onverschillig daarin te zijn, en enige vryheid geven die binnen de wetten der konst blijvende, best met het humeur vanden Discipel overeenstemt'. Goeree op. cit.[7], pp. 32–33. The gratifying thing about this text is that the author comes down for one side in what was evidently a choice. That there was another approach is confirmed by the occurrence of further, virtually identical versions of one and the same composition in the production of a painter like Gerard Dou.

26 See, for example, under nos. A 8, A 14, A 15, A 21, A 22, A 25, A 29, A 34, A 36, C 17, C 36 and C 41.

27 No. A 40 copy 1; see also the addendum in Vol. II, p. 840. The attribution to Jouderville was made by E. van de Wetering. 'Isaac Jouderville, a pupil of Rembrandt' in: cat. exhibn *The impact of a genius*, Amsterdam (Waterman) and Groningen 1983, pp. 59–69, esp. 66, and adopted by Sumowski *Gemälde* II, no. 948.

28 On Jouderville, see most recently Van de Wetering op cit. and Sumowski op. cit.

Fig. 5. Rembrandt, *The Descent from the Cross* (no. A 65), detail. Munich, Alte Pinakothek

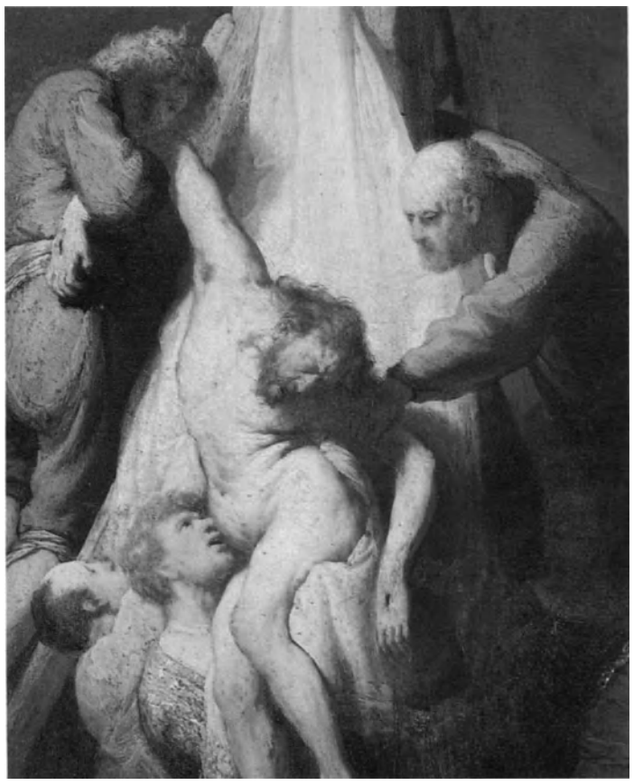
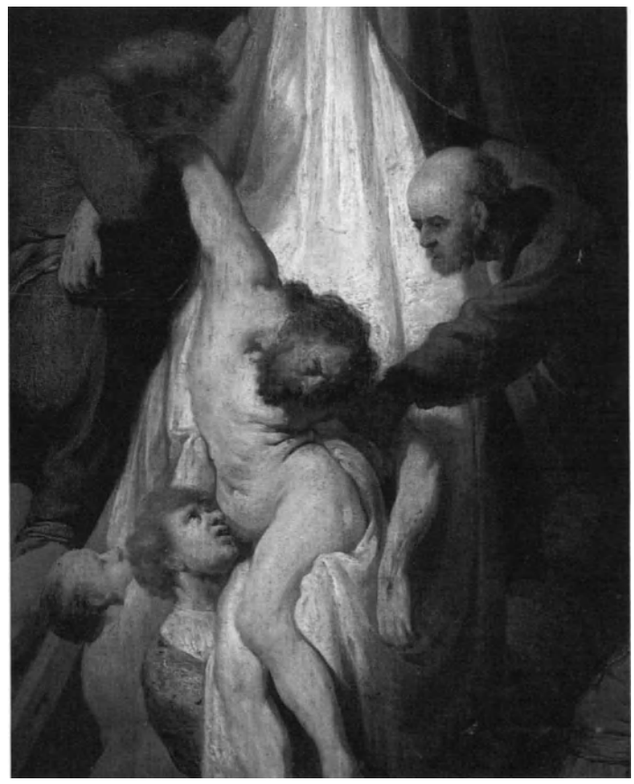


Fig. 6. Rembrandt workshop, copy after Rembrandt's *The Descent from the Cross*, detail. Mexico City, private collection



It is not often that the production of a copy can be placed so accurately, and that it can furthermore be ascribed to a particular assistant. On the contrary — within the wealth of material available it is far from simple to draw a line between the workshop copy and the vast mass of copies done outside and often later, or even sometimes between the workshop copy and the original. The latter problem has for a long time affected the *Good Samaritan* in the Wallace Collection in London (no. C 48). Because of the obvious resemblance (in reverse) to Rembrandt's etching of the subject from 1633 (B. 90), plus its lush and unmistakeably rembrandtesque execution, its Rembrandt attribution was long defended; but at the same time there was a lack of crispness in the rendering of form that gave rise to an undercurrent of distrust that would not be stilled, and to the suspicion that one was seeing only a copy of a lost Rembrandt grisaille. The reasons for rejecting this little painting as non-autograph are set out at length in the catalogue entry, and need not be repeated here[29]. In this case as well it is, exceptionally, possible to detect the hand of the assistant responsible, that of Govaert Flinck. Decisive in this is the handling of the landscape, found again in very similar form in somewhat later, signed works by him. The painting may be taken to be a copy made by Flinck while he was working in Rembrandt's studio in 1633/34, after a grisaille by the latter probably dating from 1632. This makes it a remarkable document demonstrating the practice of workshop copying. In the first place the young painter's task was obviously to produce a polychrome version of Rembrandt's monochrome original (if this was in fact a grisaille)[30]; the result was a combination, of fairly subdued tints of blue and green with browns and greys, which recurs in somewhat later work by Flinck. In addition to this, however, the artist's own sense of form finds expression in the detail (or absence of it) given to his interpretation of the prototype, e.g. in the rather clumsy lines used to show cracks in the brickwork or

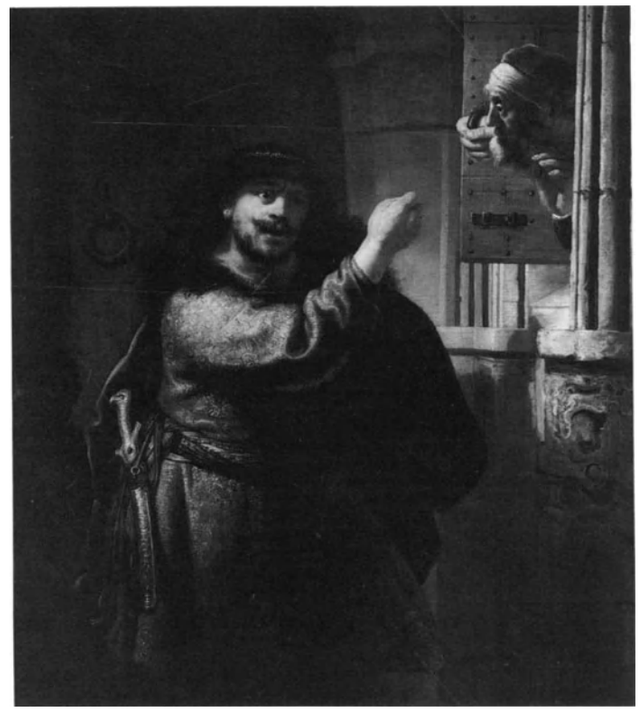
29 Vol. II, pp. 610–615.

30 One may wonder whether Rembrandt also had his etchings copied in paint. Among the far from rare painted copies after etchings, we however know of none that would could warrant this supposition. Motifs from Rembrandt etchings were of course repeatedly used by pupils in their compositions (both during and after their period of activity in his studio).

31 See, for example, the *Landscape with bridge and ruins*, signed and dated 1637, in the Louvre (fig. 36), and a drawing mentioned in connexion with this previously in the coll. Strölin, Lausanne (note 123); see further the ornament on a child's chair in the 1640 *Portrait of a little girl* in The Hague (Sumowski *Gemälde* II, no. 691).

32 Rectangular panel, said to have the same dimensions as the original (i.e. 89.6 × 65 cm), in private ownership in Mexico City, for photographs of which we are endebted to Mr Bob Haboldt of New York.

Fig. 7. Rembrandt workshop (F. Bol?), copy after Rembrandt's *Samson threatening his father-in-law* (no. A 109), canvas 155.7 × 134 cm. Norfolk, Va, The Chrysler Museum (on loan from the collection of Walter P. Chrysler Jr)



the contours of the architecture, something we recognize from the rendering of architecture and furniture in Flinck's later work[31]. This copy too thus seems on the one hand to be a typical workshop product and on the other to reveal clearly the personal hallmarks of its author.

It is as yet impossible to arrive at an equally precise judgement on another copy that shows the Munich *Descent from the Cross* (no. A 65) in its final state and must therefore date from 1633 or soon thereafter[32]. The idea that it may be a workshop copy is in this instance based wholly on an assessment of the manner of painting, and in particular of how the lively brushwork in the flesh areas and draperies contributes in a very rembrandtesque way to the suggestion of plasticity and texture, though without in this respect slavishly following the original (figs. 5 and 6). Nonetheless one can term it a faithful copy, other than in the colouring which is obviously a deliberate departure from the original. While in the original the body of Christ and the shroud are surrounded by relatively light, cool areas — light grey in the man bending over the arm of the cross, light blue in the young man on the ladder on the left, and greys in the bald man on the ladder on the right — the clothing of the adjacent figures in the copy is done in far darker and warmer tints that shade into those of the surroundings so that the main group stands out more against the adjacent areas. It is evident that in the case of copies (not only those after grisailles but copies of fully-fledged paintings as well) an individual colour-scheme was among the possibilities open to the copyist, or even part of the instructions he was given.

Just as with the carefully drawn copies, there are a great many painted copies of Rembrandt works from 1635 and 1636, and partly after the same originals — the London *Flora* of 1635 (no. A 112), the Frankfurt *Blinding of Samson* (no. A 116) and — possibly — the *Standard-bearer* (no. A 120) both of 1636, to which must be added the Leningrad *Abraham's sacrifice* (no. A 108) and the Berlin *Samson threatening his father-in-law* (no. A 109) both of 1635. One even knows of two copies of the last-named that, because of their quite definite rembrandtesque execution can be regarded as workshop copies[33]: the first, in the Chrysler Museum in Norfolk, Virginia (fig. 7) is also notable through being most probably identifiable with a painting that in a sale at The Hague on 25–26 May 1772 was described as being by Ferdinand Bol after Rembrandt, and subsequently in the Locquet sale in Amsterdam in September 1783 was again mentioned as a Bol. Despite all the caution one needs to show towards 18th-century attributions, one is inclined because of the detailed nature of the information — and the evident ignorance of the original which was then already in Berlin — to lend this attribution some credence[34]. The idea of it being by Bol is all the more plausible since his arrival in Rembrandt's studio may, as we have said earlier, be put at soon after December 1635.

The other copy after the same original is marked by Rembrandt's composition being extended on the left, taking in the kid goat (which is not without importance for the story) and showing amply the whole of the Moorish servant who is only partially visible in the other versions (see no. A 109 fig. 6). It has been supposed that this extended copy reproduced Rembrandt's composition in its original state; it seems more likely however that the unknown copyist[35], probably at his master's bidding, varied the composition in this way following his own

33 Both are alike in showing the righthand bottom part of Samson's clothing as it must have looked in the original before an old damage and restoration; on this and other details mentioned below, see the entry for no. A 109. There is no information available on the colour for either of the copies, so that nothing can be said about resemblances or differences in this respect.

34 A painting bought by the Rotterdam collector Gerrit van der Pot in 1788 is described as depicting a rabbi by Bol after Rembrandt; Van der Pot sold it in 1800 to the dealer Bryan (see E. Wiersum in: *O.H.* 48, 1931, p. 211). This painting may perhaps be identified with a very rembrandtesque copy in the coll. Lord Margadale, Tisbury, Wilts. (no. A 128 copy 1) after the Chatsworth *Man in oriental costume* of *c.* 1639. Less convincing is an attribution to Bol given around 1770 to a copy, earlier in Postdam, after the London *Belshazzar's feast* (no. A 110 copy 1 and fig. 7 there).

Fig. 8. Rembrandt, *Abraham's sacrifice*, 1635 (no. A 108), detail. Leningrad, The Hermitage Museum

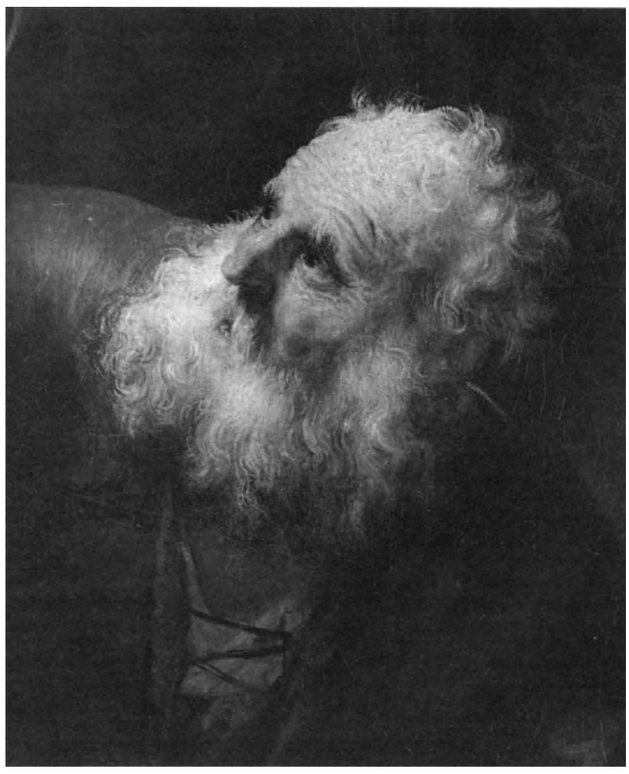
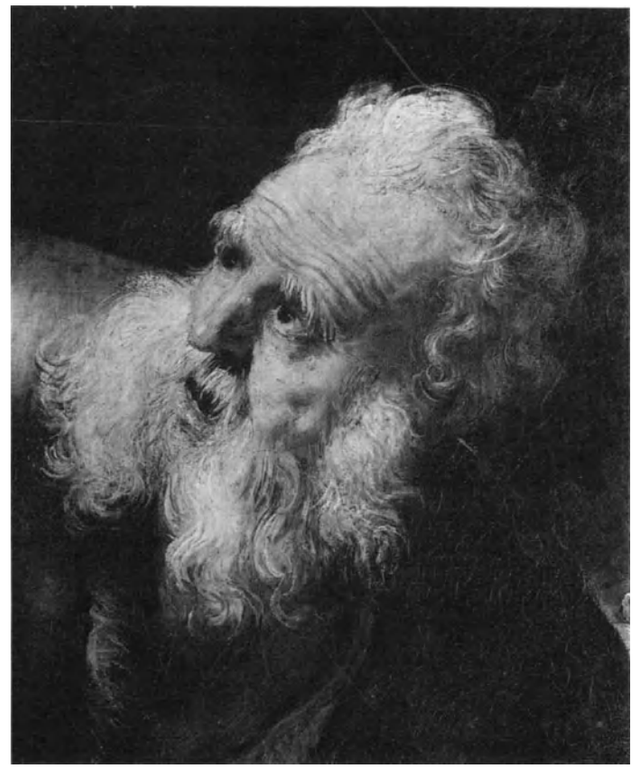


Fig. 9. Rembrandt workshop (F. Bol?), copy after Rembrandt's *Abraham's sacrifice*, 1636, detail. Munich, Alte Pinakothek



'invention'. As we have already seen in the case of colour, such changes in composition occur a number of times in copies from these years.

The best known example of this is of course the much-discussed copy in Munich after the Leningrad *Abraham's sacrifice* of 1635, with its remarkably lengthy inscription[36]. However one interprets the latter, the painting may be looked on as a copy made in the workshop in 1636 with some contribution (not recognizable as such) from Rembrandt himself. A welcome circumstance is that in this instance confirmation of its being produced in the workshop has been provided by investigation of the canvas used; this can with exceptional certainty be identified as coming from the same bolt as the canvases of two autograph Rembrandts, the 1635 *Minerva* (no. A 114) and the London *Belshazzar's feast* datable in the same year (no. A 110)[37]. The copy's individual character is manifest in three aspects: in changes in composition compared to the original, in the use of colour and in the handling of paint. In the case of the composition, the differences from the original are quite evident; they include the pose of the steeply foreshortened angel flying towards the front — also seen in a drawn version in the British Museum[38] — and the addition of the ram in the undergrowth on the left which, as a motif important for the narrative, is akin to the addition of the kid goat in the *Samson threatening his father-in-law*. In his colour-scheme the copyist has, just as one sees in the copy of the *Descent from the Cross*, departed deliberately from his prototype, and this again seems to have been done in order to heighten the contrast; thus, Abraham's lit sleeve is not kept in greys with sheens of light in ochre-yellow, but done mainly in red and brown-red, and the dull blue coat on which Isaac is lying is now a light-catching white. The use made of paint, too, plays its part in creating a stronger contrast; the shadows and cast shadows are set down more thickly, and especially in the passages that differ from the prototype the artist does not in his brushwork shy away from a linear definition of form. Abraham's head too shows, in comparison with that in the original (see figs. 8 and 9) stronger contrasts and a less supple brushstroke, e.g. in the hairs of the eyebrow on the right which hang down like icicles. This last feature reminds one not of Rembrandt's Abraham but of his Samson's

35 See no. A 123, *5. Documents and sources*. Gerson (Gerson 78 and Br.-Gerson 499) and Von Moltke (*Flinck*, p. 69 no. 22) attributed this copy to Govaert Flinck. There is no reason to do so, and it is from the outset improbable that Flinck would have painted a copy like this in Rembrandt's studio as late as 1635.

36 For more detailed information see no. A 108 copy 2. For an extensive survey of relevant literature see Sumowski *Gemälde* II, no. 611 where the author thinks in terms of collaboration between Rembrandt and Flinck.

37 See Vol. II, pp. 24–30.

father-in-law, in either the Berlin original or one of the copies. The copyist must have known that work well, and it is not inconceivable that if Bol was indeed responsible for the Norfolk work then the one in Munich might also be his. Though this can be no more than speculation, there are two things that point in this direction: the way the copyist renders the landscape can be seen as foreshadowing Bol's later landscape style[39], and the inscription shows some similarity with that of Bol in a signature from 1643[40]. These items of evidence are however too weak to allow any firm conclusion on the Bol attribution; it is difficult enough to get any coherent picture of Bol's rembrandtesque output, including the works he did in the workshop.

We can be brief in discussing copies of the London *Flora* and Frankfurt *Blinding of Samson*. The former (no. A 112 copy 2 and figs. 7 and 8 there) is known to us only from photographs, but these are enough to convince us of the rembrandtesque execution; the only clear departure from the original is a slight alteration in the position of the staff. The full-size copy of the *Samson* (no. A 116 copy 1 and fig. 7 there) that was acquired for the Kassel gallery around 1760 from the Hague dealer Gerard Hoet II was lost during the Second World War, but photographs show that this painting, like the drawing discussed above, reproduced the original in a state prior to Rembrandt making his final corrections. For this reason alone the copy must have been made in the studio itself, and as a highly ambitious product intended for sale — or might Rembrandt conceivably have offered Constantijn Huygens not the original of the *Samson* (as is fairly generally assumed), but this copy of it?

Before the flow of painted full-size copies appears to have dried up somewhat, in the late 1630s, one was made after the *The angel Raphael leaving Tobit and his family* dating from 1637, now in Paris (no. A 121 copy 2 and fig. 10 there). This shows a change from the original that can be compared with that in the *Abraham's sacrifice* and again involves the direction in which the angel is flying — the copyist has depicted him facing to the front (perhaps on instructions from his master) and in doing so has had to rely on his limited constructional capabilities. For the rest, the painting strikes one as rembrandtesque though almost nonchalantly executed[41].

Another rather crudely executed copy in Munich (fig. 10), after Rembrandt's *Resurrection*, must date from the same period, and reproduces the original at the same scale (no. A 127 copy 2). Surprisingly this copy bears the recently uncovered signature <*F. bol f.*> set out in the same way as the strange-seeming inscription on the drawn *Minerva* copy mentioned above though written slightly differently. There is a strong possibility that both that drawing and the painting, which share a certain awkwardness, are among the very first works Bol executed in Rembrandt's studio (in early 1636?), even if this attribution would practically preclude that of the extremely competent copies already mentioned, after the *Samson threatening his father-in-law* and *Abraham's sacrifice*. It is once again plain that the copy of the *Resurrection* can indeed be regarded as a studio work; it reproduces the original in a state from which it progressed further when Rembrandt (finally!) completed it in 1639. The most striking difference lies in the fact that the figure of Christ (which it has already been suspected was not initially part of the picture) is still missing from the copy; in the group of frightened guards, too, figures and other motifs are either absent or done differently in a way that has left traces (visible in the X-rays) in the original. One knows of a number of copies in various formats after the *Entombment* (no. A 126) that was supplied to the Stadholder at the same time as the *Resurrection* in 1639, but none of these was so clearly done in the workshop as the copy of the latter painting.

Fig. 10. Rembrandt workshop (signed *F. bol f.*), copy after Rembrandt's *The Resurrection* (no. A 127), canvas 80 × 68 cm. Munich, Bayerische Staatsgemäldesammlungen



38 No. A 108 copy 1; Ben. 90 as Rembrandt. Haverkamp-Begemann, reviewing the Benesch work (*Kunstchronik* 14, 1961, pp. 10–28, esp. 22), was the first to believe that the drawing was probably done by a pupil after the Leningrad painting, possibly a preparation for the Munich copy.

39 See the section on *Landscapes*.

40 See Chapter III, figs. 20 and 21.

41 Possibly one or more of the copies listed under no. A 124, *Copies* of the Buckingham Palace *Risen Christ appearing to Mary Magdalene* can also be seen as workshop copies.

There is another singular feature about this copy. We do not of course know when the 'Rembrandt' signature was placed on top of the 'Bol' one. We do however know that Lambert Doomer, probably 30 or 40 years later, made a drawing (now in Windsor Castle) after this copy with the inscription *<Rembran Pinx. L Doomer f.>*; moreover, a *Resurrection* by Rembrandt is twice mentioned as being among Doomer's possessions (together with works expressly described as *after* him). One cannot help getting the impression that copies like that of the *Resurrection* were already quite early on passing for work by Rembrandt himself. One may even wonder how matters stand in this respect with Rembrandt's own inventory drawn up in 1656; there too, after all, there is a *Resurrection* by Rembrandt[42], which cannot of course have been identical with the painting delivered to the Stadholder in 1639.

As we have just said, the production of full-size painted copies dropped off sharply in the late 1630s or, judging by the material that has survived, stopped altogether for some considerable time. The Leningrad painting, dated 1637, of the *Parable of the labourers in the vineyard* (no. C 88) is, we assume, a smaller-scale copy after a lost original, but copies of this kind remain the exception. But full-size copies like those at Knole of the 1640 *Visitation* in Detroit (no. A 138) and at Braunschweig of the lost *Circumcision* that was delivered to Frederik Hendrik in 1646[43] are also — at least if they can be looked on as workshop copies — somewhat on their own.

The series of scenes from the life and passion of Christ supplied to the Stadholder seems to have again played a role in the 1650s in the production of copies in the workshop. A wellknown example of this is an *Entombment* in Dresden that was bought as a Rembrandt in 1763 and was long attributed wholly or partly to him (no. A 126 copy 4 and figs. 7 and 8 there); it bears the date 1653, which is not out of keeping with the style of execution. It constitutes one indication that the compositions of Rembrandt's Passion scenes were still providing prototypes that were reproduced in the workshop. Now that we have seen that they probably already did so in the 17th century, it is hardly surprising that copies made in this way carried Rembrandt's name in the 18th (and not only in Dresden). The question is then, of course, how copies could have been made after originals that — as we know quite precisely in the case of the paintings supplied to the Stadholder — were no longer available in the studio to serve as models. The answer is already to some extent implicit in what has just been said; it is perfectly conceivable — and to some extent confirmed by the 1656 inventory of Rembrandt's possessions[44] — that virtually contemporaneous copies, like that of the *Descent from the Cross* (fig. 6) or the *Resurrection* (fig. 10), remained in the studio and could be used as prototypes for later versions. In this one may thus see a third useful function, besides that of saleability and didactic purpose, for the workshop production of copies.

Tronies

To judge by the mentions one finds in inventories from the 1630s of works 'naer (after) Rembrandt', this phrase almost without exception covered *'tronies'*[45]; in numbers they far outstrip the *tronies* indicated as being painted by Rembrandt himself. Traces of this state of affairs can be found right into the modern literature, in that the name of Rembrandt has, especially for heads and busts, become a collective name for widely differing paintings a not inconsiderable proportion of which can be looked on as workshop products. On this point, just as with the copies, one has to rely on the one hand on an assessment of the manner of painting and on the other on specific evidence of the origin of the panel or canvas used. Thanks to the latter we now know, for instance, that the Amsterdam *Bust of a man in oriental dress* (no. C 101) is indeed a studio work, because the panel used came from the same oaktree (and thus from the same batch of wood) as that used for an autograph work — in this case the *Landscape with a thunderstorm* in Braunschweig (no. A 137). On similar grounds, works on canvas such as the Leningrad *Descent from the Cross* (no. C 49), the Vienna *Apostle Paul* (Br. 603; our fig. 14) and the Hanover *Landscape with the baptism of the eunuch* (no. C 116) can — though we do not look on them as autograph Rembrandts — be counted among the production of his workshop on both stylistic and physical grounds[46].

Our picture of the output of Rembrandt's workshop is further determined by a number of

42 Strauss *Doc.*, 1656/12, no. 113.

43 Bauch A 31. See also the next note.

44 The 1656 inventory (Strauss *Doc.*, 1656/12) twice mentions a *Descent from the Cross* (nos. 37 and 293) and once a *Resurrection* (no. 113), as well as a *Circumcision* and a *Scourging* expressly described as copies (nos. 92 and 302). A *Circumcision* was in the coll. Isaac van der Blooken sale, Amsterdam 11 May 1707 (Lugt 205) as an original Rembrandt together with an *Entombment*, as nos. 1 and 2 respectively. These paintings are probably identical with two copies now in Braunschweig (cat. nos. 241 and 240), which were listed in the ducal collection at Salzdahlum from 1710 on.

45 On use of the term *tronies* see Vol. I, p. 40 note 8. To this may be added that the word in fact originally meant 'face' so that one might expect paintings named as such to show heads, but that in 17th-century descriptions the term was also used for larger figures. See, for example, 'een studenten Tronie nae Rembrant halff lichaems met een Clapmuts' (a student Tronie after Rembrant, half-length with a cap) (in the estate of Aert de Coninx in 1639, Strauss *Doc.*, 1639/9). Both descriptions and the surviving material indicate that the portrayal was almost exclusively of young men, young women, old men or old women meant (partly by means of the accessories shown — items of armour, ostrich feathers and costly adornment) to inspire thoughts about the fleetingness of earthly life; see Vol. I, pp. 223 and 274. Vol. II, pp. 485 and 838.

46 See Vol. II, Introduction Chapter II, especially Table B (pp. 28–29).

factors. First of all, Rembrandt's own stylistic development and use of themes and motifs naturally provide a major starting point, just as they surely did for his pupils[47]. Secondly, our image gains in sharpness and conviction as it becomes possible to make out, among the workshop production, groups of works that share sufficient characteristics to be seen as coming from a single hand, so that one gets a broader gamut of stylistic features than a single work can offer. And finally it is, in a number of instances where the pupils developed into independent painters with a clearly recognizable artistic personality of their own, possible already to detect this personality during the phase in which they were expected to work within the style of their master. We have already seen, from the *Good Samaritan* in the Wallace Collection attributable to Govaert Flinck (no. C 48), that this possibility in principle holds true for copies as well. Working along these lines, one can bring some order to the material, though it has to be conceded that success has up to now be limited. The major obstacle is uncertainty as to how a pupil, even if we have a fairly clear picture of his subsequent development, acted when he was directly exposed to his master's influence — how, for instance, his style was influenced by widely varying prototypes, and what variations one can expect to see in his work as a result. In general it seems reasonable to suppose that precisely because of the common prototype of the master the pupils' individual characteristics became blurred, and were dominated by a common rembrandtesque style. Small wonder that it is difficult, and often a source of argument, to draw the dividing lines between the master and his pupils, among the pupils themselves, and between them and the — for the time being — amorphous majority of anonymous products. A final complication (though it does not cause any serious confusion) lies in the fact that sometimes pupils continued, long after they had left his studio and set up on their own, not only to carry on working in a rembrandtesque style but also repeatedly to take recent work by their erstwhile master as their model. Perhaps the most striking example of this is Flinck (up to 1644/45) in his history paintings, portraits and landscapes.

The *tronie* must, as may be deduced from the inventory items mentioned above[48], have been a relatively cheap product. In one or two cases we know of an original by Rembrandt that can be seen as a prototype for free variants, often apparently based on fresh studies of a model, that may be attributed to workshop assistants. The *Bust of a young woman* from 1632, previously on loan to the Boston Museum of Fine Arts (no. A 50), must have been a prototype of this kind. Among the variants one, the painting in Chapel Hill (no. C 58), can be ascribed with confidence to Isack Jouderville. We have come across a drawn copy of another, in Milan (no. C 57), with an inscription that may be seen as the signature of Dirck Santvoort and with a similar drawing (fig. 3) after Rembrandt's 1632 *Portrait of the artist as a burgher* in Glasgow (no. A 58) as its companion-piece. Does this make Santvoort a candidate for the painted version in Milan ? The mention in 1647 of a 'Tronij na Rembrant van Dirck van Santvoort' alongside a 'Tronij van Rembrant(...)' in an estate valuation done by none less than Hendrick Uylenburgh[49] tempts one to see in Santvoort — who became a master in the Amsterdam guild only in 1636 — one of the young artists trained elsewhere who came to work in Rembrandt's studio, and thus a potential author of rembrandtesque *tronies*. The style of his earliest signed pictures (from 1632, indeed)[50] and of somewhat later work however does nothing to corroborate this; at most one might suspect that he worked for Uylenburgh for a while and came into contact with Rembrandt's work in that way.

Though it is sometimes possible to point to an autograph prototype for such *tronies* of young women — the Amsterdam *Bust of a young woman* of 1633 (no. A 75) can also count as such[51] — it is more difficult to do so with another large group of *tronies* (which like the former have Vanitas connotations) showing old men, of the kind that until a short while ago went under Rembrandt's name but that already in the 1630s were again being mentioned as 'naar' (after) as well as 'door' (by) Rembrandt[52]. Though at least two originals with this subject are still known from the Leiden years (nos. A 29 and A 42), there is remarkably enough no autograph prototype from the years after 1631. Mutually related derivatives do, it is true, sometimes suggest the existence of a common prototype[53], or the motif depicted shows a

47 See Vol. II, p. 50, especially the Utrecht ordinance of 1644 quoted in note 51.

48 See, for example, Strauss *Doc.*, 1634/1, 1637/4, 1638/5 and 1639/9.

49 Strauss *Doc.*, 1647/4.

50 The attribution of the Rotterdam *Young shepherd* and *Young shepherdess* mentioned in note 15 to Santvoort was doubted by P. Hecht in: *Burl. Mag.* 129 (1987), p. 692.

51 A *Young woman with a turban* at Chatsworth (Sumowski *Gemälde* II, no. 659 as Flinck) seems to be based on this, as well as a *Shepherdess* in the Harrach Collection, Vienna (ibid. no. 665 as Flinck), which does not however give the impression of having been painted in Rembrandt's studio.

52 The painter and art dealer Lambert Jacobsz. owned at the time of his death in 1636, besides a number of works done after Rembrandt, 'Een outmans troni met een lange bredebaart van M. Rembrant van Rijn selfs' (A tronie of an old man with a long wide beard, by Master Rembrant van Rijn himself). When he died in 1639 the jeweller Aert de Coninx, father of Jacob and Philips Koning, owned four tronies done after Rembrandt, including 'een stuckje schilderije synde een outmans Tronie' (a painting being a tronie of an old man) (Strauss *Doc.*, 1637/4 and 1639/9).

53 See, for example, paintings in Kassel, Richmond (Va) and New York, no. C 53 figs. 1, 4 and 5.

Fig. 11. Rembrandt workshop, *Bust of an old man*, 1632, panel 67 × 50.8 cm. Cambridge, Mass., The Fogg Art Museum, Harvard University, Bequest Nettie G. Naumberg

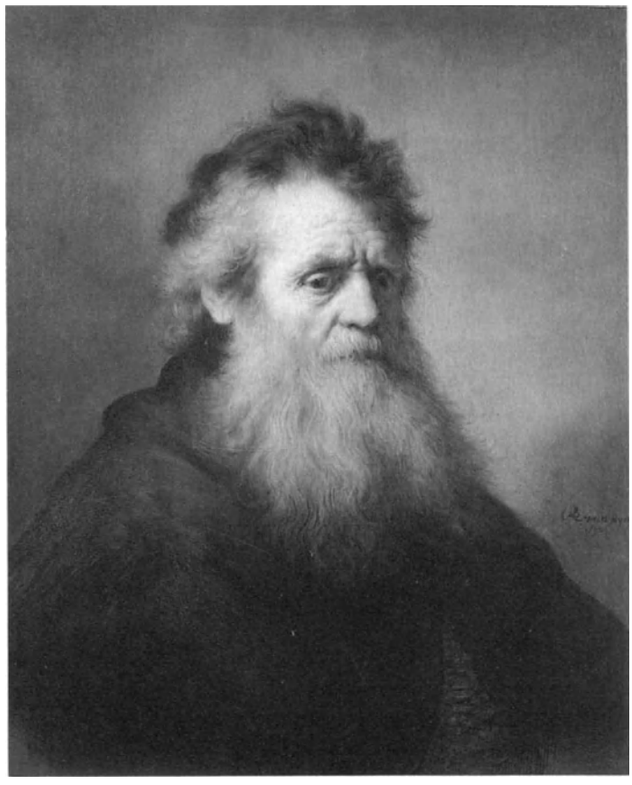


Fig. 12. Rembrandt, *Bust of an old man*, 1631 (B. 315 II), etching 6.8 × 6.6 cm. Amsterdam, Rijksprentenkabinet



strong resemblance to an etching by Rembrandt or from his studio[54], so that a direct or indirect link with a prototype by Rembrandt himself can be assumed. The latter is the case, for example, with a painting that has in recent times been connected with the names of Jan Lievens and Jacob Backer and thus bids fair to disappear from the discussion of Rembrandt works — the *Bust of an old man* in Cambridge, Mass. (fig. 11)[55]. Quite apart from an inscription reading <*RHL van Ryn 1632*> that at the very least has a strong similarity to autograph signatures, the handling of paint has besides an individual stamp (mainly a rather *sfumato*-like treatment) a number of markedly rembrandtesque features; what is more, the same model is portrayed in a very similar manner in a small monogrammed etching dated 1631 (B. 315; our fig. 12). One may see this as confirmation of a connexion with Rembrandt's workshop; it probably has to be assumed that an autograph work served as the basis.

A prototype like this need not (and this holds for the *tronies* of young women and other types as well) necessarily have been an isolated head or bust. We know of heads from the late 1620s and mid-40s that were borrowed from a larger composition and worked up by pupils into more or less individual creations, probably based in part on the pupil's own studies of a model[56]. It has been usual for heads like these to be looked on as studies done by Rembrandt for his own compositions, but they can, it turns out, more rightly be described as studies by his pupils. Remarkably, there are no examples known to us from the 1630s that came about in this way, either because the material that has survived is incomplete or because the activities in the workshop over this period were different from those before and

54 See, for example, the similarity between the Kassel *Bust of an old man with a bald head* (no. C 24) and etching B. 298 attributed to Rembrandt.

55 Br. 147, Bauch A 8. Regarded in the literature as a Rembrandt until the attribution was rejected by J. Rosenberg (*Rembrandt. Life & work*, revised edn London 1964, p. 84). S. Slive (in: *Allen Memorial Art Museum Bulletin* 20, 1963, p. 137) thought it was by Lievens, as did Gerson (Br.-Gerson 147). Bauch thought the work of a pupil (Backer?) might have been overpainted by Rembrandt.

56 See the *Bust of an old man* in Leipzig (no. C 25), which is based on the head from the Nuremburg *S. Paul at his writing-desk* (no. A 26; see also Vol. I, pp. 44–46). Examples from the mid-1640s are a *Woman crying* in Detroit (Sumowski *Gemälde* III, no. 1322 as Nicolaes Maes; J. Bruyn in: *O.H.* 102, 1988 pp. 329–330, as Samuel van Hoogstraten), based on Rembrandt's *Woman taken in adultery* of 1644 in London (Br. 566); the *Woman with infant* in Rotterdam (Sumowski op. cit., no. 1327 as Maes; J. Bruyn op. cit., p. 329 as Barent Fabritius) after a figure in Rembrandt's lost *Circumcision* (Bauch A 31); *a Head of a woman* formerly in the coll. Kappel in Berlin (Br. 376) taken from the same painting, and *a Head of a woman* formerly coll. Von Schwabach in Berlin (Br. 375) based on the head of Mary in Rembrandt's Leningrad *Holy family* of 1645 (Br. 370). At least the first two of these works appear to have been sold very early on as being by Rembrandt. See 'een crytend vroutgen van Rembrandt' (a crying woman by Rembrandt) in 1661 in the estate of Willem van Campen of Amsterdam (A. Bredius, *Künstler-Inventare* IV, The Hague 1917, p. 119), and 'een vrouken met een kint in de lueren door Reynbrant' (a woman with a child in swaddling-clothes by Rembrandt) that in 1685 was in the collection of Abraham Heyblom of Dordrecht (A. Bredius in: *O.H.* 28, 1910, p. 12).

57 Lambert Jacobsz. owned 'Een schone Jonge turcksche prince na Rembrant' (cf. no. C 54) together with what was somewhat puzzlingly described as 'een cleine oostersche vrouwentroni het conterfeisel van H. Ulenburgh huijsvrouwe nae Rembrant' (a small oriental *tronie* of a woman the likeness of H. Ulenburgh's wife after Rembrant) (Strauss *Doc.*, 1637/4); Aert de Coninx 'een Turcx Tronie nae Rembrant' (ibid. 1639/9).

58 Lambert Jacobsz. owned 'Een oud bestie met een swart capproen nae M. Remb.' (An old woman with a black headdress after Master Remb.) (Strauss *Doc.*, 1637/4) that might be one of the many versions of no. C 41.

afterwards, with the accent on, for instance, the copying of integral works by the master.

Nonetheless the number of *tronies* in the 1630s is no smaller than in other periods. Besides the young women and old men one can, from old descriptive texts, expect to find at least three other types — orientals[57], old women[58] and young men[59]. We know today of a bare handful of autograph representatives of the first two (nos. A 27, A 73 and perhaps also no. B 8), plus a much larger number of imitations some of which can with reasonable certainty be seen as coming from the Rembrandt studio (e.g. nos. C 41 copy 1, C 54 and C 101). More interesting still is the quite large group of *tronies* of young men, which must include a fair number of self-portraits and pictures of Rembrandt done by other hands, as well portrayals of other models. The 'self-portraits' group (including a not inconsiderable percentage of non-autograph works) has in the course of time been mostly absorbed in a more or less romantic vision of Rembrandt's person[60] or seen as a manifestation of self-assured artistry or of specific views on artistic theory[61]. An interpretation like this may be acceptable for certain later self-portraits — beginning with that from 1640 in London (no. A 139), that according to an old inscription must be seen as a 'conterfeycel' (likeness) and not a *tronie* — but probably not for all, and certainly not for the early ones. The earliest of all, in Amsterdam and Munich (nos. A 14 and A 19), can still count as studies in chiaroscuro, but the young man wearing a gorget or costly garb in the other self-portraits from the Leiden years (nos. A 20, A 21, A 22, A 33 and the lost original of no. C 36) has, from the accessories, to be seen as a Vanitas figure. The same is true of the less numerous autograph self-portraits from the 1630s in which gold chains, gorgets (and once even a helmet) and caps with ostrich plumes play the same role as earlier (nos. A 71, A 72, A 96, A 97 and perhaps also B 10), and of course also of the workshop pieces from the Amsterdam period in which Rembrandt appears in similar clothing (nos. C 56, C 92, C 96 and C 97)[62]. Gerson put forward the idea that pupils may have portrayed Rembrandt[63], and a number of *tronies* painted by widely differing hands and with Rembrandt's features do appear to confirm this. One of these, no. C 56 in Berlin, we have tentatively attributed to Govaert Flinck. The others form a stylistically heterogeneous group that for the most part remains anonymous but among which one work, no. C 97 in Pasadena, can together with a group of portraits from the early 1640s be with great probability be seen as done by Carel Fabritius at the time (around 1641–43) he was working in Rembrandt's studio.

The 'self-portraits' group which has always been regarded as being a separate category, is thus found to break down through the variety of hands that can be detected within it. Furthermore, it does not from the iconographic viewpoint form a discrete entity but is past of a larger group of work (mostly studio pieces[64]) showing various figures with similar dress and evidently having a common function or meaning. It is of course no mere chance that these paintings have all, earlier or later, once been looked on as self-portraits; the cap, with or without a plume, came to be regarded as a distinguishing mark of the artist in general and Rembrandt's appearance in particular, and the gorget gave rise to the singular title 'self-portrait as an officer'. Unmistakeably, however, there are among these young men faces that are not like that of Rembrandt, and that differ greatly one from the other. Some, such as the Toledo *Bust of a young man* (no. A 41), are undoubtedly from Rembrandt's hand, and sometimes one thinks one recognizes a particular pupil such as Isack Jouderville — perhaps painted by himself (no. A 23, and see also Vol. II, p. 838); but in most instances the sitter must remain nameless, and one can only suppose that the pupils in the workshop used themselves or each other as a model. One can deduce that both these options existed

59 Lambert Jacobsz. owned 'Een soldaet met swart haer een Iseren halskraegh sluijer om den hals nae Remb.' (A soldier with dark hair and iron gorget [and] shawl round his neck) (cf. no. C 55); Cornelis Aertsz. van Beyeren (a timber merchant, and father of Rembrandt's pupil Leendert) 'een soldaet gecopieert naer Rembrant'; and Aert de Coninx 'een jongemans Tronie nae Rembrant' and 'een studenten Tronie nae Rembrant' (Strauss *Doc.*, 1637/4, 1638/5 and 1639/9 respectively).

60 See, for example, W. Pinder, *Rembrandts Selbstbildnisse*, Königstein 1950; F. Erpel, *Die Selbstbildnisse Rembrandts*, Berlin 1967.

61 See H.J. Raupp, *Untersuchungen zu Künstlerbildnis und Künstlerdarstellung in den Niederlanden im 17. Jahrhundert*, Hildesheim-Zurich-New York 1984, pp. 176–177, where the early self-portraits are described as being intended to express self-confidence based on 'ingenium'. See also for example Alpers op. cit. (note 5), pp. 67–68: 'One obvious pictorial sign of Rembrandt's worldly ambitions is found in the portrait heads — mostly early self-portraits — bedecked with a golden chain. (. . .) The same thing might be said about those self-portraits in which Rembrandt dons a bit of armor. (. . .) Such studio dress-up with gold chains and armor offer a minor but revealing record of Rembrandt's serious ambitions as an artist.' How shaky such interpretations (taking iconological motifs to be means of personal expression) are is already obvious from the fact that *tronies* of quite different young men show exactly the same costume (see further, and note 62).

62 On the Vanitas meaning of the cap with ostrich-plume and other adornment, see the comments on no. A 20; on that of the gorget (or helmet), see the comments on no. A 21 (in Vol. II, p. 838).

63 Gerson p. 66, where it is however assumed that these portraits would have been copied after original Rembrandts. It is not unknown for pupils to paint portraits of their master; see, for instance, 'het conterfeitsel van Lamberts selven door J. Ariens [Backer] gedaen' in the estate of Lambert Jacobsz. in 1637 (H.L. Straat, 'Lambert Jacobsz, schilder', *De vrije Fries* 28, 1925, pp. 53–94, esp. 73 no. 24).

64 Including, besides autograph work such as the Toledo *Bust of a young man* and perhaps that in Florence (no. B 11), similar busts by various hands: in Cleveland (no. A 23, see Vol. II, p. 838) and San Diego (no. C 55) — both attributable to Jouderville — in Pasadena (see Vol. I, pp. 49–50, figs. 27 and 28; Sumowski *Gemälde* I, no. 42 as Backer), The Hague (no. C 98) and Detroit (Br. 192; fig. 13).

Fig. 13. Rembrandt workshop, *Bust of a man in a plumed hat and gorget*, panel 62.3 × 46.2 cm. Detroit, Mich., The Detroit Institute of Arts



from the fact that one and the same model can be recognized in two paintings, both of them very rembrandtesque (and earlier or later regarded as being Rembrandt self-portraits) though not acceptable as autograph and each by a different hand. One of these (no. C 98, in The Hague) offers a pose that can be interpreted as typical for a self-portrait[65], the other (in Detroit; our fig. 13)[66] shows a man with the same facial features but obviously painted by different artists. Both of them are — like several of the *tronies* based on Rembrandt's own appearance, and also like, for instance, the San Diego *Young man in gorget and plumed cap* (no. C 55; fig. 20) attributable to Isack Jouderville — of the type that used in contemporary inventories to be called 'een soldaet' (see note 59).

The final group of *tronies* that we must mention is that showing boys, mostly in a costume probably intended to be Polish. They seem to be connected, not always in an equally obvious way, with Rembrandt's workshop production in the early 1630s, but it is impossible to point to any autograph prototype for them[67]. Early documents do not, so far as we know, make any mention of the type; only later does one find descriptions of a 'Polakje' by Rembrandt[68].

History paintings

It is not easy to get a clear idea of what place history paintings occupied in the production of the workshop. Something could already be deduced from what has been said about the history painting copied after Rembrandt's prototype; but it is harder to define what the pupils composed by themselves in Rembrandt's style and with a greater or lesser use of his motifs. The sources mention them later, and even then less frequently, than the *tronies* after Rembrandt; yet one finds that the history painting 'door een discipel van Rembrandt (and sometimes moreover described as a 'principaal', i.e. an original) was a wellknown concept alongside work that went under the name of the pupil[69]. For us it is still hard however to recognize such work done in the studio and tell it from work the pupil did later on his own account. Thus it is unclear whether, in the year that (according to Houbraken) Govaert Flinck worked with Rembrandt and that must have been in 1633/34, he contributed any history paintings of his own to the production of the workshop; one can recognize his hand only in a *Lamentation* dated 1637[70], which is a free paraphrase of Rembrandt's grisaille of the same subject (no. A 107). Flinck had by then not been working with Rembrandt for some time (though he did, according to Sandrart and Baldinucci taken in conjunction, work for Hendrick Uylenburgh until 1639), but he obviously continued to keep closely in touch with the developments in Rembrandt's work. With Isack Jouderville, on the other hand, we know of no rembrandtesque history painting from the years after he left Rembrandt's studio (*c.* 1634?), though one can attribute to him a painting like the Denver *Minerva* (no. C 9) which must have been produced in the workshop in or soon after 1631. A number of motifs from recent work by Rembrandt (in this instance from his final years in Leiden) are worked into this painting in a way that from the technical and stylistic viewpoints can be termed very rembrandtesque. These are two criteria that apply, though not exclusively, to workshop pieces; a third, usable only if the material used as the support has

65 On this see Raupp op. cit. 61, pp. 181ff.

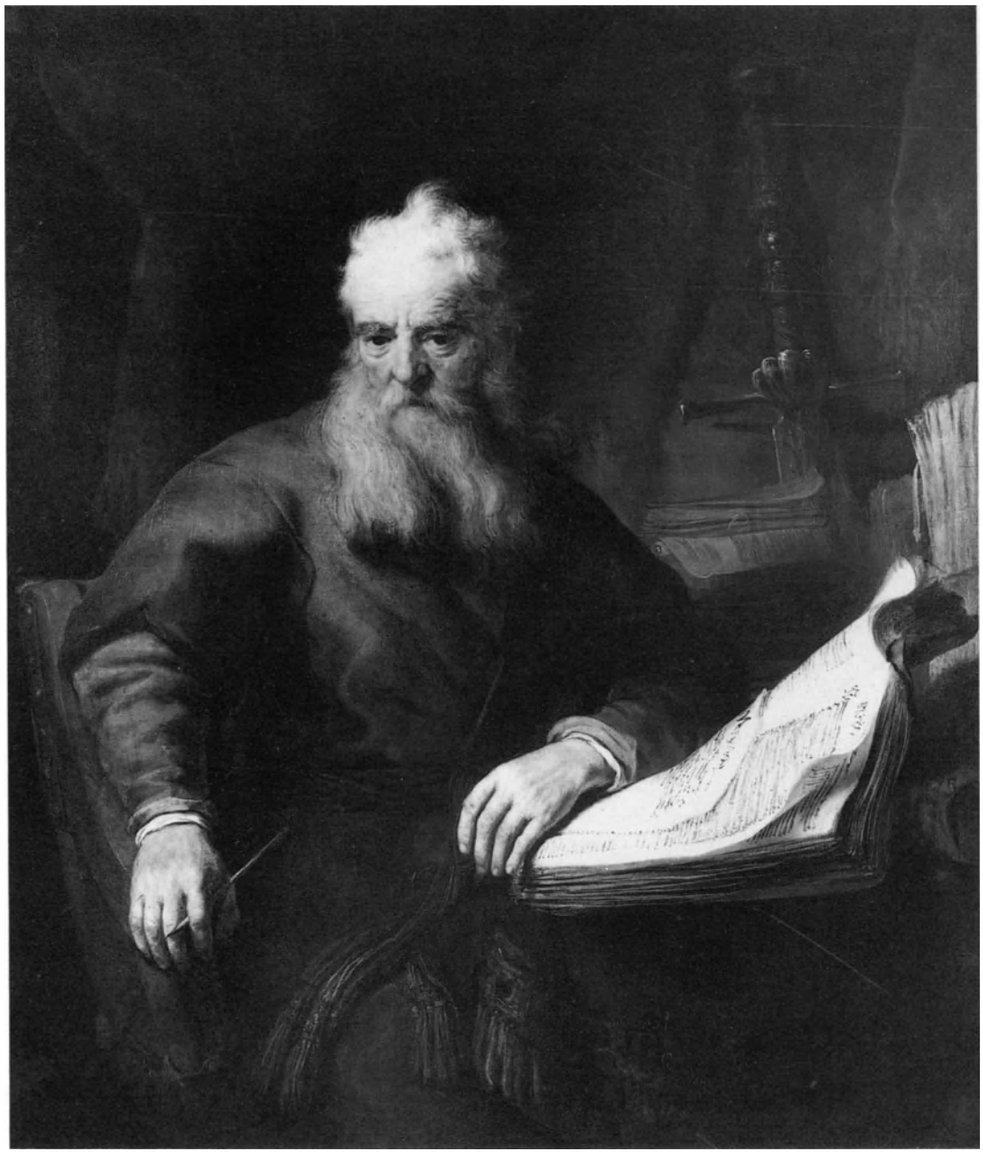
66 Br. 192, Bauch 158. See especially S. Slive, 'Rembrandt's Man wearing a plumed beret and gorget; a recent acquisition', *Bulletin of the Detroit Institute of Arts* 54 (1975), pp. 5–13.

67 Besides nos. C 62, C 63 and C 64, one must mention in this connexion paintings in the Wallace Collection and previously in the coll. Youssoupof (Br. 188 and 187). A head in the Philips collection in Eindhoven (Br. 189), a variant on Rembrandt's *Cupid blowing a soap-bubble* (no. A 91), appears to be a fragment; see the picture of a half-length figure, a boy in Polish costume beside a table bearing fruit (sale Amsterdam 21 May 1968, no. 210), certainly again a Vanitas picture.

68 Coll. Geertruida van de Polder, widow of Gerard Cocq, sale The Hague 2 October 1769 (Lugt 1781), no. 25: 'Een Polakje zeer uitvoerig geschildert door Rembrant van Rhyn, hoog 8 en een half, breet 6 duimen [= 22.1 × 13.2 cm]'. As a comparison, the *Bust of a boy in Polish costume* in the Wallace Collection (Br. 188) measures 20 × 17 cm.

69 'Een Abraham en Hagar, van een discipel van Rembrandt' in the estate of Nicolaes van Bambeeck the Younger in Amsterdam in 1671 (A.

Fig. 14. Rembrandt workshop, *The apostle Paul*, canvas 137 × 112.5 cm. Vienna, Kunsthistorisches Museum



been investigated, can be found in the relationship the panel or canvas used is seen to bear to other works from the workshop or by Rembrandt himself.

All three of these conditions are met to an almost ideal extent by the Vienna *Apostle Paul* (Br. 603; fig. 14). The motifs taken from Rembrandt stem in this case partly from his Leiden years — from etching B. 149 of *c.* 1629 or, more likely, from the preparatory drawing for it in the Louvre (Ben. 15). In its broad lines the motif comes from this, including the position of the arms and books and the colossal sword in the right background (which does not appear in the etching). The painting was for a long time, certainly for these reasons, looked on as a Rembrandt from around 1630[71]. Obstacles to this are however found in both the execution[72], which from

Bredius, *Künstler-Inventare* III, p. 1022) — perhaps identifiable with no. C 85 (see further, and that entry). 'Een heele groote schilderij daar vier mans in sijn, drie bijeen en een sittende, sijnde den hooftman Cornelius, sijnde een principael van een discipel van Reynbrant twintigh jaar geweest' (A quite large painting in which there are four men, three together and one seated, being the centurion Cornelius, an original by a disciple of Reynbrant twenty years since (?)) (Bredius op.cit. IV, p. 2146. J. Bruyn in: *O.H.* 98, 1984, p. 161), described as belonging to the possessions brought by the bridegroom into the marriage between Hildebrand van der Walle and Catharine Gruterus in Delft in 1672; most probably this is identical with the painting of *The Centurion Cornelius* in the Wallace Collection attributable to Willem Drost, which can perhaps on the basis of the puzzling phrase 'twintigh jaar geweest' be dated in 1652.

70 Von Moltke *Flinck*, no. 59; Sumowski *Gemälde* II, no. 612.

71 Thus still in Hofstede de Groot (HdG 180) and Bredius (Br. 603).

72 Both the colour, especially the over-reddish head, and the brushwork, which is lacking in rhythm and suggestion of depth.

Fig. 15. Rembrandt, *The Holy Family* (no. A 88), canvas 183.5 × 123 cm. Munich, Alte Pinakothek

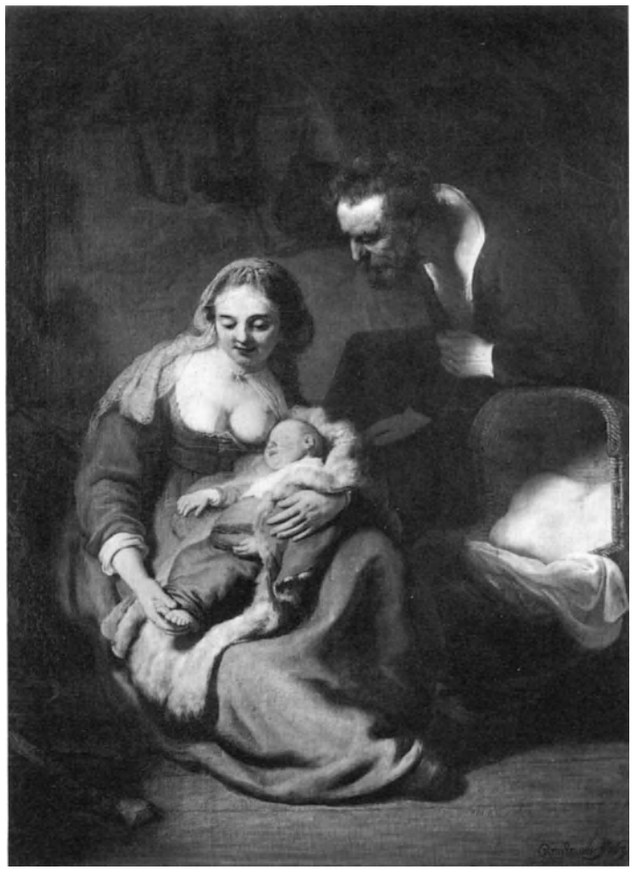


Fig. 16. Rembrandt workshop, *The rest on the flight into Egypt*, panel 73 × 58 cm. Berlin (West), Staatliche Museen Preussischer Kulturbesitz, Gemäldegalerie



quite early on prompted occasional doubts as to the Rembrandt attribution[73], and the composition. The spiral-like structure of the figure, accentuated by the swirling beard, differs fundamentally from the frontal treatment of the figure in the drawing and etching of *c.* 1629, and reminds one most of what is found in Rembrandt's work from the mid-1630s such as the figure of Mary in the Munich *Holy family* (no. A 88) and of Abraham in the Leningrad *Abraham's sacrifice* (no. A 108), or knee-length pieces like the *Minerva* (no. A 114). There are furthermore such similarities of detail and treatment with the last two of these (both dated 1635) that the style of the *Apostle Paul* can hardly be seen as other than a reflexion of Rembrandt's own style in that year. The date 163(.) now visible (read in the 18th century as 1636, and by Bode as 1635[74], is certainly in agreement with this. Investigation of the canvas used shows with amazing precision that this is indeed a work from Rembrandt's studio in the mid-1630s — it is identified as coming from the same bolt as the canvases of the Munich *Holy family* of *c.* 1634 (no. A 80), the *Cupid blowing a soap-bubble* of that year (no. A 91) and the Berlin *Samson threatening his father-in-law* of 1635 (no. A 109), plus a few pieces of canvas used for enlarging two grisailles around 1634/35 (nos. A 106 and A 107)[75]. On these grounds one may take it that the present painting was done in the workshop around 1635/36 and (because of both the execution and the borrowing of an earlier Rembrandt motif) by an assistant; unfortunately the latter must for the moment remain anonomous[76].

Another painting that can count as a workshop piece from these years is the *Rest on the flight into Egypt* in Berlin (fig. 16)[77]. Though in this case there has been no investigation of the oak panel used, the connexion with various Rembrandt works from 1633/34 and the ineptness with which borrowings have been used leave no doubt that it was done by a

73 The Vienna catalogue of 1884 by E. von Engerth had the first mention of Flinck. Benesch (*Rembrandt, Werk und Forschung*, Vienna 1935, p. 5) called the picture a workshop copy, but after Von Moltke (*Flinck*, pp. 18–19, no. 71) had accepted the Flinck attribution in 1965 this was adopted by Gerson (Br.-Gerson 603) — who also however saw Jan Lievens as a possibility! — and Sumowski (*Gemälde* II, no. 643). Compared with early works by Flinck such as the *Shepherd* in the Rembrandthuis in Amsterdam and the *Shepherdess* dated 1636 in Braunschweig (Sumowski op. cit., nos. 655 and 656), the *Apostle Paul* offers no specific points of resemblance to the characteristic somewhat slack treatment of those works. There is even less similarity to the work of Jacob Backer, whom Bauch saw (no. A 9) as a possibility (with retouches by Rembrandt).

74 W. Bode, *Studien zur Geschichte der holländischen Malerei*, Braunschweig 1883, p. 426; W. von Bode and C. Hofstede de Groot, *Rembrandt* I, Paris 1897, no. 35. As Dr Klaus Demus has been kind enough to inform us, reflectography of the signature in 1985 revealed dark marks under the present top layer, slightly higher up — two vertical and one L-shaped; he saw them as belonging to an *RHL*-monogram. The purpose and meaning of these marks are for the time being unclear.

Fig. 17. F. Bol, *The rest on the flight into Egypt*, 1644, canvas 203 × 261 cm. Dresden, Staatliche Kunstsammlungen Dresden, Gemäldegalerie Alte Meister



Fig. 18. F. Bol, *Isaac and Esau*, panel 57.3 × 69.6 cm. Geneva, art trade (1979)



beginner in Rembrandt's studio. The main prototype used was the Munich *Holy family* of *c.* 1634 (fig. 15); the figure of Mary is taken from this, though now without her artfully spiralling structure and with the head facing stiffly to the front. The latter is found to have been taken, together with a veil and pleated shirt, from Rembrandt's 1633 *Bust of a young woman* in Amsterdam (no. A 75), which we described earlier as a model for other *tronies*. Though the exact origin of the leaning figure of Joseph has still to be determined, it is already clear that the Berlin painting is a rather primitive compilation done by a hand that (certainly where the unhappy execution of the trees and landscape are concerned) is not recognizable in any other work. Remarkably, a number of divergences from Rembrandt's *Holy family* — the addition of Mary's awkward left foot, the different posture of her right arm[78] and the child's left arm, the fringe on the blanket, and so on — are taken over item-for-item years later by Ferdinand Bol, in his 1644 *Rest on the flight into Egypt* in Dresden (fig. 17)[79]. When painting this work — one of the first he executed in a new style, definitely less rembrandtesque than that of his earlier works — Bol will certainly have had the Berlin workshop piece in front of him. One can perhaps see in the function the latter had in the transmission of Rembrandt's 'inventions' an analogy for the role that, as suggested earlier, workshop copies may have had as a model for later reproduction in the studio.

Thus one time and again finds motifs taken from Rembrandt being used by pupils not only during their work in his studio but afterwards as well. In many cases where the pupil's signature — the hallmark of his independence — is absent it is consequently unclear in which phase such paintings should be placed. This uncertainty applies, for instance, to the painting of *Isaac and Esau* (see no. A 119 copy 1; fig. 18), the attribution of which to Bol[80] is confirmed by the fact that a preparatory drawing for the figures has been recognized as being by Bol[81]. The setting for the Old Testament scene is a faithful copy after Rembrandt's *Danae* in Leningrad (no. A 119), so faithful that Bol's painting can serve as a document for the original format of the *Danae* before it was drastically reduced. One could therefore easily believe one was dealing with a painting done in Rembrandt's workshop; but Bol used the same setting in a work that he certainly produced only after leaving the studio, the Dublin *David's dying charge to Solomon* signed and dated 1643 (see no. A 119 copy 2 and fig. 8 there). Though it can be assumed, from what we know of Bol's early development, that the *Isaac and Esau* was done earlier, one cannot tell for sure whether the painting was produced before or after he set up as a painter in his own right. We are on rather firmer ground with the *Departure of the Shunamite woman* in the Victoria & Albert Museum, London (no. C 85); this unhappily far from intact painting displays such evident though freely interpreted reminiscences of

75 See Vol. II, pp. 24 and 27.

76 The idea of it being a copy after a lost Rembrandt original is less likely, for two reasons. In the first place there is no known analogy in his autograph work for so close a link with a much earlier composition by Rembrandt; and in the second the X-ray shows that Paul's left hand was executed in the underpainting as resting against his chest, and was given its present position only later — something that does not point to its being a copy.

77 Oak panel 73 × 58 cm, Staatliche Museen Preussischer Kulturbesitz, Gemäldegalerie (cat. 815 B). Attributed to Flinck by Von Moltke (*Flinck*, no. 48) without sound reason.

78 Obviously the gesture, coming from an longstanding tradition based on Byzantine prototypes, of the Mary in Rembrandt holding the feet of her child (see J. Bruyn in: *Simiolus* 4, 1970, pp. 36–38), no longer held any meaning for the pupil.

79 Blankert *Bol*, no. 16 (where the similarity is pointed out); Sumowski *Gemälde* I, no. 81.

80 E. van de Wetering, 'Het formaat van Rembrandts "Danae" ', in: M. Adang et al. ed., *Met eigen ogen. Opstellen aangeboden . . . aan Hans L.C. Jaffé*, Amsterdam 1984, pp. 62–72, esp. 67–69.

81 Pen and wash 18 × 14.2 cm, whereabouts unknown; Sumowski *Drawings* I, no. 199 (dated in the early 1640s).

Rembrandt's 1637 etching of *The dismissal of Hagar* (B. 30) and his 1640 painting of the *Visitation* in Detroit (nó. A 138) that it does seem natural to think of it as a workshop piece. The highly unusual subject, first recognized for what it is by Tümpel, very soon gave rise to confusion with the far better-known one of the dismissal of Hagar, probably in the second quarter of the 18th century but possibly even earlier; the mention of 'een Abraham en Hagar, van een discipel van Rembrandt' owned by Nicolaes van Bambeeck Jnr. in 1671 could, as Schwartz has suggested, very well relate to this work. As inscription the painting bears a clearly non-autograph Rembrandt signature and the plausible date of 1640; in view of the resemblances with Bol's style in his earliest signed works from 1641[82], there is every likelihood that he was the 'discipel' responsible for the painting.

There are still a number of other paintings that are candidates for being regarded as workshop products. They include, for instance, the *Bathsheba* in a private collection in Berlin[83], a painting of modest quality in which — much as with Jouderville's *Minerva* (no. C 9) — motifs from Rembrandt's Leiden work are combined with a later prototype, in this case the Ottawa *Young woman at her toilet* of *c.* 1632/33 (no. A 64). One can also think of works such as the *Flight into Egypt* previously in the Lord Wharton collection (no. C 47), where the motif of Joseph plodding along is based on one of Rembrandt's earliest etchings (B. 54) but the style of painting points to it having been done in the later 1630s. And most of all there is the intriguing Leningrad *Descent from the Cross* (no. C 49), which carries a spurious signature and the probably misleading date of 1634, and where Rembrandt's interpretation of 1632/33 of the same subject (no. A 65) has been varied in a manner that would seem to betray a later pictorial style and, moreover, different temperaments. To this must be added, however, that the canvas probably comes from the same bolt as that of the Leningrad *Flora* dated 1634 (no. A 93)[84], which practically proves that it originated in Rembrandt's studio but also makes a much later dating not really likely. Ought one to assume that several hands worked on this one painting, at intervals? In one way this would provide an analogy for the *Rest on the flight into Egypt* (no. C 6), a work that appears to have been started by a Leiden pupil of Rembrandt (Gerard Dou?), and given a new landscape by Govaert Flinck in 1633/34 in Amsterdam[85]. So far little progress has been made in discovering how far the products of Rembrandt's workshop were executed by more than one hand. It was commented at the start of this essay that in this respect matters seem to have been quite different from what was usual in Rubens' studio; nonetheless, documents do a number of times[86] mention collaboration — between Rembrandt and a pupil, or between two pupils — and in a few, rare instances (such as the *Rest on the flight into Egypt* just mentioned) the notion of different hands becomes apparent. There is however no convincing evidence in the material that has survived for the supposition that, on any large scale, Rembrandt sought assistance when executing his history paintings; and the idea of two or more pupils working together stands up to critical examination only in exceptional cases[87].

Portraits

The idea that portrait commissions, too, might have been carried out in the studio by assistants is not supported by any explicit statements in contemporaneous documents. Yet the thought is not really all that surprising. Speaking generally, the lowly position of portrait-painting in the hierarchy of the genres leads to the assumption that the portrait was looked on as par excellence something suitable for the inexperienced to cut their teeth on. More particularly we know from Sandrart that Flinck, during the years he worked for Uylenburgh, also painted portraits, and by analogy one may take it that he had done so earlier for Rembrandt (as Rembrandt himself had probably also done for Uylenburgh)[88]. Finally, we know of portraitists whose assistants took an active part in their production; Michiel Jansz. van Mierevelt, Anthonie van Dyck and Hyacinthe Rigaud provide widely differing examples of this. What in practice they shared, however, is that the execution of clothing and other accessories was left to the assistant, and it is precisely this that appears to have been only exceptionally the case with Rembrandt. One such exception must have been the London *Portrait of Philips Lucasz.* of 1635 (no. A 115), where the background and head may be seen as autograph beyond suspicion, but where the lace collar and gold chain are in their execution so lacking in clarity of form that one has to suppose that the master left these passages to an assistant. Mostly, however, one

82 The year 1641 is on *The angel appearing to Gideon* in the Rijksmuseum Het Catherijneconvent, Utrecht, which bears the signature *fB*(joined)*ol* (Blankert *Bol*, no. 11; Sumowski *Gemälde* I, no. 79). An identical signature, which does not appear on later works (and is doubted by Blankert), is also on the *Liberation of Peter* (also, though wrongly, doubted by Blankert) in the coll. Pieter K. Baaij, Schoten (Blankert *Bol*, no. D 4; Sumowski *Gemälde* I, no. 78).

83 Oak panel 54 × 47.5 cm (Br. 495); exhibn cat. *Holländische Malerei aus Berliner Privatbesitz*, Berlin 1984, no. 52 (with colour illus.). Copy at Leiden, Stedelijk Museum De Lakenhal, cat. 1949 no. 177 (panel 67.1 × 51.5 cm).

84 See Vol. II, pp. 24 and 28.

85 See Vol. II, pp. 848–854, where the painting is related to the description (by Ferdinand Bol and Gerrit Uylenburgh!) of 'Een Josep en Maria van Gerrit Douw en Flinck' in the estate of Laurens Mauritsz. Douci drawn up in Amsterdam on 18 January 1669 (A. Bredius, *Künstler-Inventare* II, p. 423).

86 Apart from the description quoted in the previous note, see for

Fig. 19. I. Jouderville, *Bust of a young man (self-portrait?)*, detail. Dublin, National Gallery of Ireland

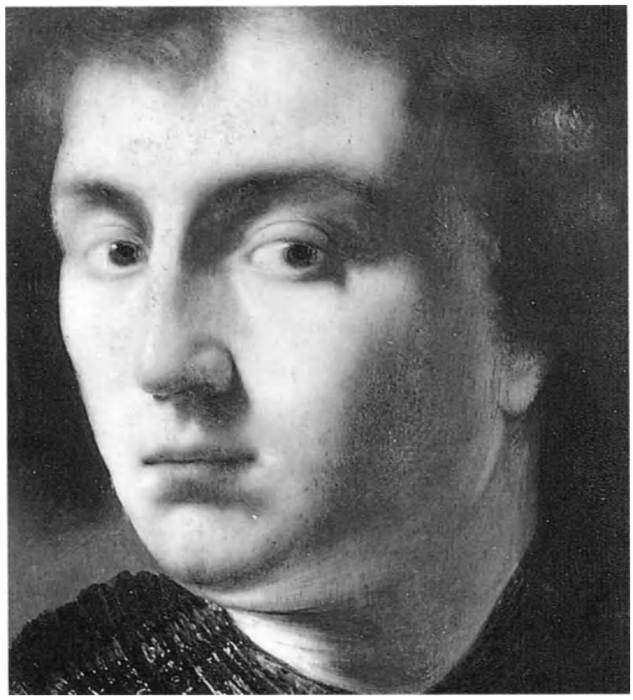


Fig. 20. Rembrandt workshop (I. Jouderville), *Bust of a young man in a gorget and plumed cap*, 1631 (no. C 55), detail. San Diego, Cal., San Diego Museum of Art



is dealing with portraits that, if they are not by Rembrandt himself, seem to have been painted in their entirety by another hand. An example of this is the companion-piece to the *Philips Lucasz.*, the *Portrait of Petronella Buys* (no. C 111), which differs so much from Rembrandt's own portraits in execution that it has to be ascribed to someone else, probably the same workshop assistant who painted the accessories in the man's portrait. In Rembrandt one can at least once find the situation of one of a pair of portraits having been done by an assistant[89].

Belief in the involvement of assistants naturally becomes more acceptable, and our picture of the part they played in production clearer, as it becomes possible to form groups of portraits in which the characteristics of a single hand can be detected in a variety of appearances and combinations, and possibly further than that to identify this hand as that of an artist known in his own right. This seems to be the case with Isack Jouderville, the only pupil who may be assumed to have followed Rembrandt from Leiden to Amsterdam in 1631, and who has already been discussed as the author of copies after Rembrandt and of rembrandtesque *tronies* and history paintings in the early 1630s. As we have explained before[90], various workshop pieces can be attributed to Jouderville on the grounds of common characteristics and resemblance with the only signed rembrandtesque painting by him we know of — the Dublin *Bust of a young man* (fig. 19) —, the differences between them being explicable as resulting from variations in the prototypes by Rembrandt himself. This ambiguity — which can of course lead to a wider or narrower range of attributions depending on whether one is generous in allowing discrepancies or strict about accepting similarities — typifies the problem that a workshop production like that of Rembrandt presents us with.

This seems the proper place to look at this problem, because one knows that Jouderville did, during his later career in Leiden after 1636, paint portraits and may thus well have been involved in earlier years in Rembrandt's studio production in this field. His work may be expected to show very close resemblances to Rembrandt's own portraits from the early 1630s in terms of composition and motifs, and at the same time to display Jouderville's by now familiar idiosyncracies. The point of

example the cryptic mention of a 'Rembrandt and Gerrit Dou' in the inventory of the estate of the dealer Johannes de Renialme drawn up in Amsterdam on 27 June 1657 (A. Bredius, *Künstler-Inventare* I, p. 235).

87 A typical example of this is the Amsterdam *Beheading of John the Baptist* described in the 18th century (sale Amsterdam 16ff September 1760, Lugt 1111, no. 89) as 'in the manner of Rembrandt', and in the 19th century regarded as by Rembrandt and subsequently as the work of Carel Fabritius and Govaert Flinck. C. Brown (*Carel Fabritius*, Oxford 1981, p. 28 and no. R 1) called the picture, probably rightly, 'the work of a Rembrandt pupil of the middle or later 1630s'.

88 On this see Vol. II, pp. 57–59. Sandrart says of Flinck: 'Er hielte sich lange Jahre auf bey dem berühmten Kunsthändler Ulenburg, dem er viel ausbündige herrliche Contrafäten von eigner Hand hinterlassen' (ed. Peltzer, op.cit.[3], p. 194).

89 See the pair of portraits in Vienna (nos. A 45 and C 80).

90 See Vol. II, pp. 76–87, esp. 84–85, and E. v.d. Wetering, op. cit.[27].

Fig. 21. Rembrandt workshop (I. Jouderville), *Portrait of a woman*, 1632 (no. C 69), detail. New York, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, The H.O. Havemeyer Coll.



Fig. 22. Rembrandt, *Portrait of a young woman*, 1632 (no. A 55), detail. Vienna, Akademie der bildenden Künste in Wien, Gemäldegalerie



departure for pinpointing the latter remains the signed painting in Dublin, just mentioned. If we look for a moment only at the face turned to the light in this picture, we see that it has a fairly strong demarcation between the lit and shadowed parts, partly through the latter having a remarkably smooth and rather opaque appearance; the very linear delineation of the eyes emphasizes their slitlike nature. If one adds to this the singularly chaotic indication of ornament in the shawl using confused highlights, one has a stylistic specification that is matched so perfectly by a coherent group that they can be seen as typical of Jouderville's style and (if the inscription on the Dublin portrait can be regarded as evidence of his achieving his independence) coming from around the end of his activity with Rembrandt, probably *c.* 1635[91]. The same features can be found in a less pronounced form, in what one may assume to be an earlier group of works, bearing a clearer relationship to prototypes from Rembrandt's hand. We have already mentioned as such Rembrandt's *Self-portrait* of *c.* 1629 in The Hague (no. A 21), the 1631 *Artist in oriental costume* in the Petit Palais (no. A 40) — which Jouderville copied! — and the 1632 *Portrait of a young man* in a private collection (no. A 60)[92]. The *Portrait of a young man in a gorget and plumed cap* in San Diego (no. C 55; fig. 20) is very close to the lastnamed work, but at the same time shows traces of Jouderville's style in several respects. An attribution to the latter, which in Vol. II was still 'looked on as no more than a cautious suggestion', is persuasive in that it also provides an explanation for the origin of the artist's later style as we know it from the Dublin painting and similar works. The diagrammatic handling of modelling and chiaroscuro found here recurs in the San Diego piece where however it has a far stronger rembrandtesque stamp. If one takes account of the amorphous ornamentation on the gorget, the attribution becomes even more convincing.

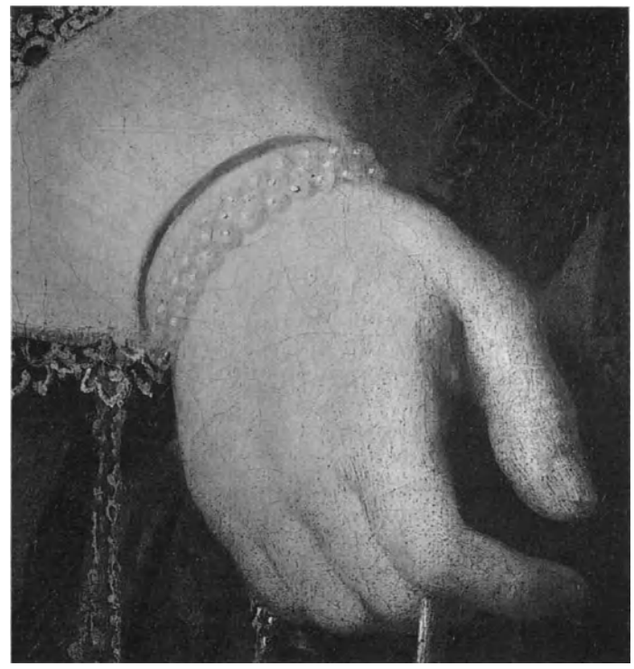
This attribution now offers immediate interest for assessing what part Jouderville played in the workshop production of portraits, and in particular for recognizing his hand in the New York *Portrait of a woman* dated 1632 (no. C 69; fig. 21). As we have already said[93], this work displays more obviously Jouderville-like characteristics than the San Diego picture. The almost smooth and continuous paint in the shadows of the head, and the strangely flat effect this creates, represent a variant on Rembrandt's portrait style in the early 1630s that can hardly be interpreted as other than as exactly matching Jouderville's development. In the eyes here we meet (perhaps for the first time) a slitlike effect familiar from various other later works, and due partly to a slight bend in the drawing of the upper eyelid; the disordered and unsuggestive highlights and sheens in various parts of the costume are also very close indeed to Jouderville's style. At the same time the New York woman's portrait gives an insight into how the artist drew on Rembrandt's prototype. A head such as that in the 1632 *Portrait of a young woman* in the Vienna Akademie der bildenden Künste (no. A 55; fig. 22), where the shadow area though

91 See Vol. II, p. 83, figs. 33, 34 and 35.
92 See Vol. II, pp. 84–87.
93 See Vol. II, p. 87.

Fig. 23. Rembrandt, *Portrait of a young woman*, 1632 (no. A 55), detail. Vienna, Akademie der bildenden Künste in Wien, Gemäldegalerie



Fig. 24. Rembrandt workshop (I. Jouderville), *Portrait of a woman*, 1632 (no. C 69), detail. New York, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, The H.O. Havemeyer Coll.



more sensitively modelled also gives a flattish effect, and a certain stylization clearly wins out over detail, must have made an impression on him and prompted his lopsided interpretation of Rembrandt's style. When one notices that the right hand in the Vienna *Portrait of a young woman* (fig. 23) is used almost unaltered in the New York picture, despite the addition of a fan (fig. 24), then it becomes likely that it was precisely this painting that Jouderville took as his model. In this detail one sees the difference between prototype and derivative at least as clearly as in the heads — in the Vienna portrait, lightly stylized contours and a discreet chiaroscuro are enough to evoke the intended shape, while in the New York hand there seems to be no real feeling for shape at all, and the same formula results in a misdrawing that lacks any power. The other hand, however, was finalised only after a radical change, and the outcome suggests that Rembrandt here intervened in his assistant's work as he appears to have done more than once in drawings.

The main reason why, in Vol. II, the New York woman's portrait was regarded as definitely a workshop piece but the attribution to Jouderville was judged only a remote possibility lay in the associated man's portrait (no. C 68)[94]. This work, which because of the manner of painting must certainly be ascribed to the same hand, indeed does not exhibit such evident similarities to Jouderville's style (though this is not entirely absent in the rendering of the collar and cuffs); yet the prototype used and the effect it had on the young painter provides a ready explanation for this. Just as Rembrandt's young woman in the Vienna Academy was used as the model for various components of the woman's portrait, so one can recognize in its companion-piece — the Kassel *Portrait of a man trimming his quill* of 1632 (no. A 54) — the prototype for the head in the man's portrait (see figs. 25 and 26). Though the result is, especially in the modelling of the forehead and right eye, less diagrammatic (and thus less Jouderville-like), the way the shadow side of the face is treated as an almost uniform surface can be seen as based on the same interpretation of Rembrandt's example as one sees in the woman's portrait. Because of this, and of the convincing similarity the lastnamed work shows to Jouderville's style, one may take it that the surprising quality seen in the man's portrait (directly explicable by his using the Rembrandt as his model) is part of the potential he deployed in portraits that are still to be recognized as his.

With regard to the composition of the two New York portraits it has to be commented that, as we have already said[95], this follows a scheme employed a number of times in Rembrandt's workshop around 1632/33. Obviously, the assistant had prototypes that he was allowed to use with a certain amount of freedom. In the case of the man's portrait there is so much similarity to the 1632 *Portrait of Marten Looten* in Los Angeles (no. A 52) that this, or a similar painting, could have provided the basis.

94 See Vol. II, pp. 748–750.

95 See Vol. II, p. 749 and 750 figs. 7 and 8.

Fig. 25. Rembrandt, *Portrait of a man trimming his quill*, 1632 (no. A 54), detail. Kassel, Staatliche Kunstsammlungen Kassel, Schloss Wilhelmshöhe

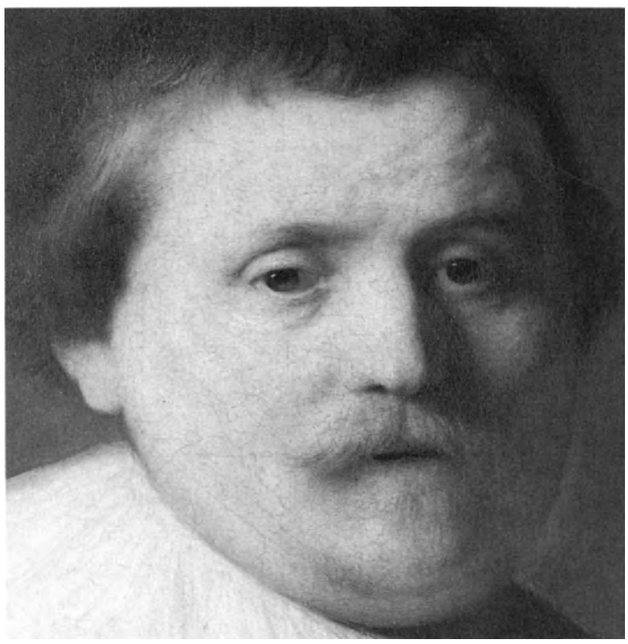


Fig. 26. Rembrandt workshop (I. Jouderville), *Portrait of a man*, 1632 (no. C 68), detail. New York, The Metropolitan Museum, The H.O. Havemeyer Coll.



As the New York portraits demonstrate, the assistant executing such work was nonetheless able to a substantial extent to place his own stamp on the product. When seen as part of the workshop production they represent quite clearly one tendency that can be detected in Rembrandt's autograph portraits. They mirror a limited aspect of his portrait style determined more by juxtaposing light and dark areas treated as fields than by a distinct indication of form, and more by a fairly opaque use of paint than by an alternation of opaque luminosities and translucent shadows. This stylistic feature can also be found in other portraits from the early and middle 1630s, but how far Jouderville can be seen as responsible for these as well it is hard to say; answering the question is of course made difficult by the fact that stylistic similarities like this might very well come from a similar interpretation of the same prototypes painted by Rembrandt. Indeed, the resemblance of the pair of bust portraits from 1632/33 in Braunschweig (nos. C 70 and 71) with the works in New York attributable to Jouderville would appear to be ascribable only to Rembrandt's influence. The intensity put into the plastic rendering of certain details (e.g. the eyes in the woman's portrait), and a slightly differing use of colour (which includes a orangish brown) seem proof enough that another hand was involved here. The same (for the moment anonymous) hand can probably be recognized in a woman's portrait (later altered into a kind of sibyl) owned by the University of Los Angeles (no. C 115) and bearing the date 1635 that was written on the second background and must thus be viewed with some reserve. Against this, the 1633 *Portrait of a young woman* in a private collection (no. C 81), with its rather enamel-like surface and diagrammatic indication of form, again bears more resemblance to the work of Jouderville. The *Portrait of Petronella Buys* already mentioned (no. C 111) bears a general resemblance to these works, but alongside this there are idiosyncracies that make it impossible to attribute it convincingly to any one of the hands described above.

Besides this group of what, to oversimplify, one can term smoothly-painted portraits there is a group whose appearance is determined by a more forceful brushwork, a more contrasty rendering of form and a greater variation between opaque and translucently painted passages. The starting point for this style was provided by another trend in Rembrandt's work that showed itself increasingly from 1633 on, not only in *tronies* — like the two 1633 self-portraits in the Louvre (nos. A 71 and 72) — but also in commissioned portraits like those of Johannes Wtenbogaert (no. A 80) and of an unknown man (Jan Harmensz. Krul?) in Kassel (no. A 81). Linked with this tendency in general, and probably with the lastnamed work in particular, there is the Dresden *Portrait of a man* dated 1633 (no. C 77), which precisely because of its broad and audacious treatment we connect tentatively with Govaert Flinck, together with the Berlin *Bust of Rembrandt* mentioned earlier (no. C 56). This attribution would fit in well with the date of Flinck's arrival in the workshop and would cast light on his contribution to its production. However, until such time as an acceptable transition is discovered to Flinck's typical style as we can follow

it in his development from 1636 onwards, the idea can be no more than conjectural.

A somewhat related group that can be identified as a distinct entity is formed by a number of bust portraits that, according to the dates they bear, come from 1634 and 1635. This includes a pair in Boston (nos. C 72 and C 73), a woman's portrait in Edinburgh (no. C 82), a man's portrait in an American private collection (no. C 104) and possibly — though it is difficult to say for sure — a woman's portrait in Cleveland (no. C 105). What the first four of these especially have in common can be summed up as a manner of painting that though sometimes quite effective often provides little suggestion of plasticity and tends towards the slovenly; in the heads this leads to an overemphasis on linear elements, and in the costume (collars in particular) a somewhat unclear structure and rendering of materials. It is quite obvious that autograph Rembrandt portraits from 1633 and '34 served as the models for these works. One can think, for instance, of the 1633 *Portrait of a man* in Kassel mentioned a moment ago (no. A 81), and of women's portraits like that of a young woman done in 1633 (no. A 84) and of Oopjen Coppit from 1634 (no. A 101). Yet comparison also makes it clear that the essence of the subtle means the master used to obtain his three-dimensional effects — the understated indication of line, and the articulation between half-shadows and reflexions of light — eluded the assistant. What became of this anonymous artist after 1635 one does not for the time being really know.

Besides these groups of portraits in which aspects of Rembrandt's style plainly set the tone and gave rise to a thoroughly rembrandtesque treatment, there are works where his influence is far less obvious. One example of this is the *Portrait of a couple*, from 1632/33, in the Stewart Gardner Museum in Boston (no. C 67); though the handling of chiaroscuro especially gives the whole a rembrandtesque feel, the pose of the figures and stylization of details differ so much from what one knows from Rembrandt — on the former point one thinks of the 1633 *Portrait of the shipbuilder Jan Rijcksen and his wife* (no. A 77), and on the latter of the 1632 *Portrait of Maurits Huygens* (no. A 57) — that one can see in it neither Rembrandt's design nor his hand. One tends to think rather in terms of a young artist trained elsewhere who worked in Rembrandt's studio for a short while, and from whose hand one cannot with certainty identify any other work done in the same manner[96].

The picture of an artist like this naturally comes into sharper focus as it becomes possible to point to more work by him, thus finding a broader basis for our view of his personal characteristics. This seems to be possible with a painter who must have been affected by Rembrandt's work in 1634, rather later than the foregoing, and then worked his impressions into two portraits known to us — the *Portrait of Antonie Coopal* dated 1635 on loan to the Boston Museum of Fine Arts (no. C 108) and the New York *Portrait of a 70-year-old woman* from the same year (no. C 112). What these share, despite a substantial difference in subject and the resultant treatment — and the reason for attributing them to a single hand — is the use of remarkably straight and sometimes fairly long and quite broad brushstrokes, and of abrupt accents for shadows and lights; the outcome is a distinctly un-Rembrandtlike brushstroke image and quality of chiaroscuro. The resemblance between the two, and the relation to Rembrandt's work, are apparent only as one becomes aware that two different prototypes by him were used as a model. The basis for the *Coopal* is a type — the bust with hands, amply framed — that curiously we know only from two examples later made into ovals, the London *Portrait of Philips Lucasz.* of 1635 (no. A 115) and the *Portrait of a man* from the same year in an American private collection (no. C 104). The similarity to the Philips Lucasz. the angle at which the face is seen and the distribution of light is so great that one may assume that it or a similar work served as a prototype, however much the idiosyncratic execution makes this hard to recognize. The use of a Rembrandt prototype is even less obvious in the *Portrait of a 70-year-old woman*, with its almost Frans Hals-like hands and the rough rendering of the costume; yet here too use has been made, even though only superficially, of a Rembrandt prototype. The composition is taken partially from the 1634 full-length *Portrait of Maria Bockenolle* in Boston (no. A 99), and the basis for the remarkable, almost graphical treatment of the wrinkled head is the forceful brushwork in pieces like the London *Portrait of an 83-year-old woman* from the same year (no. A 104). One can only conclude that Rembrandt's assistants interpreted and used his prototype in widely varying ways, and that practice in the workshop left room for considerable freedom in this respect.

After what appears to be a short break in the production of portraits by assistants, it resumed from about 1640 on. This was the period when Rembrandt was painting the *Night watch* (no. A 146), but when also one finds in his single portraits a move towards a more subtle modelling and a style aimed at an atmospheric impression of depth; and this move is reflected in the shopwork as well. Coupled with this shared tendency, the few autograph portraits show quite marked differences in the

96 Despite a matching pose by the model in the *Portrait of a woman* in Vienna (no. C 80), there is insufficient reason to think of the same hand being involved (see *Comments* under that entry).

Fig. 27. Rembrandt workshop (F. Bol?), *Portrait of Elisabeth Jacobsdr. Bas*, detail. Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum



Fig. 28. Rembrandt workshop (F. Bol?), *Portrait of a young woman*, detail. Dublin, National Gallery of Ireland



degree of emphasis that is placed on various pictorial elements. In the 1639 *Portrait of a young woman (Maria Trip?)* in Amsterdam (no. A 131) there is the careful handling of paint, sometimes blending and at other times descreetly graphical, used to lend the silver-coloured banister and the model physical presence, and something of the kind can be said about the London *Self-portrait* of 1640 (no. A 139) where an illusionistic effect of depth is likewise provided by an architectural feature in the extreme foreground. In the 1640 portraits of the Doomer/Martens couple in New York and Leningrad (nos. A 140 and A 141) the atmospheric effect is heightened by a sophisticated interplay of rather unsharp brushstrokes, and in those of the Van Bambeeck/Bas couple of 1641 in Brussels and Buckingham Palace (nos. A 144 and A 145) a far-reaching simplification of plastic form is combined with an illusion (created by the painted framing) of a space that encompasses both the sitter and the viewer. These variants, each with its own stylistic peculiarities, have all left their traces in the workshop production of portraits.

The style of the *Maria Trip*, with its almost chubbily-done flesh areas and crisp detail in costume passages, seems to have provided the immediate model for at least two portraits (both of which have of course previously been attributed to Rembrandt), one of an old and the other of a young woman; these are the *Portrait of Elisabeth Bas* in the Amsterdam Rijksmuseum[97], and the *Portrait of a young woman* (unfortunately reduced on all four sides and badly worn especially in the head) in Dublin[98]. Both display a certain soberness in flesh areas and costume, and lack the refinement with which Rembrandt achieved pictorial unity between sitter and surroundings; in both of them the most interesting (and in the Dublin painting the best preserved) passage is provided by the hands and the objects they are holding — a handkerchief in one case and gloves in the other (see figs. 27 and 28). It was mainly because of this passage, pictorially the most successful, that already in 1911 Bredius attributed the *Portrait of Elisabeth Bas* quite emphatically to Ferdinand Bol, with whose name Sumowski later coupled the Dublin painting as well[99]. The similarities with Bol's known signed and dated portraits from 1642[100] cannot be termed decisive, but there is enough resemblance in the treatment to warrant the assumption that Bol painted portraits like these when he worked in Rembrandt's studio. It is not impossible that the same hand (and as Gerson suggested, that of Bol) was responsible for the *Portrait of Anna Wijmer* dated 1641 in the Six Collection in Amsterdam (no. C 113). The collar and rest of the costume in this portrait have the same sobriety as those in the *Elisabeth Bas*, and a tendency to soften contours seen in the head is in line both with Rembrandt's development in 1640/41 (clearest in the Van Bambeeck/Bas portraits) and with what we know of Bol's signed portraits from 1642 onwards.

The deceptive simplicity of execution marking the portraits of the Doomer couple — a combination of greatly simplified structure for the bust with a subtly-varied brushwork in the heads — hardly lent itself to an imitation in toto. Their composition must however also have had an influence outside the studio; that much is plain from the man's portrait by Flinck in the Thyssen-Bornemisza collection also dated 1640[101], where this painter — some six years after he had left Rembrandt's workshop — was still keeping his eye firmly fixed on the latter's latest work. One sees the same influence in a pair of

97 Canvas 118 × 91.5 cm; Blankert *Bol*, no. R 200; see also note 99.

98 Canvas 72 × 62 cm; Sumowski *Gemälde* I, no. 59. The painting has obviously been trimmed down on all four sides.

99 A. Bredius in a number of articles, including *O.H.* 29 (1911), pp. 193–197; *Burl. Mag.* 20 (1911/12), pp. 330–341, and 24 (1913/14), pp. 217–218, 260; *Festschrift für Max J. Friedländer*, Leipzig 1927, pp. 156–160. The Bol attribution, fairly generally accepted after a substantial amount of argument, was rejected by Blankert (*Bol*, p. 57, no. R 200) who reattributed the work to 'Rembrandt (and an assistant?)'.

100 See in particular women's portraits in East Berlin and Baltimore (Blankert *Bol*, nos. 117 and 121; Sumowski *Gemälde* I, no. 160).

101 Von Moltke *Flinck*, no. 529; Sumowski *Gemälde* II, no. 695.

Fig. 29. Rembrandt workshop, *Portrait of a man*, canvas 120 × 92 cm. Shelburne, Vermont, Shelburne Museum



Fig. 30. Rembrandt workshop, *Portrait of a woman*, canvas 106 × 91.5 cm. London, The Iveagh Bequest, Kenwood (English Heritage)



pendants, probably from 1642, in the coll. Duke of Westminster (nos. C 106 and C 107) that belong among the most remarkable output of Rembrandt's studio. In manner of painting they resemble least of all the Doomer portraits, at least where subtle execution of the heads is concerned. A tendency to a rather angular style in the man's portrait makes one think rather of what one sees in some of the heads in the *Night watch*[102]. One is moreover surprised in both the man's and the woman's portrait by bold strokes of colour in the lit flesh areas; a similar approach to colour can also be found in the Toronto *Portrait of a woman* (no. C 114) and, in less developed form, in the *Bust of Rembrandt* in Pasadena mentioned earlier (no. C 97). Thinking of the later work of Carel Fabritius and the significance colour was to assume in this, it seems justified to recognize in this group some of his earliest works, done in Rembrandt's workshop and representing a hitherto unknown rembrandtesque face in his stylistic development[103].

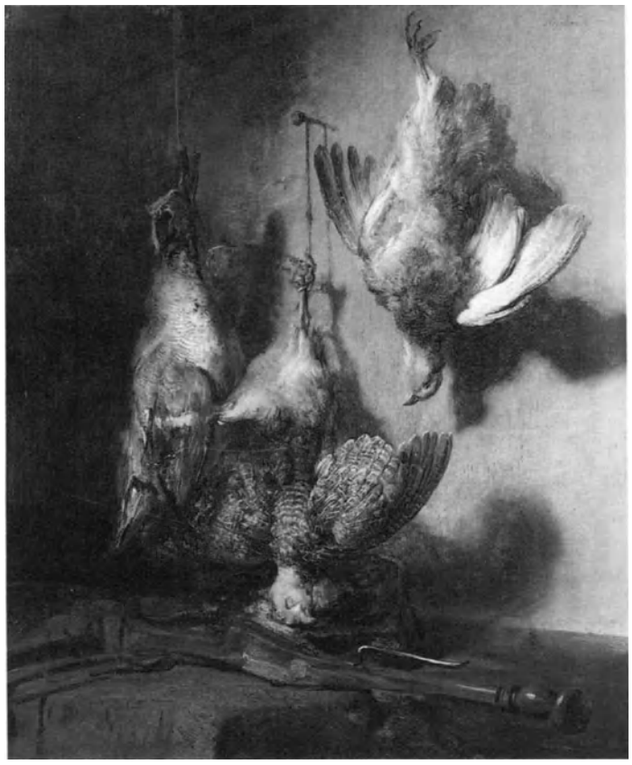
In a final group of portraits one can see the influence of Rembrandt's portraits of the Van Bambeeck/Bas couple and in particularly of the spatial effect these share with the London *Self-portrait* of 1640. The way the latter painting was for years on end to influence the work of Flinck, Van den Eeckhout and, in particular, Bol had to do mainly with the pose of the body, though to a lesser extent also with the effect of depth given by the motif of the sill. Compared to this the influence of the Van Bambeeck portraits was fairly shortlived, and limited mostly to the diffuse lighting of the figures and their relation to a vaguely-indicated space. This is, remarkably, added as an afterthought in the form of a somewhat foreshortened opening to the *Portrait of a man in a doorway* (no. C 110), the date of which can best be read as 1641. The addition is not happily integrated with the lighting and spatial composition, nor with the execution — extraordinarily precise and emphatic in the costume and relatively broad (with little plasticity) in the face — of the whole. Another hand has produced its own variations on the theme of the Van Bambeeck portraits[104], with a greater mastery and unity of stylistic means, in a

102 See, for example, the heads of Sergeant Reyer Engelen and the militiaman between the captain and the lieutenant (numbered 1 and 17).

103 See, apart from the catalogue entries in question, the article soon to be published by Mr. F.J. Duparc, Montreal, who independently arrived at the same conclusion with regard to three of the four paintings.

104 The man's portrait (canvas 120 × 92 cm; HdG 766), now in the Shelburne Museum, Shelburne, Vermont, and the woman's portrait (canvas 108 × 93.5 cm, evidently reduced at the top, HdG 865) in the Iveagh Bequest, Kenwood, London, were shown side-by-side by Valentiner (*Rembrandt. Des Meisters Gemälde*, Stuttgart-Leipzig 1908, p. 270), though not explicitly mentioned as pendants. The woman's portrait was attributed by H. Gerson and J.G. van Gelder to Bol, an attribution accepted by Blankert (*Bol*, no. 120) and Sumowski (*Gemälde* I, no. 158). The two paintings are unmistakably from a single hand — probably not that of Bol — and though they have long been separated they are most probably companion-pieces.

Fig. 31. Rembrandt workshop, *Two dead partridges and a teal*, panel 73 × 57 cm. Ithaca, N.Y., Herbert F. Johnson Museum at Cornell University, Bequest of David B. Goodstein



pair of pendants — the man's portrait at Shelburne, Vermont, and the woman's at Kenwood, London (figs. 29 and 30). Without citing his prototypes, this artist has managed to use his rather more forceful handling of paint to produce a three-dimensional space filled with soft light. Understandably these portraits were both long known as Rembrandts, and the name of Bol has since been attached to the woman's. It is more likely, however, that the quite personal style, with a penchant for somewhat angular shapes, is that of a younger assistant — perhaps a contemporary of Fabritius.

Still-lifes

Still life and landscape occupy, in the output of Rembrandt and of his workshop as well, a subordinate but not entirely negligible place. Despite the absence of a constant level of production Rembrandt set his stamp on the treatment of both subjects — the latter more than the former — creating a type that, if only incidentally, was imitated and developed further by his pupils both in the studio and after they had left him.

The amount of still-life material that has survived falls short of the expectations aroused by Rembrandt's inventory of 1656, which mentions no less than five Vanitas still-lifes retouched by him[105]. In fact we know, from surviving examples, of only two still-lifes with dead birds (which may well have been put under the Vanitas heading!). Neither of them is a still-life in the traditional meaning of the word; both the Amsterdam *Dead peacocks and a girl* (no. A 134) and the Dresden *Dead bittern held high by a hunter* (no. A 133) also include a human figure. Whatever the iconographic programme of these works may have been[106], Rembrandt's pictorial vision of a subject that has its antecedents in the 16th- and 17th-century Flemish kitchen-piece seems to have blazed the way for generations of artists who specialized in painting dead birds. The production of these in the workshop must have been small; only two examples have survived, one of *Two dead partridges and a teal* in the Herbert F. Johnson Museum at Cornell University, Ithaca, N.Y. (fig. 31)[107], and the other of *A dead bittern and a girl with a dead snipe* in the Stiftung Sammlung E.G. Bührle in Zurich[108]. The first, with its accent on the fall of light on the dead birds' feathers and the play of cast shadows on the wall, seems to have been directly inspired by Rembrandt's example, in particular the Amsterdam painting; the very direct and occasionally even brilliant manner of painting, and the colour-scheme based on a light-brown tone, point to a date in the late 1630s. Subsequently Ferdinand Bol, in a painting in Leningrad dated 1646[109] (his only known still-life), was to deal with a very similar motif in a far softer manner. The Zurich painting shows a rather cursory style of painting, and a chiaroscuro that depends mainly on reflexions of light; this style probably reflects a somewhat later phase in Rembrandt's development.

There is one further work that can be dated around 1640 and has to be mentioned in this connexion because of its subject-matter — the Glasgow *Dead ox* (no. C 122). One cannot be sure if this composition — which was to recur, scarcely changed, in the painting dated 1655 in the Louvre (Br. 457) — had a prototype done by Rembrandt.

105 Strauss *Doc.*, 1656/12 nos. 25, 27, 28, 120, 123, 295.

106 According to the interpretation of Scott A. Sullivan (in: *Art Bull.* 62, 1980, pp. 236–243; see also idem, *The Dutch gamepiece*, Totowa-Montclair 1984, p. 43) the Dresden painting, usually seen as a self-portrait, was an expression of Rembrandt's social ambitions, i.e. the pretence of belonging to the privileged class to whom hunting was reserved. The premise underlying this — that social ambition was an iconographic theme in the 17th century — is however an anachronistic misconception.

107 HdG 988 (described on the basis of Smith); Bauch 560 (as Rembrandt around 1638).

108 Br. 455, Bauch 559. Gerson (Br.-Gerson 455) suspected it to be a schoolwork.

109 Blankert *Bol*, no. 184.

110 Strauss *Doc.*, 1656/12 no. 108.

111 It is evident, from the description of 'een do. van een geslagen varcken' (a ditto [i.e. a painting] of a slaughtered pig) in the inventory drawn up after the death of Fabritius's wife in 1643 (see Brown op. cit. 37, p. 147), that he painted such subjects in his early period.

Fig. 32. Rembrandt, *The rape of Europa*, 1632 (no. A 47), detail. New York, private collection



Fig. 33. Rembrandt, *Diana bathing, with Actaeon and Callisto*, 1634 (no. A 92), detail. Rhede (BRD), Fürst zu Salm-Salm



The mention of 'een ossie van Rembrant naer 't leven' (a little ox by Rembrant, done from life) in his 1656 inventory[110] may (if it indeed relates to this subject at all) refer either to the painting in the Louvre, or to an earlier lost original, or even to the Glasgow version. One can deduce that the lastnamed is in fact a workshop piece not so much from the inscription *Rembrandt. f. 16* (with the date curiously and irritatingly incomplete) scratched into the wet paint of a a mysterious black strip along the bottom, as from the manner of painting, which is free and varied and, because of the use of colour in the opened carcass of the beast, might make an attribution to Carel Fabritius not too farfetched[111].

Landscapes

The production of landscapes — autograph or by assistants — in Rembrandt's studio was as irregular as that of still-lifes. Even if the number of works is in both instances a little larger, there is a lack of stylistic continuity in this area too, and this does not make it any simpler to distinguish the work of Rembrandt from that of his pupils. When trying to draw such a line one may profitably consider also the later production of Flinck and Bol, and its relationship to Rembrandt's prototypes.

One knows from documents that, earlier or later, both Rembrandt and these two pupils painted landscapes. Rembrandt's 1656 inventory lists 11 painted landscapes from his hand (one admittedly only 'overgeschildert' by him)[112]. Two Amsterdam inventories from 1647 mention five Flinck originals — one described as a 'koeywey' (pasture with cattle) — and a copy[113]. Bol, at the time of his second marriage in 1669, owned three landscapes by himself, one described as a moonlight scene[114]. In themselves these mentions tell us little other than that our knowledge of landscapes by these two Rembrandt pupils is very incomplete; but then there is also a lack of clarity about the start and further development of Rembrandt's own painting of landscape.

When Flinck, probably in 1633 (when he was 18 years old), came to work with Rembrandt he (we may assume) met landscape in the latter's work only in pieces such as the 1632 *Rape of Europa* (no. A 47; fig. 32) and, probably, the lost sketch for the etching of the *Good Samaritan* which must have provided the model for the Wallace Collection copy attributable to Flinck that has already been mentioned (no. C 48). Together with the *Diana with Actaeon and Callisto* dated 1634 (no. A 92; fig. 33), these works seem to have had a lasting effect on Flinck's landscape backgrounds. This may be seen not only in the relatively dark and mostly grey skies in signed works like the *Portrait of Dirck Jacobsz. Leeuw* of 1636 (Amsterdam, Mennonite Community; fig. 34) and the *Portrait of Dirck Graswinckel and Geertruyt van Loon* of *c.* 1640 in Rotterdam (fig. 35)[115], but also in the styling of the trees used as repoussoirs in the same

112 Strauss *Doc.*, 1656/12 nos. 10, 11, 20, 43, 60 ('a herding scene'), 65, 69, 125 ('an eventide'), 291, 301 ('a moonlight scene overpainted by Rembrant'), 304 ('a landscape, begun').

113 In the estates of the Mennonite cloth merchant Jan Pietersz. Bruyningh (1593–1646) and likewise Mennonite merchant Ameldonck Leeuw (1604–1647); see S.A.C. Dudok van Heel in: *Doopsgezinde bijdragen* new series 6 (1980), pp. 105–123, esp. 118–120.

114 A. Bredius, 'Bol's kunstschatten', *O.H.* 28 (1910), pp. 233–235; Blankert *Bol*, p. 77.

115 Sumowski *Gemälde* II, nos. 685 and 713 respectively. In the first painting the hat was altered about 1645 to suit the latest fashion, but it is partly still (or again) visible in its original state. In the second — as Gudlaugsson pointed out (in: *NKJ* 1948/49, p. 254 note 1) — the year 1646 shown on the painting does not chime with the costume depicted (nor indeed with Flinck's stylistic development); it is usually assumed that the last digit in the inscription has been altered by another hand, but the paint at that point gives no reason for this belief. One ought rather to assume that Flinck added the inscription only when he was revising the painting; here too one can see that the man was originally wearing a wide-brimmed hat, of the kind still usual around 1640.

Fig. 34. G. Flinck, *Portrait of Dirck Jacobsz. Leeuw*, 1636, canvas 65 × 47.5 cm. Amsterdam, Verenigde Doopsgezinde Gemeente



Fig. 35. G. Flinck, *Portrait of Dirck Graswinckel and Geertruyt van Loon*, detail. Rotterdam, Museum Boymans-van Beuningen



paintings. The singular way they are silhouetted reminds one at once of Rembrandt's *Rape of Europa*, while the radiating brushstrokes along the edges of the foliage in the middle ground bears a strong resemblance to similar passages in the *Diana*. The same characteristics provide one of the strongest reasons for regarding the landscape in the *Rest on the flight into Egypt* in an American private collection (no. C 6)[116] as being by Flinck, painted while he was working in Rembrandt's studio, as an addition to a painting already completed (perhaps by Gerard Dou)[117].

Thus while Rembrandt's influence on Flinck's landscape backgrounds from around 1633 onwards is easily traced, finding specifically rembrandtesque independent landscape paintings (whether or not staffed with biblical figures) is another matter. The earliest dated example of this is, remarkably, done not by Rembrandt but by Flinck — the signed and dated *Landscape with a bridge and ruins* of 1637 in Paris (fig. 36)[118]. In the execution of the trees on the right this matches entirely the manner of painting we have become used to seeing in Flinck's landscape backgrounds; but one wonders where the composition came from, with its dominant diagonal structure and the accent of the ruins lying just off-centre. We know that Rembrandt's earliest dated work in this sphere, the *Landscape with the Good Samaritan* in Krakow (no. A 125; fig. 37), comes only from the following year; so did an earlier landscape, now lost, provide Flinck with his prototype? This has perhaps too readily been accepted as being the case[119]. Rembrandt's undated Amsterdam *Landscape with a stone bridge* (no. A 136; fig. 40), which the literature often puts before 1638, would then have served as the model for the Flinck; but this explanation is not as satisfying as it seems at first sight. In the first place, the *Landscape with a stone bridge* can despite its apparent simplicity be interpreted as more mature than the 1638 *Landscape with the Good Samaritan*, and can thus be dated later for this reason alone; a further ground is that dendrochronology has practically ruled out a date in or before 1637. Moreover, Rembrandt's painting would in fact do little to explain the style of Flinck's *Landscape with bridge and ruins*; what marks Flinck's work — the composition built round a diagonal, and the colour-scheme using a golden-brown tone and

116 See also Vol. II, pp. 848–854.

117 Possibly Flinck's hand ought also to be seen in at least the trees in *The parable of the treasure hid in a field*, Budapest, Szépmüvészeti Múzeum (cat. no. 342 (404)). See A. Czobor, *Rembrandt und sein Kreis*, Budapest 1969, no. 9 (as Rembrandt and Dou).

118 Sumowski *Gemälde* II, no. 718; J. Foucart in: *Musée du Louvre. Nouvelles acquisitions du département des peintures 1983–1986*, Paris 1987, pp. 72–74.

119 E.g. by Sumowski, loc. cit.

120 For the development of this compositional type, see W. Stechow, *Dutch landscape painting in the seventeenth century*, London 1966, pp. 23–25.

121 See his *Landscape with the recalling of Joseph's brethren*, panel 53 × 70 cm, signed and dated *Lambert Jacobsz. fecit A° 1632*, previously in coll. Dr. A.W. Visser-Kiewiet de Jonge, Groningen; illustrated by H.F. Wijnman, 'Nieuwe gegevens omtrent de schilder Lambert Jacobsz. I', *O.H.* 47 (1930), pp. 145–157, fig. 4.

Fig. 36. G. Flinck, *Landscape with a bridge and ruins*, 1637, panel 49.5 × 74.9 cm. Paris, Musée du Louvre



Fig. 37. Rembrandt, *Landscape with the Good Samaritan*, 1638 (no. A 125), panel 46.1 × 65.5 cm. Krakow, Muzeum Narodowe



contrasting cool grey — is linked to developments in Dutch landscape painting in the 1620s and -30s in the work of artists like Esajas van de Velde, Pieter de Molyn and Pieter van Santvoort[120], or even Flinck's first master Lambert Jacobsz.[121]. Flinck himself must be credited with both the merits and the weaknesses of the composition. Features typical of him, apart from the singularities of organization and colour already mentioned, include an absence of strong chiaroscuro contrasts and a certain lack of sureness in deciding the scale of various elements. The figures in the second plane, for instance (halfway towards the ruins) are hardly any smaller than the hunter in the foreground, and too large in relation to the houses in the right foreground. A similar uncertainty must have played a part during the painting's genesis, because — according to the X-rays — the group of trees on the right was originally twice as high and wide as in the final execution[122]. Equally typical of Flinck, finally, is the use made of the picturesque effect of crumbling architecture and the sharp-edged lighting effects this motif encouraged[123].

If one now compares Flinck's landscape with Rembrandt's 1638 *Landscape with the Good Samaritan*, the differences are immediately apparent. In the Rembrandt, one is struck at once by the marked chiaroscuro effect and its function in the dividing-up of space, and by the graphic detail in both foreground and distance. Because of the dynamic of the contrasting tonal values it is not at a first glance obvious how much Rembrandt has made use, in combining wooded high ground with a low-lying plain, of an arrangement that had its roots in a 16th-century Flemish tradition[124]. There is nothing of

Fig. 38. G. Flinck, *Landscape with obelisk*, 1638 (no. C 117), panel 54.5 × 71 cm. Boston, Mass., Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum



this to be found in the Flinck. The remarkable thing is that from that moment on Flinck moved step-by-step closer, from the composition viewpoint, to Rembrandt's landscape to the extent that for a long time his works have been able to go under Rembrandt's name.

The first example of this can be seen in the *Landscape with obelisk* in the Stewart Gardner Museum, Boston (no. C 117; fig. 38), which in the 18th century was still known as a work by Flinck and probably comes from the same year 1638 as Rembrandt's *Landscape with the Good Samaritan*. The similarity in composition and type between the two paintings has of course long been noticed, but on closer inspection the differences in approach and quality are plain to see. In the Flinck the chiaroscuro,

122 See C. Schneider, 'A new look at The Landscape with the obelisk', *Fenway Court 1984*, Boston (Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum) 1985, pp. 6–21, esp. 14.

123 Sumowski (loc. cit. 118) rightly regarded the discovery of this signed Flinck landscape as confirmation of his previous attribution to Flinck of a drawing of a ruin earlier in the coll. A. Strölin, Lausanne (Sumowski *Drawings* IV, no. 983). Similar ruins, invariably on the bank of a river, occur in Jan van Goyen from 1634 onwards; see H.-U. Beck, *Jan van Goyen 1596–1656* II, Amsterdam 1973, nos. 629ff.

124 An artist who made use of this arrangement until his final works dated 1638 was Jacob van Geel (1584/85–1638 or later), who was active in Middelburg, Delft and Dordrecht; see L.J. Bol, 'Een Middelburgse Breughel-groep VI. Jacob Jacobsz. van Geel', *O.H.* 72 (1957), pp. 20–40.

Fig. 39. G. Flinck, *Landscape with ruin*, panel 40.8 × 57.2 cm. New York, coll. Spencer A. Samuels



Fig. 40. Rembrandt, *Landscape with a stone bridge* (no. A 136), panel 29.5 × 42.3 cm. Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum



which in the Rembrandt helps to mark out the spaces, is there but does little to help create a clear structure. In the details the brush, unlike that of Rembrandt, fails to convey the essence of form and perspective. The same slightly unclear and rather patchy brushwork is seen in another work that evidently comes from the same phase of Flinck's production, a *Landscape with ruin* in the coll. Spencer A. Samuels in New York (fig. 39)[125], where a similar uncertainty in handling perspective plays a role in what is an otherwise typical Flinck composition with a central architectural motif.

If, as we believe, the next step in Rembrandt's own landscape production was the Amsterdam *Landscape with stone bridge* (no. A 136; fig. 40), then the Berlin *Landscape with a seven-arched bridge* (no. C 118; fig. 41) — which resembles it in a number of motifs — illustrates how it is echoed in that of Flinck, and perhaps even the effect various Rembrandt prototypes had during the production of the Berlin painting. One can see from the paint relief that the central group of trees (like that on the right in the Paris painting!) was initially a good deal taller, so that in its original state the composition must have looked very like that of the *Landscape with the Good Samaritan*; the higher version of mountainous scenery still visible on the right would also have matched (in reverse) that in the prototype. One gets the impression that while working on the Berlin painting Flinck successively used Rembrandt's *Landscape with the Good Samaritan* and *Landscape with a stone bridge*, both in reverse. The conclusion already reached from Flinck's history paintings and portraits, that he for a long time after he had left Rembrandt's workshop continued assiduously to keep an eye on Rembrandt's production, is borne out to an unexpected degree by his landscapes.

Fig. 41. G. Flinck, *Landscape with a seven-arched bridge* (no. C 118), panel 28.4 × 39.5 cm. Berlin (West), Staatliche Museen Preussischer Kulturbesitz, Gemäldegalerie



This conclusion is further confirmed by what seems to be the fifth and last Flinck landscape we know of, the *Landscape with a moated castle* in the Wallace Collection, London (no. C 119; fig. 42), which might be called an amalgam of all the stylistic hallmarks that we have met in Flinck's landscapes. The fall of light makes little contribution to dividing up the space, and the details in the foreground (seen, curiously, from high above) and the overdetailed castle with its reflexion in the water are not sharply defined in their essential elements. A number of motifs can be interpreted as indicating that Flinck had in the meantime got to know Rembrandt's *Landscape with a thunderstorm* now in Braunschweig (no. A 137); the distribution of chiaroscuro seems to be broadly based on this, and the indication of rural

125 Oak 40.8 × 57.2 cm, coll. Spencer A. Samuels, New York. Examined on 12 June 1972 (J.B., S.H.L.). Published as a Rembrandt by J.G. van Gelder (in: *O.H.* 62, 1947, pp. 179–181, and *Burl.Mag.* 90, 1948, pp. 118–121). Already attributed to Flinck in C. Schneider, op. cit. 122, note 35, and J. Bruyn in: *O.H.* 101 (1987), p. 226.

126 The same may be said about the *Landscape with farmhouses and a bridge* in the Thyssen-Bornemisza Collection in Lugano (Von Moltke *Flinck*, p. 257 no. 153, as wrongly attributed to Flinck). Similar in motif to the painting owned by the Duke of Alba, but quite differently painted, is *a Panoramic landscape* with a Jan Lievens signature and the date 1640 in the

Fig. 42. G. Flinck, *Landscape with a moated castle* (no. C 119), panel 46 × 64 cm. London, The Wallace Collection



life to the front can be seen as a variant on what Rembrandt's Braunschweig painting has in shadow in the foreground. In Flinck, however, the way the middle ground is joined onto this area results in a distortion of perspective that makes the surface running away into the distance seem concave instead of flat. All things taken together, the Wallace Collection landscape adds a few more characteristics to what we may regard as Flinck's landscape style, one that with time may perhaps provide the basis for recognizing other landscapes as being done by him.

Flinck was not the only artist to paint rembrandtesque landscapes prior to about 1640 (i.e. before Philips Koninck and Abraham Furnerius started to produce); indeed, his influence as well as that of Rembrandt does occasionally seem unmistakeable in a number of unattributed landscapes. In the *Landscape with a walled town* in the coll. Duke of Berwick and Alba (no. C 120), for instance, the strange perspective effect and the motif of the figure of a hunter in the corner and the centrally-placed town appear to be derived from the Wallace Collection landscape, and the drawing of the lit trees shows a version, reduced to a calligraphic device, of Flinck's treatment in that painting[126].

According to the contemporaneous sources already mentioned, however, Bol must have painted landscapes of his own as well as Flinck, and one may assume that in doing so he followed Rembrandt's example. It is important here to realize that Bol must have entered Rembrandt's studio considerably later than Flinck, probably in 1636. The type of landscape that was current in the workshop at the time will thus have been different for him from what it was earlier on for Flinck — not the landscape dominated by carefully-worked tree repoussoirs, but the river valley done in subdued colouring that we see in the Leningrad *Abraham's sacrifice* of 1635 (no. A 108; fig. 43). This landscape background, with its dull green repoussoirs of trees and vaguely-modelled hills must, to judge from much later work by Bol, have made a lasting impression on him. If one takes into account the change in taste there had been in the interim in respect of colour and lighting, the similarity in motifs and formal character with the landscape in the background of the *Elisha rejecting the gifts of Naaman* dated 1661 in the Amsterdam Historical Museum (fig. 45)[127] is amazingly close. It is evident from the background in the (unfortunately incompletely preserved) *Portrait of a couple, probably Erasmus Scharlaken and Anna van Erckel as Isaac and Rebecca* from the late 1640s in the Dordrecht Museum

Norton Simon Museum of Art at Pasadena; see, inter alia, C. Schneider, op. cit. 122, pp. 15–16, fig. 9. This painting differs so radically from the landscapes that Lievens painted in Antwerp before and after 1640 under the influence of Adriaen Brouwer (see Sumowski *Gemälde* III, nos. 1301–1305), that for the moment it seems safer to think in terms of the work of an as yet unidentified artist from Rembrandt's circle. Unacceptable as a Flinck work is the *Rest on the flight into Egypt* in the Musée Baron-Gérard at Bayeux, with a (genuine?) signature and date on a basket, *G. – flinck – f./1636* (Von Moltke *Flinck*, no. 48 as Flinck).

127 Blankert *Bol*, no. 14; Sumowski *Gemälde* I, no. 103.

Fig. 43. Rembrandt, *Abraham's sacrifice*, 1635 (no. A 108), detail. Leningrad, The Hermitage Museum



Fig. 44. Rembrandt workshop (F. Bol?), copy after Rembrandt's *Abraham's sacrifice*, 1636, detail. Munich, Alte Pinakothek



(fig. 46)[128], that Bol adopted this type of landscape at various times in his career. In this painting too the repoussoir of mountains seems to offer (in reverse) a reminiscence of the *Abraham's sacrifice*. It also contains a curious quotation (again in reverse) from Rembrandt's *Landscape with a stone bridge* in the form of a traveller who is seen, with a stick over his shoulder, crossing a bridge; the Dordrecht work also has a number of other features suggesting that Bol was familiar with the same prototype. They include the treatment of the trees, most clearly so those in the middle ground but also those more to the front with their bare, forked branches. It also applies to an edging of light that occurs in the middle ground in a context that, given the absence of a rembrandtesque chiaroscuro, one would hardly expect. Such features, coming from examples of Rembrandt's work of the middle and later 1630s, can be recognized repeatedly in the backgrounds of Bol's history paintings and portraits even when, from 1643 onwards, the colour has become lighter and the rendering of form more draughtsmanlike[129]. At the same time one often finds that the edges of light along trees or clumps of trees lend them the character of flat repoussoirs.

The same is very true of a *River landscape with cattle* that, since Hofstede de Groot ascribed it to Bol, has generally been accepted as his sole real landscape and dated in the years 1650/55 (fig. 48)[130]. It contains a number of familiar features — including a vaguely-modelled cliff repoussoir and the use of forked branches in a nearby tree — but is surprising through the singular and somewhat naively poetic effect of the mirror-like water and the contrasting silhouettes of cows and trees. The rather primitive and somewhat shaky construction of the whole, with the clumsy perspective of the foreshortened path on the left, is here more obtrusive than it is when, as in the Dordrecht portrait, such an arrangement is merely used as a backdrop. The generally murky lighting does nothing much to clarify the spatial structure, and nor does the scale of man and beast — appearing hardly any smaller when seen further off. The same may be said of the rather coarse paint surface, which presents a heavy brushstroke image in which there is little to mark out the forms. The clumps of trees and their reflexions in the water, seen contre-jour, produce an almost decorative effect of stylized shapes rather than any suggestion of depth. In this one can recognize a tendency that may be detected in Rembrandt's own landscapes from the 1640s, and that may be related to his renewed interest in the landscapes of Adam Elsheimer; this was ultimately to lead him to re-work Hercules Seghers' copperplate after Elsheimer's *Tobias and the angel* into a *Flight into Egypt* (B. 56). He had however by then already taken Elsheimer's *Flight into Egypt* engraved by Hendrick Goudt as the model for the Dublin *Nocturnal landscape with the rest*

128 Blankert *Bol*, no. 167; Sumowski *Gemälde* I, no. 150 (with colour reproduction). The extent to which this painting, now measuring 100 × 92 cm, has been reduced is evident from the description of what is unmistakeably the same work in an Amsterdam sale on 25 July 1804 (Lugt 6846), no. 5: 'Boll (F.) hoog 47 breed 67 duim [= 121 × 172.4 cm], Doek. In een capitaal boomryk landschap, ziet men een wandelend Heer, in Oostersch gewaad, verzelt van een Dame in ryke Satyne kleeding; ter linkerzyde op een Heuvel, onder het Geboomte, schynt een Veehoeder te rusten, waarby enige Schapen en een Bok; het is van een bevallige en uitvoerige behandeling'. (In a thickly wooded landscape one sees a man walking, in Eastern garb, accompanied by a lady in rich satin dress; on the left on a hill, beneath the trees, a cowherd appears to be resting beside some sheep and a he-goat; it is done gracefully and elaborately).

129 Only a few examples: the Copenhagen *Three Marys at the tomb* and the Dresden *Rest on the flight into Egypt*, both from 1644, the Leningrad

Fig. 45. F. Bol, *Elisha refusing the gifts of Naäman*, 1661, detail. Amsterdam, Amsterdam Historical Museum



Fig. 46. F. Bol, *Portrait of Erasmus Scharlaken and Anna van Erckel as Isaac and Rebecca*, detail. Dordrecht, Dordrechts Museum



on the flight into Egypt dated 1647 (Br. 576), with its reflexions in the water in the foreground; and he had explored the possibilities of a wooded landscape seen against the light in the *Landscape with castle* in the Louvre (Br. 450) that, despite its unfinished state, must have been an important prototype for Bol.

This group of works unassailably by Bol in the field of landscape — a number of landscape backgrounds of varying date and a single landscape in its own right from *c.* 1650/55 — offer a narrow basis for our knowledge of his landscape style. We can conclude from it that in Bol's later landscapes one can clearly recognize a number of impressions from Rembrandt's landscapes from the middle and later 1630s, and that contact with his master after leaving the workshop played a major role. The change that came about in Rembrandt's landscapes in the 1640s — the moving away from planes separated by chiaroscuro, the use of silhouettes seen against the light, and a fresh interest in Elsheimer's reflexions in water — must have been watched with interest by Bol. He based on it a fairly personal and somewhat romantic style that shows greater attachment to his old master than his history paintings and portraits from the same period would lead one to expect. This conclusion is borne out by the attribution to Bol, which Martin Royalton-Kisch of the British Museum was able to argue persuasively, of a group of rembrandtesque landscape drawings (that had in fact mostly been ascribed to Rembrandt) from around 1650[131].

But before looking at Bol as a landscape painter around 1650, we ought to consider what part he played in Rembrandt's workshop production in this field in the late 1630s; and here all we really have to go on is the certainty that, as we have seen, Bol must have been thoroughly familiar with the landscape type one finds in Rembrandt's Leningrad 1635 *Abraham's sacrifice*. We have already advanced the possibility that the Munich copy of this painting dated 1636 (no. A 108 copy 2; fig. 44) is by Bol. Though his evident familiarity with the landscape type that appears in this lends persuasiveness to the idea, it remains no more than speculative. One may perhaps see some support in the only landscape for which an attribution to Bol in Rembrandt's studio is plausible — the Hanover *Landscape with the baptism of the Eunuch* (no. C 116; fig. 47), a painting that until a short while ago was taken for a Rembrandt and, because of the (one has to assume, spurious) date of 1636, seen as his earliest landscape. Its origin in Rembrandt's workshop is confirmed by the fact that the canvas most probably came from the same bolt as that of Rembrandt's *Two dead peacocks and a girl* of *c.* 1639 in Amsterdam (no. A 134). There are several similarities that argue for Bol's authorship, both in the general approach to the subject and in a number of specific features. First of all the distribution of chiaroscuro — a diagonal zone of light slicing through image and space — lends the picture a markedly rembrandtesque appearance, though this comes not so much from Rembrandt's landscapes as from his small-figured history paintings like *John the Baptist preaching* (no. A 106) and the *Concord of the State* (no. A 135); the riders in their helmets and armour, picked out by glancing light in the semi-darkness on

Dismissal of Hagar from the earlier 1650s (fig. 49), the Amsterdam portraits of Roelof Meulenaar and his wife from 1650, the Orléans *Venus and Adonis* of *c.* 1660 (Blankert *Bol*, nos. 17, 16, 3, 145, 146, 147 and 27; Sumowski *Gemälde* I, nos. 83, 81, 92, 166, 167 and 106).

130 Panel 38.5 × 52.8 cm, in 1939 in coll. Edwin S. Webster in Boston; Blankert *Bol*, no. 183; Sumowski *Gemälde* I, no. 185. Hofstede de Groot's attribution to Bol (HdG p. 453 note 68) was based on a resemblance in the treatment of cows and landscape with that in the Leningrad *Dismissal of Hagar* (fig. 49) that was dated by Blankert and Sumowski (nos. 3 and 92 respectively) in the early 1650s. Blankert thought it possible that the figures were by another hand; they do however seem characteristic of the staffing that Bol used in his landscapes (see also below).

131 Thanks are due to Martin Royalton-Kisch of the British Museum, who has made available to us the text of a paper given at the Ian Woodner Symposium at the Royal Academy, London, on 17 October 1987 and scheduled for publication in 1989. See also no. B 12 fig. 6.

Fig. 47. Rembrandt workshop (F. Bol?), *Landscape with the baptism of the Eunuch* (no. C 116), canvas 82.6 × 105 cm. Hanover, Niedersächsische Landesgalerie



the right, remind one to some extent of the latter work. It is however the way the composition is constructed in this somewhat forced arrangement of lighting that one might see as typical of Bol; diagonals play a great part, more than one ever finds in Rembrandt's landscapes. In this respect there is a striking resemblance to the *River landscape with cattle*, and the result is similarly unsteady due to the lack of any clear orientation on a horizontal base, and has a similar feeling of unsureness in the perspective due to lack of clarity in the division of planes and the scale of the figures, trees and plants. Equally typical is the indeterminate, almost woolly modelling of the mountain-slope on the right, painted in an orangish brown-yellow and other yellows, brown and grey. In this modelling, and its silhouette, the mountainous area foreshadows Bol's later landscapes; but it is also somewhat similar not only to Rembrandt's prototype in the Leningrad *Abraham's sacrifice* but also — and even more — to the copy in Munich. The manner in which, in the latter, the cliff repoussoir is (more emphatically than in Rembrandt's original) modelled in an almost ornamental way with squiggly brushstrokes is wholly comparable with what one sees in the Hanover painting. This makes the attribution of the Munich painting somewhat more probable; but it has to be said that that of the Hanover landscape, though less speculative, is so far only narrowly based. If one were to discover similar works this could give us a clearer picture of Bol's landscape style during his rembrandtesque phase, as has proved possible in the case of Flinck.

Less isolated are three works that may be grouped around the *River landscape with cattle* as later works by Bol, in which one can recognize both similar stylistic features and similar relationships to Rembrandt's prototype. On the matter of dating all that can really be said is that they appear to have been painted around 1650; as to the sequence in which they were done, one can at most try to imagine this from

Fig. 48. F. Bol, *River landscape with cattle*, panel 38.5 × 52.8 cm. Formerly Boston, coll. Erwin S. Webster



Fig. 49. F. Bol, *The dismissal of Hagar*, canvas 58.7 × 70.5 cm. Leningrad, The Hermitage Museum



stylistic features that can be linked to successive phases in Rembrandt's stylistic development. Thus, one is inclined to put the *Wooded landscape with castle* (no. C 121; fig. 50), previously attributed to Rembrandt, as the earliest — perhaps before 1650. The execution shows a clear resemblance to that of the (somewhat larger) *River landscape with cattle*; in the coarse paint surface the contours of the trees become rather vague against the sky and the shapes of the castle, as if modelled in the thick paint, lack a sense of depth. The figures, broadly indicated with bold, flat brushstrokes and in each case including a woman reading, are also very alike and seem for all the difference from those in Bol's history paintings to be typical of those staffing his landscapes. Compared with the *River landscape* the contrasts of chiaroscuro play a greater part in separating the planes, and the horizon is a good deal lower; this may mean that Rembrandt's earlier landscape type — which includes, for example, the *Landscape with a stone bridge* — was still providing the model for this painting. This would also explain the emphasis put into the chiaroscuro of the side-lit clump of trees. There are also, in the rendering of the wooded passages, strong similarities with various of Bol's history paintings, in particular the Leningrad *Dismissal of Hagar* (fig. 49)[132]. One can find confirmation that the similarities between the works we have been comparing do point to their having a single author, in the animals in the *Dismissal of Hagar* — the cows that reappear almost identically in the *River landscape*, and a sheep standing on the downward-sloping river bank that recurs in the *Wooded landscape with castle* in the same pose and position (though smaller and less distinct).

If the *Wooded landscape* incorporates more reminiscences of the contrasty Rembrandt landscape of the late 1630s than the *River landscape*, and can thus

Fig. 50. F. Bol, *Wooded landscape with castle* (no. C 121), panel 31.3 × 45.2 cm. Whereabouts unknown



132 Blankert *Bol*, no. 3; Sumowski *Gemälde* I, no. 92.

Fig. 51. (Rembrandt and?) F. Bol, *River landscape with a windmill* (no. B 12), panel 67 × 87.5 cm.
Kassel, Staatliche Kunstsammlungen Kassel, Schloss Wilhelmshöhe



perhaps be dated rather earlier, then this is also to some extent true of the Kassel *River landscape with a windmill* (no. B 12), at least as this appears in a second version painted on top of an earlier landscape with a different composition (fig. 51). We can leave aside here the question of whether this earlier landscape, part of which done in the style of the late 1630s can be seen only in the bottom righthand corner, was painted by Rembrandt or by Bol. An argument for the first might be the crispness with which the reflexion of the sailing-boat is drawn in the water, which one does not find even in the early Bol; for the second, the shape of the mass of cliff on the right which (according to the X-rays) corresponded notably in the first version too with this motif as it was to continue to occur in Bol's later work. Here, the style in which the part painted later is done is specially relevant, and there can be hardly any doubt about the work being that of Bol. First of all, there is the form of the indistinctly-modelled cliff on the right, which offers almost the same silhouette as the mountain Bol used at various times in his career. The remarkably unarticulated manner of painting in large area of the distant vista, as well as in the left foreground, reminds one strongly of the *River landscape with cattle*, and the same applies to the stylized trees to the right of the bridge with their edgings of light. The dark silhouettes of trees in the middle ground form a motif that though appearing in the *River landscape*, again contrasting with the light edges of the trees to the front, is still not present in the *Wooded landscape with a castle*. It seems not impossible that the introduction of this motif stems from a development in Rembrandt's work — see, for instance, his etching dated 1650 of *A canal with swans* (B. 235) — and can provide a clue to the chronology of Bol's landscapes. In both the *River landscape with a windmill* and the *River landscape with cattle* there is a lack of clarity, evidently characteristic of Bol, as to the nature of the lighting, of a kind we have already met in the Dordrecht double portrait; local lighting effects sometimes seem to suggest a beam of light coming from the side, but elsewhere the light appears to be diffuse or even to come from behind. Finally, the purpose of overpainting large parts of the underlying composition, with a resultant appreciable raising of the horizon, seems wholly consonant with Bol's treatment of space as we know it from his *River landscape with cattle*. The Kassel painting must originally have shown a fairly abrupt transition from the foreground, via a lit middle ground, to a distant vista with a town immediately above the bridge, roughly as one sees this in Rembrandt's *Landscape with the Good Samaritan* of 1638. Bol has eliminated the rapid succession of planes by adding, over the earlier vista (which is still visible to the naked eye), a rising middle ground closed off by the silhouettes of trees and hills. To replace the town he has added an iconographic equivalent of it, the high-set celestial castle, a motif

Fig. 52. F. Bol, *The Mill*, canvas 87.5 × 105.5 cm. Washington, D.C., National Gallery of Art, Widener Collection



clearly inspired by Rembrandt's *Landscape with a castle* in the Louvre (Br. 450), mentioned earlier as important for the direction taken by Bol's 'romantic' landscapes.

This direction, which in the Kassel *Landscape with a windmill*, and even more so in the *Landscape with cattle*, led to a three-dimensional interplay of forms interpreted as silhouettes in a murky light, points us to a painting that once occupied an important place in the general view of Rembrandt's landscapes until it first gave rise to considerable argument and then, in 1935, was not included by Bredius in his book — *The mill* in Washington (fig. 52)[133]. This work too seems to fit wonderfully well (provisionally as the last) into Bol's landscape production around or soon after 1650. Unhappily, the composition, reached by the artist only after radical alterations[134], has been reduced at the top and, especially, the righthand side, upsetting the intended balance and placing the mill too close to the centre[135]; but even in its present state, the work shows so many similarities — in the execution of the figures as well — with the two river landscapes that an attribution to one and the same hand is justified. The silhouette of trees in the middle ground of the Kassel *River landscape with a windmill* (with which in the older literature this painting used to be compared, as a work by Rembrandt) are found again along the riverbank in the righthand part of *The mill*. The road rising in the bottom lefthand corner is in function and treatment like the corresponding passage in the Kassel painting, and even more like the path on the left in the *River*

133 Following the sensation caused by the sale of *The mill* from the coll. Marquess of Landsdowne to P.A.B. Widener of Philadelphia (see, for instance, *Burl. Mag.* 19, 1911, pp. 3–4) it became silent around this famous painting. Hofstede de Groot recognized it as a Rembrandt (HdG 592), as did others including J. Rosenberg, op. cit. 55, p. 168 (in the same breath as the Kassel *River landscape with a windmill*), W. Stechow, op. cit. 120, p. 137, S. Slive in: *Burl. Mag.* 130 (1988), pp. 396–397, and A.K. Wheelock Jnr. The lastnamed provided an overview of the history and appreciation of the painting in 'De geschiedenis en de bekoring van "De molen" ', *Kroniek van het Rembrandthuis* 29 (1977), pp. 20–32, a report prompted by restoration in 'De restauratie van "De molen" ', ibid. 31 (1979), pp. 9–13, and a combination of both in 'The art historian in the laboratory: examinations into the history, preservation and techniques of 17th century Dutch painting', in: R.E. Fleischer and S.S. Munshower ed., *The age of Rembrandt. Studies in seventeenth-century Dutch painting* (Papers in Art History from Pennsylvania State University vol. II), 1988, pp. 214–245, esp. 217–218.

134 An etching by Mathieu and Dequevauviller published in 1786, reproduced in fig. 6 of Wheelock's last article mentioned in note 133, already shows the painting in its present state.

135 The X-ray reproduced by Wheelock in 1979 and 1988 reveals changes that are partially also visible to the naked eye. On the right there was initially not the presentday boat but, slightly higher up, a single-arched bridge with its reflexion in the water. Above this one can see a reserve as if meant for hills; this does not coincide with the trees on the other side of the water, but roughly with what now appears as a grey lowering cloud. To the left of the mill there is a reserve for a hill that is today partly incorporated in the sky.

landscape with cattle, where there is also walking along it a figure of a man that is scarcely smaller than the figures in the foreground. *The mill* shares with the Kassel work the effect of a reflexion of trees and sky in the water, and all three paintings are linked by a similar diffuse lighting that does not bear a clear relationship to the distribution of light in the sky. Even more than in the other two paintings Bol has here raised to the status of a principle the form defined as a silhouette. It must have been mostly this marked simplification and the resultant intriguing character of the form that later won the painting its great reputation; but by then Bol had long been forgotten as a landscape painter, and Rembrandt seemed the only artist who could be seen as responsible for it.

Looking back over the landscapes painted by Flinck and Bol during and after their time in Rembrandt's studio, one can say that while — just as with Rembrandt himself — these occupy hardly more than a marginal place in their oeuvre, and form relatively incohesive groups, they do help to give us a picture of the relationship in which these two major pupils of Rembrandt from the 1630s stood to him. In a sense Flinck was the closer imitator of the two; the impression that Rembrandt's landscape backgrounds made on him as soon as he joined the workshop continued to a large extent to dictate how he was to handle landscape motifs, especially in the backgrounds, both during his apprenticeship and afterwards into the 1640s. It did seem as if his *Landscape with a bridge and ruins* dated 1637 (fig. 36), his first independent landscape that is known to us and probably predating Rembrandt's own production, might form the start of a personal landscape style; but remarkably each new landscape ended up a paraphrase of successive examples from Rembrandt's hand (as can sometimes be said of his history paintings as well). The moment at which Flinck turned his back firmly on Rembrandt's style — probably after a visit to Flanders of which we learn from Baldinucci[136] — can be pinpointed fairly accurately as 1644/45; from then on there are hardly any rembrandtesque features to be found in Flinck's work[137], and this radical about-face meant for the artist, who had just turned 30, the end of his production of landscapes as well.

Rembrandt's effect on Bol was quite different, but in his case too the production of landscapes reflects his relationship with his teacher. Though scarcely younger than Flinck in years, he was certainly so in seniority in the workshop. During his time there he too was greatly influenced by Rembrandt's landscape backgrounds, but he also witnessed the appearance of the rembrandtesque landscape in its own right. If the Hanover *Landscape with the baptism of the Eunuch* is in fact by him, this painting represents a rather original attempt at incorporating items from the rembrandtesque history painting in a large landscape of what might be termed the heroic type. Even after he had left the studio around 1640/41, and had in 1643/44 adapted his style to a Backer-like use of colour, Bol never broke away from Rembrandt and his past as abruptly and radically as Flinck. On the contrary, it is surprising not only how much his etchings and (sometimes) his drawings kept a rembrandtesque feel right into the 1660s, but also how much rembrandtesque features and motifs appeared in his history paintings that in general had a quite different orientation. Bol must have kept up contact with Rembrandt, far longer than Flinck did, and his painted landscapes are the clearest proof of this. Just like the ending of landscape production with Flinck, so the continuation of it with Bol — in a style that is almost anachronistic seen against most of his other work — seems to epitomize his attitude towards Rembrandt.

J.B.

136 F. Baldinucci, *Notizie de' professori del disegno da Cimabue in qua* . . . IV, Florence 1728, p. 484: Flinck was rather better in his outlines than Rembrandt 'come quegli, che grandissimi studj aveva fatto in disegno, molto avendo perigrinato per la Fiandra, e molto faticato intorno alle pitture di valenti uomini di quella provincia, e particolarmente d'Anversa'.

137 An exception is the rather rembrandtesque *Crucifixion* in Basle dated 1647 (Von Moltke *Flinck*, no. 57; Sumowski *Gemälde* II, no. 630).

Chapter III

A selection of signatures, 1635–1642

Fig. 1. A 87 *Portrait of a 40-year-old woman.* Louisville, Kentucky, J.B. Speed Art Museum. A typical specimen from 1634

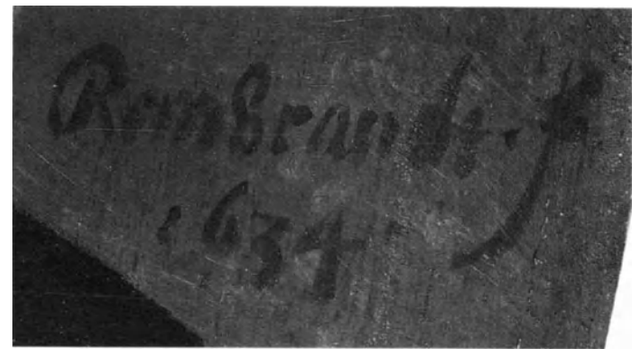


Fig. 2. A 99 *Portrait of Maria Bockenolle.* Boston, Mass., Museum of Fine Arts. A typical specimen from 1634



In our assessment of paintings the signature has always played a very subordinate role; and where the material contained in the present volume is concerned, too, this approach will prove to be justified. Comparison of the inscriptions on these works shows time and again that the borderline between signatures that convince one as being autograph and those that do not does not at all coincide with that between paintings that can be seen as autograph and those that are unacceptable as such. This chapter will not do much more than illustrate this general truth; for a deeper insight one would need more facts and greater expertise — facts about the stratification of the paint at the point in question (where an intervening layer of varnish can point to a later addition), and expertise in the analysis of handwriting, which would allow us with greater precision to recognize Rembrandt's own hand. As matters stand at the moment we have had, in the main, to work on what one might call a style-critic's interpretation of the writing, using the same criteria as those already defined in Volume II (pp. 101–102). These relate on the one hand to the shape and rhythm of the letters and figures, and on the other to the inner cohesion of the inscription that can be roughly equated with regularity and homogeneity. As we did when discussing the signatures from Rembrandt's early years in Amsterdam, we have for the signatures examined in this volume benefited from talking to Professor Dr W. Froentjes and the handwriting experts Ir H. Hardy and Ms. R. ter Kuile-Haller of the Forensic Laboratory of the Ministry of Justice at Rijswijk; their conclusions, to be published elsewhere[1], have in some instances been of great help to us in reaching a yea or a nay judgment. There is one reservation that must be made here once again: our views on the features of individual signatures are to a great extent based on comparison. This means, unhappily, that in studying and interpreting the signatures we are wholly dependent on the availability of good detail photographs, and that a number of interesting cases must of necessity be left out of account while in others a judgment can be given only with great reservations and without any means of making a subsequent crosscheck.

A final caveat has to do with the importance that ought to be assigned to the signature. As our opening says, a verdict on it plays only a minor part in our assessment of a painting. It is well to realise that as late as 1800 it was still possible to add an imitated signature with a clear conscience[2], as it were to provide an essential though not necessarily authentic confirmation of the attribution. This attitude naturally opens up unlimited opportunities for interpretation, in the case of both autograph and non-autograph works. Yet the problem of signatures added by other hands does in two respects have some part to play over and beyond the question of whether a given inscription was applied by Rembrandt's own brush. In the first place the inscription often contains a date, and for our understanding of the artist's stylistic development it is not unimportant to determine what trust can be placed in this. And in the second it is conceivable that (as we assumed in Volume II, pp. 105–106) Rembrandt signatures were appended in the workshop by his studio assistants — as a kind of trademark — which of course would speak very much in favour of their reliability as an indicator of origin and (possibly also) of date. Besides the evidence for this assumption that has already been put forward, we shall below discuss further grounds in support (see figs. 24 and 25). It is remarkable that to date we have met nothing that argues for the theoretically perfectly plausible opposite situation — that of Rembrandt putting his own signature on the work of pupils.

How did Rembrandt himself sign his work?

The works from 1634 provide us with enough reliable signatures to serve as a starting-point for assessing those from the following years, and also to give us an idea of the variations that may be expected within what can be regarded as autograph examples. On the one hand there is the chunky type (fig. 1), of the kind seen on the Louisville *Portrait of a woman* (no. A 87; cf. also, for instance, nos. A 90, A 93, A 96, A 103 and A 104). In this the letters have a rather compact appearance, partly through the use of a relatively thick brush and fairly thick ('short') paint. On the other one finds a more elegant version (fig. 2) done with a brush that is thinner, in relation to the scale, and with a somewhat more runny ('long') paint, such as that on the *Portrait of Maria Bockenolle* (no.

Fig. 3. A 114 *Minerva*. Japan, private collection. A typical specimen from 1635

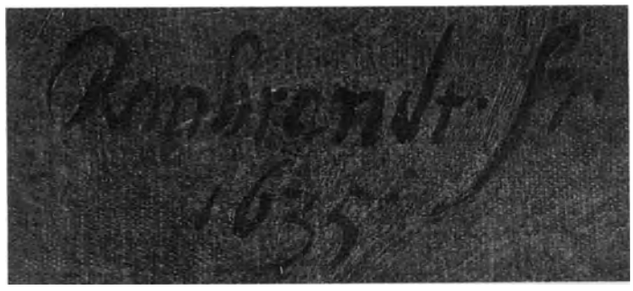
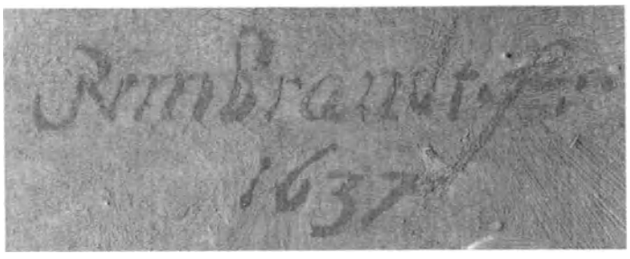


Fig. 4. A 122 *Half-length figure of a man in 'Polish' costume*. Washington, D.C., The National Gallery of Art. A typical specimen from 1637



A 99). The letters in the latter example do of course have a rather slimmer shape and are more finely worked (most clearly in the *n*), but both types have important features in common not only in the shape of individual letters and figures but also and especially in the way the whole inscription is organized: the *b*, seen almost as symmetrical, forms the central pivot of the name, and is flanked by the slightly taller *R* and *d*. In all three of these letters one finds a certain balance between elegance and clarity, the same confident and spontaneous mode of execution.

A group of closely similar signatures from 1635 and the following years shows the same traits. One can naturally be certain of this only when the condition of the paint encourages confidence. The nucleus of works fulfilling both conditions would comprise, for instance, the inscriptions on the 1635 *Minerva* (no. A 114; fig. 3), the *Ganymede* from the same year (A 113), the 1636 *Standard-bearer* (no. A 120), the 1637 *Man in 'Polish' costume* (no. A 122; fig. 4) and then, at some distance, the 1641 *Portrait of Agatha Bas* (no. A 145; fig. 12). One ought perhaps to include the well-preserved signature and date of 1640 on the *Portrait of Herman Doomer* (no. A 140; fig. 5), the slender and even elegant script of which is at first sight surprising. If however one takes into account the 'long' paint used, with great sureness of touch, to append the signature then the similarity with the more elegant type of signature mentioned earlier (see fig. 2) is such that one can, in spite of the rather wider form of the *a* and as the handwriting experts named above have suggested to us, accept it as being autograph.

Clustered immediately around this nucleus there

Fig. 5. A 140 *Portrait of Herman Doomer*. New York, N.Y., The Metropolitan Museum of Art. A probably authentic specimen from 1640



Fig. 6. A 109 *Samson threatening his father-in-law*. Berlin (West), Staatliche Museen Preussischer Kulturbesitz, Gemäldegalerie. An authentic signature distorted by retouching



is a group of signatures that, because of either their state or slight deviations, generate doubts or objections. A clear example of the former is that on the 1635 *Samson threatening his father-in-law* (no. A 109; fig. 6). At first sight it appears spontaneous and characteristic, allowing for the fact that the loop of the *6* is for the most part missing due to paint loss; as one can see with the naked eye there is a retouch at that point (at which the craquelure stops short). The shape of the *R* is a little off-putting; the continuity of the curve of the bowl is not entirely convincing, and the stem extending well upwards is definitely aberrant and gives the whole letter a taller look than in the examples mentioned so far, where the stem begins a little way below the top of the bowl. One finds, however, that — as the X-ray confirms quite precisely — the entire righthand upper part of the *R* is on an inpainted area of paint-loss. Though a difference in colour and consistency between the original paint and that used later is not immediately evident, the unusual shape of the *R* has to be ascribed entirely to subsequent reworking of the damaged but otherwise totally authentic inscription.

A further example of a signature evidently distorted by later interference and restoration is that on the *Susanna at the bath* (no. A 117). Here it was not paint-loss that was to blame for the damage but the sawing-off of part of the panel at a later date that resulted in both lines having kept only the first four letters or digits in their authentic form, with the rest now consisting of a replacement of the lost elements that is not really successful in terms of either form or spelling.

Fig. 7. A 115 *Portrait of Philips Lucasz.* London, The National Gallery. An authentic signature that was later reinforced



Fig. 8. A 138 *The Visitation.* Detroit, Mich., The Detroit Institute of Arts. A probably authentic signature that was later totally gone over



Fig. 9. A 139 *Self-portrait.* London, The National Gallery. A definitely aberrant signature, conceivably applied over an authentic one



Fig. 10. A 129 *Portrait of a man standing.* Kassel, Staatliche Kunstsammlungen Kassel. Not acceptable in its present state

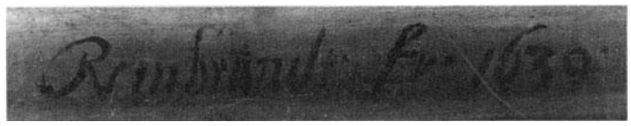


Fig. 11. A 144 *Portrait of Nicolaes van Bambeeck.* Brussels, Musées royaux des Beaux-Arts. A careful copy after an authentic signature, presumably the one on the companion-piece



Fig. 12. A 145 *Portrait of Agatha Bas.* London, Buckingham Palace, H.M. Queen Elizabeth II



It is, sad to say, exceptional for a later intervention to be so obviously responsible for the present condition of a signature. In most cases there is no such certainty; one can, for instance, surmise that there has been a later redrawing of the letters, though often without having any really sound evidence that there is an underlying and more convincing signature. In the case of the *Portrait of Philips Lucasz.* of 1635 (no. A 115; fig. 7) the authenticity can be fairly readily assessed; wearing seems to have given rise to a certain amount of reinforcement — most evident in the *b*, *n* and the last three figures of the date — but the characteristic shape of the letters and figures can still be recognized and so closely matches what one sees in better-preserved autograph signatures that there need be no doubts as to the basic reliability of the inscription. Things become more difficult when the original appearance is almost or totally hidden by subsequent overpainting, and the original character can no longer be gauged. In the 1640 *Visitation* (no. A 138; fig. 8) we believe we have found beneath the now dominant inscription, uncharacteristic because of its lack of an even rhythm, evidence enough to show the presence of another inscription; that this might be an authentic one is however scarcely more than conjecture. Often, there is no definite evidence for the presence of an underlying inscription and all that one can say is that the presentday one, though broadly showing the general characteristics of a Rembrandt signature, offers too many deviations to count as autograph. A problem of this kind is presented, for example, by the inscription with the date 1640 on the London *Self-portrait* (no. A 139; fig. 9); though in the overall layout of the letters and figures along the line it does roughly correspond to what one might expect, this quite confident script offers all kinds of radical differences. Most of the letters are linked in a way one does not find in any Rembrandt signature, and in the *m* and *n* the upstrokes leave the downstrokes at a remarkably low point. Is one seeing here the overpainting of an originally genuine signature? The same question can be asked about the signature on the Kassel *Portrait of a man standing* of 1639 (no. A 129), where the inscription (fig. 10) not only shows little sign of ageing in the paint layer but is also so shakily written that it cannot in its present state be regarded as the original version. Sometimes, in such cases, it is not clear whether the original lies hidden beneath the signature seen today; with the Kassel man's portrait it is possible that the present version was appended by a later hand, copying an inscription found elsewhere — e.g. on a lost companion-piece. We believe we have already discovered examples of the addition of a signature to an originally unsigned pendant[3]. Of the paintings discussed in this volume, it may be assumed that the *Portrait of Nicolaes van Bambeeck* from 1641 (no. A 144; fig. 11) carries such an

Fig. 13. A 116 *The blinding of Samson.* Frankfurt-am-Main, Städelsches Kunstinstitut. An inscription in a clearly different handwriting



Fig. 14. A 133 *A dead bittern held high up by a hunter.* Dresden, Staatliche Kunstsammlungen Dresden. An inscription in a clearly different handwriting



Fig. 15. B 10 *Bust of Rembrandt with an architectural background.* Paris, Musée du Louvre. An inscription probably done in the same handwriting as that in fig. 16



Fig. 16. A 121 *The angel Raphael leaving Tobit and his family.* Paris, Musée du Louvre. An inscription probably done in the same handwriting as that in fig. 15



inscription copied from an original signature, probably that on its companion-piece (no. A 145; fig. 12). Though very much like it in form, the writing does not show the characteristic firmness of touch and has just a little too much emphasis on serif-like details. It is natural to suppose that the inscription was done when the two paintings were separated in 1814. In cases like this it is not hard to appreciate how an inscription that cannot be regarded as authentic can still give a wholly plausible date.

Things are more difficult in cases where authentic paintings carry deviant and even markedly differing inscriptions that have obviously not been placed over earlier ones and also cannot have been copied from genuine signatures on a companion-piece. This applies to, for instance, the uncharacteristic signature and date on the *Blinding of Samson* (no. A 116; fig. 13), set down with a reasonably

Fig. 17. A 134 *Two dead peacocks and a girl.* Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum. An inscription in a clearly different handwriting



Fig. 18. A 125 *Landscape with the Good Samaritan.* Krakow, Muzeum Narodowe. The handwriting would seem to differ from Rembrandt's.



Fig. 19. Rembrandt, *Portrait of Cornelis Claesz. Anslo,* red chalk drawing (Ben. 758). London, The British Museum



confident hand but written with almost upright, rather squat letters and with the same thickness throughout. It is also true of the no less confident but quite differently written inscription on the *Dead bittern held high up by a hunter* (no. A 133), whose letters and figures (fig. 14) are marked by a uniformity produced partly by singular curves in the verticals (in the *m, n, d, t,* etc.) and which is clearly different from Rembrandt's own writing. One cannot tell when and by whom such inscriptions were appended, and all one can do is hope that the datings — 1636 and 1639 respectively — were based on reliable knowledge, perhaps of a signature somewhere else that has become invisible or has disappeared. Sometimes one can assume that this knowledge was based on an inscription that was lost when the painting was cut down in size. This could be the case with the *Danae* (no. A 119), just as we have already supposed for the *Portrait of the shipbuilder Jan Rijcksen and his wife* (no. A 77). Assumptions of this kind can of course seldom or never be checked out and, to make matters worse still, the number of cases where obviously unauthentic inscriptions do inexplicably give dates that are acceptable on the grounds of style is remarkably large.

Though companion-pieces being separated may give a pointer in this respect, there is generally little or nothing that can be said about the period at which these evidently unauthentic inscriptions were added. An exception to this is perhaps the inscriptions on two paintings in the Louvre, the *Angel Raphael leaving Tobit and his family* (no. A 121) and the *Bust of Rembrandt with an architectural background* (no. B 10). The signature and date of 1637 on the latter (fig. 15) are on a part of the background that may be assumed to have been overpainted outside Rembrandt's circle, and if only for this reason —

Fig. 20. After Rembrandt (no. A 108 copy 2), *Abraham's sacrifice*. Munich, Bayerische Staatsgemäldesammlungen, Alte Pinakothek. Inscription in a different handwriting



though there is also that of the spiky, uncertain writing — cannot be seen as being done by either Rembrandt himself or a pupil. The same reasoning does not apply to the inscription likewise with the date of 1637, on the first named painting (fig. 16). The remarkable thing is, however, that both inscriptions are so alike in the shaping of the letters and the way they have been applied that they do seem to be from the same hand. If this is so, the dates when they came into the French royal collection (by 1750 and in 1785 respectively) are evidence that the inscriptions were appended in 1785 at the earliest. The foundation for dating the paintings in 1637 thus becomes very shaky, making matters awkward for the *Tobit* work in particular.

Less of a problem in this respect — because it does not involve a date — is the inscription '*Rembrandt*' (without an *f*, though that could well have been at the edge and have been lost) on the *Dead peacocks* (no. A 134; fig. 17). Though this comes very close to the shaping of Rembrandt's own letters, the execution is too uncertain and too lacking in continuity to persuade one that the signature is autograph.

One problem all on its own is that of the very small signatures that appear on landscapes especially, and that must occupy us here in relation to the *Landscape with the Good Samaritan* (no. A 125; fig. 18). One is tempted to see the slightly aberrant and rather over-careful shaping of this inscription as due to the unusually small scale, but it has to be said that neither the balance within the individual letters nor the relationship between them matches up entirely to what one expects of Rembrandt's handwriting. Comparison with a signature done with a rather blunt chalk at a more or less equally small scale on a drawing from 1640 (the *Portrait of Cornelis Claesz. Anslo* in the British Museum, Ben. 758; fig. 19) — does not serve to explain the difference — the sturdiness of the lettering achieved even on such a small scale, and the cohesiveness as a whole, make the signature on the *Landscape with the Good Samaritan* all the more difficult to accept.

Assumptions as to inscriptions done by workshop assistants

As might be expected, the inscriptions on non-autograph works show a wide variety, and only exceptionally is it possible to detect any order or pattern among them. Though as has already been said, we have not so far come across an unmistakeably authentic inscription on any of the non-authentic paintings discussed in the present volume, we have in fact got the impression that workshop assistants marked their productions with

Fig. 21. Ferdinand Bol, *David's dying charge to Solomon*. Dublin, National Gallery of Ireland (infrared photograph)



their master's name, written more or less as he did himself; so it is at best on this point that one might hope to trace some kind of logic among non-authentic signatures, in the sense that studio works that seem to come from a single hand would carry similar inscriptions, or even that inscriptions on workshop pieces would show the handwriting of pupils known to us by name. Below we shall be able to point to one more or less convincing example of each of these occurrences, but for the most part there is little or no pattern to be found among all the variety. Given the multiplicity of Rembrandt signatures added subsequently to works done in a more or less rembrandtesque style[4], this is not surprising. Thus, there is no clear link between the inscription on a number of works that can be connected in some way with Ferdinand Bol (nos. B 12, C 84, C 85, C 87, C 88, C 116 and C 121), nor any with Bol's handwriting[5] — but then one is not in the least sure that they were appended in the workshop.

The latter is generally accepted for the remarkably lengthy inscription '*Rembrandt . verandert. en over geschildert . 1636* on the Munich version (a free studio copy, one may assume) of the *Abraham's sacrifice* dated 1635 (no. A 108 copy 2; fig. 20). One cannot indeed see to whom it would have occurred later to add such an exceptional inscription. It starts by reproducing Rembrandt's own writing punctiliously — though gradually less and less so — but shows, in the poor cohesiveness and various over-accentuated details, so many clear differences that Rembrandt himself can be ruled out as the writer. The workshop assistant who painted the work must thus probably be seen as responsible for the inscription; our impression, voiced above, that assistants wrote Rembrandt signatures is to that extent confirmed. Who did so in this particular instance one cannot tell for sure, though it must be said that the form of the letters does show some similarity with that of early Bol signatures (fig. 21).

A prime example of an obviously unauthentic signature with a clearly individual character is on the *Bust of a man with a plumed cap* in The Hague (no. C 98; fig. 22). Most of the dancing letters, with a rather modest *R*, show a singular spikeness or, as in

Fig. 22. C 98 Unknown Rembrandt pupil, *Bust of a man with a plumed cap.* The Hague, Koninklijk Kabinet van Schilderijen, Mauritshuis



Fig. 23. C 72 Unknown pupil, *Portrait of a man.* Boston, Mass., Museum of Fine Arts. Inscription possibly done by the same hand as that of no. C 104



the *b*, a definite rhythm in a curve; these are foreign to Rembrandt's own script in this form, and do not appear again in any other known signatures.

The latter is perhaps true in the case of an inscription on a *Portrait of a man* of 1635 (no. C 104), which we believe to be from the same hand as three portraits dated 1634 — a pair of pendants in Boston (nos. C 72 and C 73) and the *Portrait of a woman* in Edinburgh (no. C 82). It would of course be interesting if a similar manner of signing were to confirm this link, but unfortunately the condition of some of the paintings mentioned and of their signatures does not warrant too firm an opinion on this point. Yet one might (with due reservations in respect of the retouches that must be assumed in both cases) well imagine that the inscriptions on the two men's portraits (see fig. 23) — marked by an out-of-balance *R* and a somewhat puny *b* — were done by a single hand, and thus find some support for the idea that the two portraits have one and the same author.

In general, such inscriptions do not point the way to any artist to whom we can put a name. One might see an exception to this in the case of the Glasgow *Slaughtered ox* (no. C 122), which we think can on the grounds of style and execution be attributed to Carel Fabritius. The signature, remarkably enough scratched in the wet paint (fig. 24), would seem to bear out this attribution. As material for comparison we have a number of signatures written by Fabritius both on documents and on paintings[6], the latter including one scratched into the paint on the *Bust of a*

Fig. 24. C 122 Attributed to Carel Fabritius, *A slaughtered ox.* Glasgow, Art Gallery and Museum

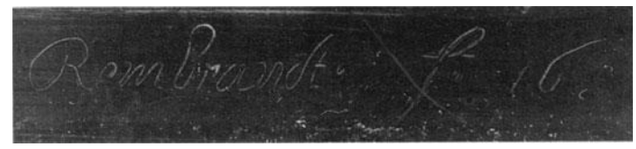


Fig. 25. Carel Fabritius, *Bust of a young man (Self-portrait?).* Rotterdam, Museum Boymans-Van Beuningen



man (self-portrait?) in Rotterdam (fig. 25). The Glasgow inscription shows enough points of similarity with this in rhythm and form — especially that of the *a* with the stem written separate — to make us think that the same hand wrote both.

Though the prospects that such cases offer seem encouraging, it must not be forgotten that in the great majority of cases it is impossible to bring any order into the chaos of the great many non-authentic signatures. But luckily, paintings are more important than signatures.

J.B.

1 In periodicals in the fields of art history and handwriting analysis.
2 See Vol. II, p. 104 notes 11.
3 See Vol. II, pp. 104–105 and nos. A 98 and A 99.
4 See Vol. II, p. 104, notes 12 and 13.
5 For Bol's signatures see, besides Blankert *Bol* pp. 31–34, Sumowski *Gemälde* I, nos. 78 and 79, and J. Bruyn in: *O.H.* 97 (1983), pp. 211–213 with illus.
6 C. Brown, *Carel Fabritius*, Oxford 1981, pl. 9.

Biographical information 1635–1642

26 February 1635 — In the Barent van Someren sale held on 22–28 February 1635, Rembrandt is mentioned on 26 February as 'Rembrant van Rijn tot Hendrick Uylenburch's'[1]. From this one may gather that he was still living with the painter and art dealer of that name, where he had already been mentioned in July 1632[2].

17 November 1635 — Rembrandt and Saskia make their will at the notary Sybrant Cornelissen, naming each other as sole heir[3]. From this one may deduce that they were married under the joint-estate regime. It was usual for couples to make a will before the first child was born, in case the wife died in childbirth.

15 December 1635 — Baptism of Rembrandt and Saskia's first child Rombertus, in the Oude Kerk[4].

15 February 1636 — Burial of Rombertus[5].

February 1636 — First letter to Constantijn Huygens[6], in which Rembrandt reports on good progress made on three Passion pieces for Frederik Hendrik – an *Entombment*, a *Resurrection* and an *Ascension* (nos. A 126, A 127 and A 118). Rembrandt gives his address in this letter as 'niuwe doelstraet'. The date 'Feb. 1636' is in a different hand, probably that of Huygens[7].

1636 — Second letter to Constantijn Huygens, in which Rembrandt says he will soon be coming to The Hague to see how the painting fits in with the others[8]. For this painting, the *Ascension*, Rembrandt asks 200 pounds[9].

c. 1636 — Notes on the verso of a drawing in Berlin, a copy after Pieter Lastman's *Susanna and the elders* (Ben. 448): '[first line undecipherable] / verkoft syn vaendraeger synt 15.-.- / en floora verhandelt 6.-.- / fardynandus van syn werck verhandelt / aen n ander werck van syn voorneemen / den Abraeham een floora / leenderts floora is verhandelt teegen 5 g' (p. 14 fig. 2)[10] (his standard-bearer sold at 15 guilders / a floora traded at 6 guilders / some of fardynandus' work traded / another work of his design / the Abraeham one floora / leendert's floora sold at 5 guilders). 'leendert' and 'fardynandus' may be identified as Leendert Cornelisz. van Beyeren and Ferdinand Bol[11].

10 March 1637 — At the sale of the coll. Jan Basse (Lille 1571–Amsterdam 1637) held 9–30 March 1637 Rembrandt buys, on 10ff March, various lots of prints, shells and plaster figures[12] His pupil Leendert Cornelisz. (van Beyeren) buys on 18 March, inter alia, an album with work by Lucas van Leyden. It has long been assumed that in doing so he was acting for Rembrandt; Dudok van Heel thought it possible Leendert was buying on behalf of his father, a rich timber merchant[13]. The inventory drawn up at Leendert's death in 1649 describes an album with prints and drawings by Lucas van Leyden; an album of drawings and prints by Lucas van Leyden given by Rembrandt as a pledge for a 600-guilder loan in 1668 would have been acquired from Leendert's estate[14].

10 September 1637 — At the sale of the paintings from the estate of Nicolaes Bas (1607–1636) Rembrandt buys a landscape by Govert Jansz. (1578–1619) for 30 guilders[15].

7 October 1637 — In the diary of Trojanus de Magistris, administrator of the financial estate of the brothers Jan Jansz. and Arent Jansz. Uyl: 'Noch den 7 October 1637 gegeven aen Jan Jansz Uyl om te gaen sitten op de vercoopinge van sijne schilderije mit Rembrant een rijcxdaelder

1 Strauss *Doc.*, 1635/1.

2 Wijnman (H.F. Wijnman, 'Rembrandt en Hendrick Uylenburch te Amsterdam', *Amstelodamum. Maandblad* . . . 43, 1956, pp. 94–102, esp. 100) interpreted this note as giving the address, but Van Eeghen, less plausibly, read it as an indication of Uylenburch standing guarantor for Rembrandt (I.H. van Eeghen, 'Het Amsterdamse Sint Lucasgilde in de 17de eeuw', *Jaarboek Amstelodamum* 61, 1969, pp. 65–102, esp. 87).

3 Strauss *Doc.*, 1635/5.

4 Strauss *Doc.*, 1635/6.

5 Strauss *Doc.*, 1636/3. I.H. v[an] E[eghen], 'De kinderen van Rembrandt en Saskia', *Amstelodamum. Maandblad* . . . 43 (1956), pp. 144–146, concluded from the evidence that no child of Rembrandt's – neither Rombertus nor either of the two girls that followed him – could as Benesch believed have served as a model for the drawings of children, which are on stylistic grounds placed around 1635 (Ben. 258, 259, 277, 280b, 313, 313a and 440).

6 H. Gerson, *Seven letters by Rembrandt*, The Hague 1961, pp. 18–24; Strauss *Doc.*, 1636/1.

7 Gerson (op. cit.[6], p. 31) by mistake placed this remark in his commentary on the second letter; see Strauss *Doc.*, 1636/2, note 2. The idea of it being in Huygens' handwriting is very plausible when one compares it with that in his *Vita* (see our Vol. I, p. 192).

8 Gerson, op. cit.[6], pp. 26–31; Strauss *Doc.*, 1636/2.

9 If one assumes that the word 'Vlaams' is omitted in front of 'pond', the price Rembrandt had in mind would amount to 1200 guilders. In his comment on this letter, Gerson (op. cit.[6], p. 31) believes this reading presents problems because 600 guilders each was paid for the paintings delivered earlier. In 1646, however, 1200 Carolus guilders each was paid for the *Birth* and *Circumcision* (Strauss *Doc.*, 1646/6).

10 The drawing on the recto is dated variously, but mostly *c.* 1635/37; a certain preference for 1636 can be based on Rembrandt's occupation with the Susanna theme in that year (see no. A 117). That the notes on the verso are roughly contemporaneous with the drawing is of course by no means certain.

11 Ferdinand Bol entered Rembrandt's workshop probably in 1636 (Blankert *Bol*, p. 12). Leendert Cornelisz (van Beyeren) was named on 10 March 1637 as 'disipel van Rembrandt' (Strauss *Doc.*, 1637/2).

12 Strauss *Doc.*, 1637/2.

13 HdG *Urk.*, no. 51; S.A.C. Dudok van Heel in: *Jaarboek Amstelodamum* 70 (1978), pp. 146–169, esp. 152.

14 Strauss *Doc.*, 1649/5a (Addenda) and 1668/5.

15 Strauss *Doc.*, 1637/3. At the time of his *cessio bonorum* in 1656 Rembrandt owned two paintings by Govert Jansz; see Strauss *Doc.*, 1656/12, nos. 44 and 107.

f.2:10:–'[16]. Van Eeghen interpreted this note as meaning that Jan Jansz. Uyl gave Rembrandt a *rijksdaalder* to bid at the sale of Uyl's paintings and thus drive up the price[17].

8 October 1637 — In the diary of Trojanus de Magistris, administrator of the financial estate of the brothers Jan Jansz. and Arent Jansz. Uyl: 'Noch den 8 October 1637 [. . .] van Sr. Rembrant schilder vier hondert vierentwintich gulden thien stuijvers acht penningen, over den coop van een schilderije van Leander ende Hero bij Ribbens gedaen, dwelcke ick tot onderpant hadde [. . .]'[18] (Furthermore on 8 October . . . from Sr. Rembrant painter four hundred twentyfour guilders ten stuyvers eight pence, for the purchase of a painting of Leander and Hero done by Ribbens, the which I had as a pledge). Around 1644 Rembrandt sold the painting to Lodewijk van Ludick (1607–1669), art dealer of Amsterdam, for 530 guilders[19].

17 December 1637 — In a deed drawn up by the notary Benedict Baddel dated 17 December 1637 two witnesses state that they have been present when on the evening of 16 December 1637 '. . . Reijnbrand van Rhijn . . .' promised Samuel d'Orta to use only for his own purposes the 3 or 4 prints still in his possession of the etching of *Abraham and Hagar* (B. 30), the plate of which he had sold to D'Orta[20]. Rembrandt is living on the 'Binnen Amstel deser voors. Stede . . .', where on the evidence of the address on his third letter to Constantijn Huygens he was still living on 12 January 1639[21].

9 February 1638 — At the sale of the estate of Gommer Spranger held on 9ff February 1638 Rembrandt buys prints including some by Lucas van Leyden and Albrecht Dürer (including the latter's *Life of the Virgin* in nine copies and a *Passion*, 3 drawings by Goltzius and 2 prints by Raphael)[22].

16 July 1638 — Rembrandt brings a libel action, through his brother-in-law Dr Ulricus Uylenburch, against Dr Albertus van Loo and Mayke van Loo the widow of Dr Adigerus Adius in the Court of Friesland. They are alleged to have said to Saskia that she has squandered the inheritance from her parents through ostentatious living. The defendants reply that they have not named Saskia but her eldest sister Jeltie, and that it has been done with the best of intentions. The court dismisses Rembrandt's complaint[23].

22 July 1638 — Baptism of Rembrandt and Saskia's second child Cornelia, in the Oude Kerk by Johannes Sylvius[24].

13 or 14 August 1638 — Burial of their daughter Cornelia in the Zuiderkerk[25].

5 January 1639 — Rembrandt signs the deed of purchase for a house on the St. Anthoniebreestraat. Completion is to be on 1 May. Of the purchase price of 13 000 guilders, 1200 are to be paid on completion, a further 1200 on 1 November of the same year, and on 1 May 1640 850 guilders, together making up one-quarter of the total price. The remaining three-quarters can be paid by the buyer over the next 5 or 6 years, as will suit him. An annual 5% interest is to be paid on the unpaid amount[26].

12 January 1639 — Third letter to Constantijn Huygens. Rembrandt reports completion of the *Entombment* and *Resurrection* for Prince Frederik Hendrik. He also offers Huygens a painting, probably the *Blinding of Samson* (see no. A 116)[27].

[January 1639] — In the undated fourth letter to Constantijn Huygens Rembrandt announces the despatch of two paintings, and hopes the Prince will pay 1000 guilders for each or, if he does not find them worth this, a lesser amount at his discretion[28].

27 January 1639 — In the fifth letter to Constantijn Huygens Rembrandt expresses the desire to have

16 Strauss *Doc.*, 1637/5; Hofstede de Groot (*Urk.*, no. 53) believed that Trojanus de Magistris wanted to have purchases made by Uyl at the sale of Uyl's work, with support and advice from Rembrandt. They would together have received a rijksdaalder for their trouble.

17 I.H. v[an] E[eghen], 'Jan Jansz. Uyl en Rembrandt als "tamme eend" [i.e. decoy duck]', *Amstelodamum. Maandblad* . . . 64 (1977), pp. 123–126.

18 Strauss *Doc.*, 1637/6. There is a version of this subject at New Haven, Yale University Art Gallery (canvas 95.9 × 127 cm) and a larger and probably later one at Dresden, Gemäldegalerie Alte Meister (cat. no. 1002, canvas 128 × 217 cm). For the history of both of these, see M. Jaffé, 'Rubens in Italy: Rediscovered works', *Burl. Mag.* 100 (1958), pp. 411–422, esp. 420–421.

19 Strauss *Doc.*, 1637/6 and 1659/14.

20 Strauss *Doc.*, 1637/7.

21 H. Gerson, op. cit.[6], pp. 34–40.

22 HdG *Urk.*, no. 56; Strauss *Doc.*, 1638/2. Hofstede de Groot concluded from the purchasing of large numbers of identical prints that at this time Rembrandt was acting as an art dealer.

23 Strauss *Doc.*, 1638/7.

24 Strauss *Doc.*, 1638/8.

25 Strauss *Doc.*, 1638/9. See also I.H. v[an] E[eghen], op. cit.[5], p. 145.

26 Strauss *Doc.*, 1639/1.

27 H. Gerson, op. cit.[6], pp. 39–40; Strauss *Doc.*, 1639/2.

28 H. Gerson, op. cit.[6], pp. 42–47; Strauss *Doc.*, 1639/3. C. Vosmaer, 'Brieven van kunstenaars. Briefwisseling tussen Rembrandt en Huygens', *De Nederlandsche Spectator*, 1865, pp. 60–62, believed that this undated letter followed that of 27 January 1639 and then came that of 13 February 1639. Huygens, he thought, gave permission for the despatch of the two paintings in a letter, which has not survived, written after 14 January. Hofstede de Groot (*Urk.*, no. 65) thought the undated letter was written before that of 27 January, and crossed the latter of 14 January from Huygens. This latter sequence is adopted by Gerson (op. cit.[6]). Schwartz (1984, pp. 112–113) had the fourth and fifth letters in reverse order.

payment for the last two paintings sent, preferably in cash, via the receiver of direct taxes Johannes Wtenbogaert, to whom he has already spoken and who has no objection[29].

13 February 1639 — In his sixth letter to Constantijn Huygens Rembrandt reluctantly agrees to the payment of 1600 guilders each for the two paintings, though he thinks they are worth more, provided he receives the 44 guilders he has had advanced for frames and packing[30].

17 February 1639 — At the intercession of Constantijn Huygens, the Prince issues an order to Thyman van Volbergen to pay Rembrandt 1244 Carolus guilders for two paintings, the *Entombment* and *Resurrection* (nos. A 126 and A 127)[31].

[February 1639] — In his seventh letter to Constantijn Huygens Rembrandt complains of the delay in payment[32]. This letter must have been written between 13 February and the payment that had been authorized by the Prince on 17 February.

20 January 1640 — Hendrick Uylenburch gives his art dealer's business as a pledge to his creditors, who included Rembrandt. By this arrangement, the creditors as shareholders owned Uylenburch's as a guarantee for the moneys advanced by them[33].

31 March 1640 — On Rembrandt's behalf his brother Adriaan sells his brother Willem a plot of land near Leiden by the Wittepoort in Zoeterwoude, for 459 guilders (of 40 stuyvers to the guilder) and 3 stuyvers in cash[34].

29 July 1640 — Baptism of Rembrandt and Saskia's third child Cornelia in the Oude Kerk[35].

12 August 1640 — Burial of a child in the Zuiderkerk. It is unclear whether this note about a child of 'haerbrant', elsewhere called 'Garbrandt', refers to Rembrandt. This would be so only if one assumes that the address 'over die sluis' means across the Anthoniesluis, i.e. in the Anthoniebreestraat, and that the father's name was misspelled[36]. At all events, the third child was no longer living when Saskia died in 1642.

30 August 1640 — Rembrandt empowers a lawyer to claim at Leeuwarden the part-inheritance coming to his wife from her aunt Sas Rommertsdochter Ulenburg (before 1554–1634). The witnesses are 'Srs. Ferdinandus Bol ende Herke Ibbeler schoemakersgezel . . .'[37].

14 September 1640 — Burial of Rembrandt's mother in the St. Pieterskerk in Leiden. Rembrandt visited Leiden more than once in connexion with the winding-up of the estate[38].

22 September 1641 — Baptism of Rembrandt's son Titus in the Zuiderkerk; he was named after his mother's sister Titia van Uylenburgh, wife of François Coopal, commissioner of maritime muster at Flushing, who was a witness at the baptism[39].

5 June 1642 — Saskia makes her will, naming Rembrandt as sole beneficiary until his remarriage or, if he does not remarry, until his death. She further provides that Rembrandt need make no deposition on or give an inventory of her estate. The chamber of orphans is excluded from any say in the affairs of her children. If Titus or any other children should die without issue, Saskia's share on the death or remarriage of Rembrandt is to go to her sister Hiskia, provided the latter gives 1000 guilders to her brothers Ulricus and Idsert Uylenburgh and to the children, jointly, of her deceased sister Jeltje van Uylenburgh[40].

14 June 1642 — Death of Saskia, according to a note by Rombertus Ockema in his album 'Notabilia quaedam'[41]. Rombertus was a son of Doede Ockema and Jeltje van Uylenburgh, one of Saskia's sisters.

19 June 1642 — Saskia buried in the Oude Kerk[42].

1 November 1642 — By a deed of notary, Floris Stevens, magistrate of Edam, and Pieter Cornelisz Oots, father of the Edam almshouse, promise to guarantee to 'Sr. Rembrant Van Rijn, coopman te Amsterdam' discharge of a sum of 1200 guilders he has paid as ransom for the release of Cornelis Jansz of Edam, who was being held captive by Barbary pirates. It is assumed that Cornelisz Jansz was an acquaintance of Geertje Dircx, known as Titus's nurse and Rembrandt's mistress, who also came from Edam and whose brother Pieter was a ship's carpenter[43].

17 December 1642 — Saskia's will registered by the chamber of orphans[44].

29 H. Gerson, op. cit.[6], pp. 50–55; Strauss *Doc.*, 1639/4.
30 H. Gerson, op. cit.[6], pp. 58–63; Strauss *Doc.*, 1639/5.
31 Strauss *Doc.*, 1639/7.
32 H. Gerson, op. cit.[6], pp. 66–71; Strauss *Doc.*, 1639/6.
33 Strauss *Doc.*, 1640/2.
34 Strauss *Doc.*, 1640/3.
35 Strauss *Doc.*, 1640/5.
36 Van Eeghen, op. cit.[5], p. 146; Strauss *Doc.*, 1640/6).
37 Strauss *Doc.*, 1640/7.
38 Strauss *Doc.*, 1640/8. See also ibid. 1640/9, 1640/11, 1640/12, 1640/13 and 1640/14.
39 Strauss *Doc.*, 1641/4.
40 Strauss *Doc.*, 1642/2.
41 Strauss *Doc.*, 1642/3.
42 Strauss *Doc.*, 1642/4. See also ibid. 1642/5 and 1642/6.
43 Strauss *Doc.*, 1642/8.
44 Strauss *Doc.*, 1642/9.

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 105–A 146
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 half-length figures and busts (including self-portraits) without any explicit thematic significance, portraits (group portraits, companion-pieces, single portraits, known sitters in alphabetical order, unidentified sitters according to size, men preceding women), landscapes, animals and still-life.

Nos. B 9–B 12
Paintings Rembrandt's authorship of which cannot be positively either accepted or rejected.

Nos. C 83–C 122
Paintings Rembrandt's authorship of which cannot be accepted, including those that are usually associated with his work of 1635–1642 but were probably executed at a later date. The paintings are arranged in iconographical order, irrespective of their status as works by contemporary artists, schoolpieces, copies, old imitations or later imitations. For convenience sake the following works are singled out for special mention:
C 117, C 118 and C 119: attributed to Govaert Flinck
C 84, C 85, C 87, C 88, C 113, C 116, C 121 and (the completion of) no. B 12: attributed with a varying degree of plausibility to Ferdinand Bol
C 97, C 106, C 107 and (possibly) C 122: attributed to Carel Fabritius
C 104 (and C 105?) to the same hand as C 72, C 73 and C 83
C 90 and C 91: attributed to one anonymous follower
C 108 and C 112: attributed to one anonymous studio assistant
C 86, C 88, C 93 and C 94: 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 to us. For more detailed information see the comment on the Table of dendrochronological data in this Volume.

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 Vol. II, Chapter II of the Introduction.

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.

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.

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 *8. 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	=	2.50 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] *pied du roi*	=	32.48 cm; 12 *pouces*
1 *pouce*	=	2.70 cm
Nuremberg foot (*Schuh*)	=	30.40 cm; 12 *Zoll*
1 *Zoll*	=	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 *archine*	=	71.10 cm; 16 *verchokk*
1 *verchokk*	=	4.44 cm
Vienna foot (*Schuh*)	=	31.61 cm; 12 *Zoll*
1 *Zoll*	=	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 (*pied du roi*)
Pommersfelden	–	Nuremberg foot (*Schuh*)
St Petersburg	–	Russian *archine*
Salzdahlum	–	Brunswick foot
Strasbourg	–	[French] royal foot (*pied du roi*)
Vienna	–	Vienna foot (*Schuh*)

Paintings by Rembrandt

A 105 The Entombment

[1633/35]

GLASGOW, HUNTERIAN ART GALLERY, UNIVERSITY OF GLASGOW

HDG 139; BR. 554; BAUCH 74; GERSON 217

1. Summarized opinion

A well preserved, authentic work with the character and probably also the function of a preparatory sketch, datable not later than 1635.

2. Description of subject

In an only partially lit cave the body of Christ is being laid in a tomb which appears to be sunk partly into the ground but on the right clearly has a vertical end.

To the left an old bearded man kneels by Christ's head and supports his body, which lies in a shroud, under the armpits. A younger man stands holding the two ends of the shroud, taking the weight of the body; alongside him a man stands, somewhat higher up and perhaps stepping down from a ledge, with one hand resting on a rock. The shroud is held together at Christ's feet by a kneeling figure wearing a large headdress. At the righthand end of the tomb a standing (or kneeling?) figure wrapped in voluminous drapery is seen only vaguely in the gloom. To the left, close to the body, a kneeling woman uses one hand to shield a flaming torch held in the other hand and providing the main source of light; her figure throws a shadow on the rear wall of the cave. To the left of her stands an old bearded man, looking down.

A group of figures at some distance on the right appears to be approaching the tomb down some steps. They are weakly lit by the glow of a lantern carried by a bearded man with a wide, flat hat. To the right of him a man's head emerges from the darkness, while to the left two figures can be seen extremely vaguely; a child stands in front of them. The group is preceded by two figures who, further to the left, are halfway down the steps. On the right an old seated man can be made out, leaning on a boulder and supporting his head on his left hand.

3. Observations and technical information

Working conditions

Examined in June 1971 (B.H., P.v.Th.) in satisfactory lighting and out of the frame. A radiograph covering the whole of the painting was received later.

Support

DESCRIPTION: Oak panel, grain horizontal, 32.1 × 40.3 cm. Of very uneven thickness (thickest on the left), averaging about 0.9 cm. Single plank. Back bevelled on all four sides. A horizontal crack *c.* 5 cm long runs at the lower left at 2 cm from the bottom edge.
SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

Ground

DESCRIPTION: A ground of grey-brown tint is clearly visible at many places, especially in and below the standing figure on the far left; elsewhere it shows through.
SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

Paint layer

CONDITION: Very good. Craquelure: very slight, and only in the thickest parts.
DESCRIPTION: A translucent brown has been used to lay in the picture. An opaque paint was then used for working it up, in both dark tints and lighter mixed colours that occur in numerous variations from grey-brown to a light ochre yellow and white. Besides a mainly broad and firm approach the work shows, in some passages, a considerable variety of treatment.

The surroundings are done with broad strokes of mostly dark paint; in rendering the majority of the figures the treatment becomes denser with brushstrokes cursorily defining shapes and the fall of light. Paint is applied thickly, especially in the parts of the woman kneeling to the left of Christ that catch the light. The standing (or kneeling) figure at the foot of the tomb is rendered mainly with a few arching movements of the brush, in dark and somewhat lighter paint. Elsewhere, particularly in the group at the upper right, paintstrokes are placed over darker paint that remains partly visible through reserves, where it contributes to the suggestion of form.

The figure of Christ is rendered with greater precision, the body done with thick and very light ochre-coloured paint, the head in almost white paint on top of which there are minute strokes of grey and a brownish ochre colour that strengthen the structure. The teeth are shown with two tiny spots of white. The shroud, too, is painted thickly in white, with dry, glancing brushstrokes of a dark brown paint marking the lower outline and the fall of the folds. Christ's legs are done more thinly in a brownish white, with on top of it a few touches of dark brown; the feet are worked up quite precisely. The old man supporting Christ's upper body, with his hands hidden in the folds of the shroud, has hazy outlines and yet is subtly defined. The two men further up to the right, painted in browns and greys with the heads in an ochre colour, form the most detailed passage in the painting. As with Christ's head and that of the white-bearded man, the structure and expression of the faces are determined to a great extent by a few gossamer-fine and tellingly-placed accents. A few scratchmarks in the paint have been used in rendering the clothing of the man standing on the left.

A pentimento can be seen to the left of the head of the figure holding the shroud together at Christ's feet; a second appears at the place where a part of the rock wall or a round stone is indicated at the middle of the righthand edge. Both pentimenti can be seen in the relief.
SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

X-Rays

The radiographic image is dominated by mainly bold brushstrokes showing the lit forms in radioabsorbent paint. Some have been toned down in the final execution, or filled in with detail, while others have been slightly altered. The latter is the case mostly with the figure at Christ's feet; here, various shapes interfere with the forms now seen at the surface. One gets the impression that this figure was laid in quite differently — possibly she (or he) had the arms outstretched, with the hands clasped.

Signature

None.

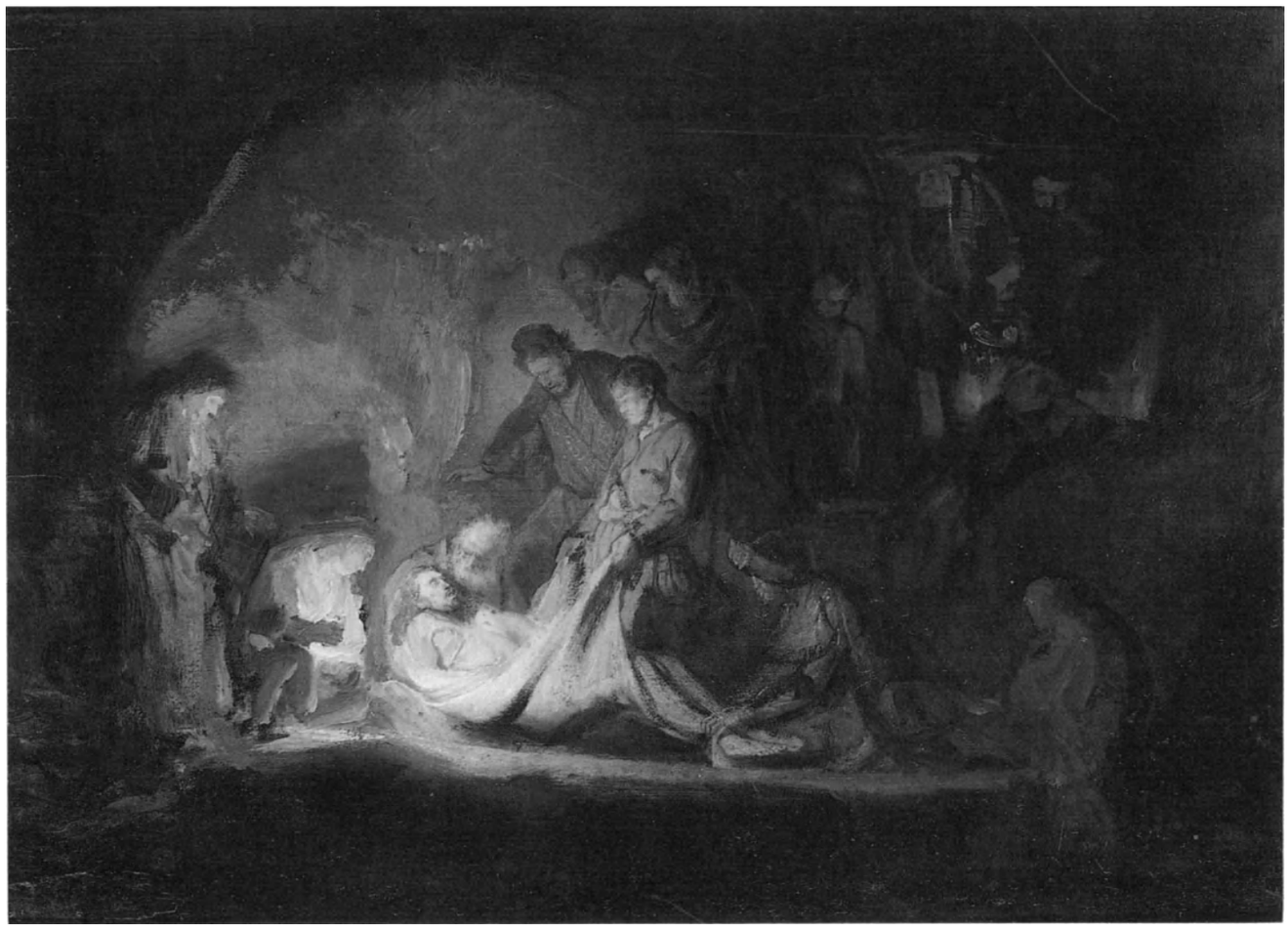
Varnish

No special remarks.

4. Comments

The unsigned painting is generally thought to be an autograph work by Rembrandt, and we share this opinion. The absence of any doubt on this score stems firstly from the general character of the work; only some of its individual features can be closely compared to other authentic works. Quite exceptional is the extremely sketchlike treatment, evident not only in figures placed to one side but also in the figures in the centre; it is very striking even in a lit figure like that of the woman with the torch. Even though the work may have been left unfinished, it shows a spontaneity and sureness of touch of a kind that one expects to find only in an original work. The free treatment is accompanied by great mastery in distributing light values and in

Fig. 1. Panel 32.1 × 40.3 cm



giving character to the figures at the centre of the action, where there is a convincing rendering even of the characters' emotional involvement in what is happening. This handling of light, treatment of depth and typing of the figures accord well with what one knows of Rembrandt, though these features, together with the occasionally noticeably free handwriting, perhaps remind one more of his drawings and etchings than of the paintings. Such a night scene, in which some figures are lit more strongly and most of the others only sparsely by one or more sources of light, is also one of Rembrandt's favourites, especially as a setting for a biblical scene. It is to a large extent the mood, as created by the chiaroscuro and reticent action, that convinces one of his authorship; for all the sketchiness, one senses here, if only in embryo, the effective balance between the narrative and the contemplative that is so characteristic of his history paintings.

The various but closely connected features mentioned above are, to an important extent, part of the essence of Rembrandt's work and are thus not linked to any specific period. It is therefore understandable that alongside the general certainty about the painting's author there is in the Rembrandt literature a considerable variety of opinion as to its date. At one extreme Hofstede de Groot[1] placed its date of production around 1633, and at the other Valentiner[2] referring to the Munich *Entombment* (no. A 126) which was about half completed in February 1636 and was delivered to Prince Frederik Hendrik in 1639, put the production 'about a decade later than the similar composition in Munich', so that one has to think in terms of 1645–49. There is, between the Glasgow picture and the fine and detailed working of that in Munich, an evident difference in treatment that prompted Van Gelder[3], too, to assume different dates of production for the two works. He saw 'the more vital Glasgow sketch' as being 'probably a later version of a sketch for the Munich picture'. Schwartz[4], too, thought of a version derived from the latter. Hofstede de Groot[5], on the other hand, regarded the oil sketch itself as a preliminary study for the Munich Passion painting,

Fig. 2. X-Ray



and Brochhagen[6] thought it was used during the preparations for this, in which case the work would have been done not later than 1635. Bauch[7] and Gerson[8], finally, preferred to see in the Glasgow sketch the design for an etching that was never executed; Bauch considered 1639 as then being the earliest date of production, while Gerson pointed to affinities with drawings from the 1630s in general.

When considering the dating, the Munich work that Rembrandt painted for Prince Frederik Hendrik (no. A 126) naturally serves as a point of reference. Strictly speaking, there is between the two pictures a close resemblance only in the placing and form of the body of Christ and of the two men standing over him. Similar in a more general sense in the two works is the lighting from the left, the torch shielded by the hand of the person holding it, and the motif of the kneeling figure holding Christ's feet. In both pictures the actors are divided into two groups, the main one shown at the bottom by the tomb while the other is placed higher up to the right by the entrance. Apart from the handling of paint — improvising in the Glasgow oil sketch and carefully considered in the Munich painting — the main difference between the two lies in the proportion of the picture area (oblong in the sketch and upright in the painting, in which one can see the extreme lefthand and righthand figures from the sketch as appearing somewhat lower down). Ought one, in the light of this, to see the Glasgow sketch as preceding the Munich painting or following it?

Looked at in isolation, the sketch offers, as we have said, hardly any clue to an accurate dating. The fact that the group in the middle ground (especially the man with the wide headdress and the lantern) recurs in a corresponding place in reverse in the Munich *Adoration of the shepherds* painted for Prince Frederik Hendrik in 1646 (Br. 574) cannot count for a great deal — as this group appears also in the Munich *Entombment* (where it has become almost invisible), this in any case involves the re-use of an earlier motif. A drawing of the subject attributable to Rembrandt and earlier in coll. F. Güterbock, Berlin (Ben. 64), which shares a number of motifs

Fig. 3. Detail (1 : 1)



with the Glasgow sketch, gives no clear evidence of the relationship between the two works, and its date is too uncertain to yield any conclusion about no. A 105. One cannot however help feeling that the composition and typing of the figures point to a date before rather than after 1635. The closing-off of the scene on the left with a scarcely-lit figure acting as a repoussoir can already be found in works from the late Leiden years, e.g. the *Raising of Lazarus* in Los Angeles (no. A 30). The man standing in the centre holding up the body looks, in his attire and facial features, more like the servant in the 1633 etching of the *Good Samaritan* (B. 90) than like his counterpart in the Munich painting. More specifically, the indication of the whites of the eyes and teeth using fine dots of white is very reminiscent of Rembrandt's habit in the Leiden years and the early 1630s, which then continued in work like the Munich *Ascension* completed in 1636 (no. A 118). Because of this, the similarities between the Glasgow sketch and Munich painting can be interpreted with a great measure of probability as meaning that Rembrandt used the former when painting the latter.

Whether no. A 105 was intended from the outset as a preparation for the Munich painting is of course a different question. The difference in proportions makes this doubtful, and a closer study of the nature and functions of Rembrandt's grisailles prompts a different conclusion. The London *Ecce homo* on paper of 1634 (no. A 89) is the only monochrome sketch that is definitely known to have served for an etching at the same scale. With the other grisailles that can with great probability be dated in the years 1633–35 — the Amsterdam *Joseph relating his dreams* (no. A 66), the Berlin *John the Baptist preaching* (no. A 106) and the London *Lamentation* (no. A 107) — one cannot be sure of their purpose. One gets the impression, however, that all these sketches, no matter how much they differ in the degree of detail, were like the *Ecce homo* made with an eye to etchings that probably had to be done on the same scale as the sketch. Bauch and Gerson's idea that the Glasgow sketch too was meant for an etching that was never made thus gains in plausibility. This does not however contradict Brochhagen's view that the sketch was the starting point for the Munich *Entombment* and thus was done in 1635 at the latest. This would mean that it was painted around 1633/35. Despite the greater measure of sketchiness that (like the *Joseph relating his dreams*) it betrays compared to the *Ecce homo* and *John the Baptist preaching*, there is much to be said for the idea that the whole group of stylistically more or less similar sketches were painted in the same years, all of them done in preparation for etchings most of which never materialized.

5. Documents and sources

'Een schets van de begraeffenis Cristi van Rembrant', perhaps identical with no. A 105, was listed in the inventory of Rembrandt's possessions drawn up on 25–26 July 1656 (Strauss *Doc.*, 1656/12, no. 111). It is less likely that the mention of 'een grafleggingh van Rembrant' owned by Ferdinand Bol in 1669 (Blankert *Bol*, p. 77 no. 13) could be related to no. A 105; it more probably referred to one of the copies of no. A 126.

6. Graphic reproductions

1. Etching by Pierre François Basan (Paris 1723–1797), inscribed: *Rembrandt Pinxit — F. Basan Excudit / Les morts ensevelis* (fig. 5). Reproduces the picture in reverse compared to the original in a framing smaller at the top but especially at the left and bottom.

Fig. 4. Detail (1 : 1)

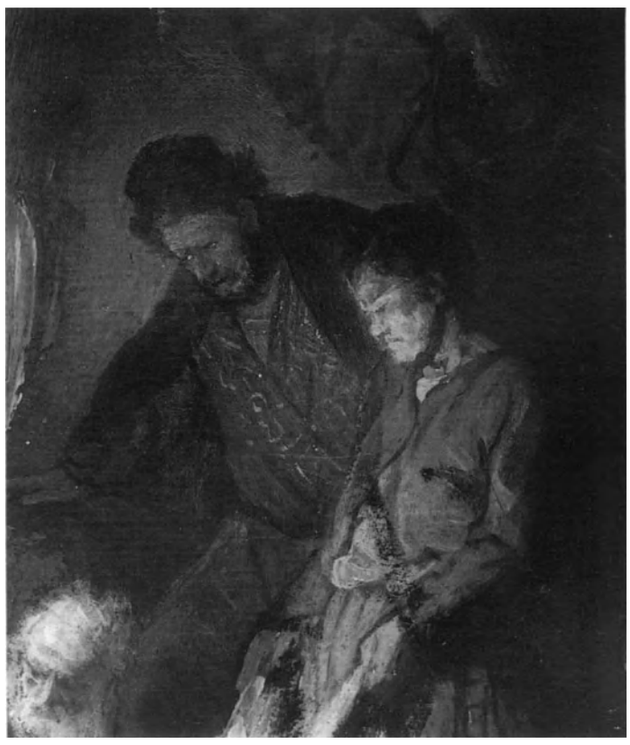


Fig. 5. Etching by P. F. Basan (reproduced in reverse)



The kneeling figure shown very summarily at the lower right in the oil sketch is omitted from the etching, as is a configuration of dark patches that appears above this figure and in which one can read a seated figure. The floor is shown as flat, while the oil sketch gives the impression of the tomb being partly sunk into the ground.

2. Mezzotint by Johann Jakob Haid (Kleineislingen 1704 –Augsburg 1767) is in these and other features so close to Basan's etching that the latter must have been the model for it; accordingly, the mezzotint picture is reversed compared to that in the etching.

7. Copies

None.

8. Provenance

– Probably identical with a sketch described in the inventory of Rembrandt's possessions dated 25–26 July 1656 (see *Documents and sources*).

*– To judge mainly from the dimensions, identical with a painting in coll. Robert Strange: *A descriptive Catalogue of a Collection of Pictures . . . collected during a Journey of Several Years in Italy*, by Robert Strange, London 1769, no. 59: 'Rembrandt. Born near Leyden 1606, died 1668. The Entombing of Lazarus. The composition of this picture is extremely fine, and the characters remarkable for expression; though we must neither expect to find an elegance of outline, nor the taste of the antique. Rembrandt, though born with a happy genius for painting, was a stranger to both. He followed nature strictly, but it was that of his own country; so that his figures for the most part are deficient in elegance. His pictures are however conceived with the most lively imagination. He possessed above all other a sovereign knowledge of light and shade; of which this picture is an example. One foot three inches and a half wide, by one foot half an inch high [= 32.3 × 40 cm]'. Sale London (Christie's) 7–9 February 1771 (Lugt 1888), 2nd day no. 61: 'Rembrandt. Born near Leyden 1606, died 1668. The Entombing of Lazarus. — This picture is remarkable for character and expression, the author possessed, above all others, a sovereign knowledge of light and shade: we have here a striking example of it. — 1 foot 3½ wide, by 1 foot ½ an inch high.'

– Coll. Dr William Hunter, Glasgow, bequeathed to University College, Glasgow in 1783.

9. Summary

Though it is in its partly extremely sketchy treatment hard to compare to any other Rembrandt work, this monochrome oil sketch convinces one of its authenticity; it was presumably done in preparation for an etching, possibly at the same time — 1633/35 — as other monochrome sketches. It may have been identical with a sketch of the Entombment listed among Rembrandt's possessions in 1656. The unmistakeable link with the painting of this subject in Munich (no. A 126), which was described as half completed in February 1636, can be interpreted as meaning that the sketch was used for the painting, without necessarily having been intended from the outset as a preparation for it.

REFERENCES

1 HdG 139.
2 W.R. Valentiner, 'The Rembrandt exhibitions in Holland, 1956', *Art Quarterly* 19 (1956), pp. 390–404, esp. 404 note 14.
3 J.G. van Gelder, 'The Rembrandt exhibition at Edinburgh', *Burl. Mag.* 92 (1950), pp. 327–329, esp. 328.
4 Schwartz 1984, p. 117.
5 C. Hofstede de Groot, 'Hollandsche kunst in Schotland', *O.H.* 11 (1893), pp. 129–148, esp. 146.
6 E. Brochhagen in: *Holländische Malerei des 17. Jahrhunderts* (Alte Pinakothek München Katalog III), 1967, p. 66.
7 Bauch 1966, 74.
8 Gerson 217.

A 106 John the Baptist preaching [1634/1635]

BERLIN (WEST), STAATLICHE MUSEEN PREUSSISCHER KULTURBESITZ, GEMÄLDEGALERIE, CAT.NO. 828 K

HDG 97; BR. 555; BAUCH 63; GERSON 71

Fig. 1. Canvas 62.7 × 81.1 cm



1. Summarized opinion

A well preserved grisaille the authenticity of which is, on the grounds both of style and quality and of evidence as to the genesis of the work, combined with documentary evidence, beyond all doubt. The work must, in its smaller, first state, have been painted around 1634 in preparation for an etching and have been enlarged to its present format soon afterwards.

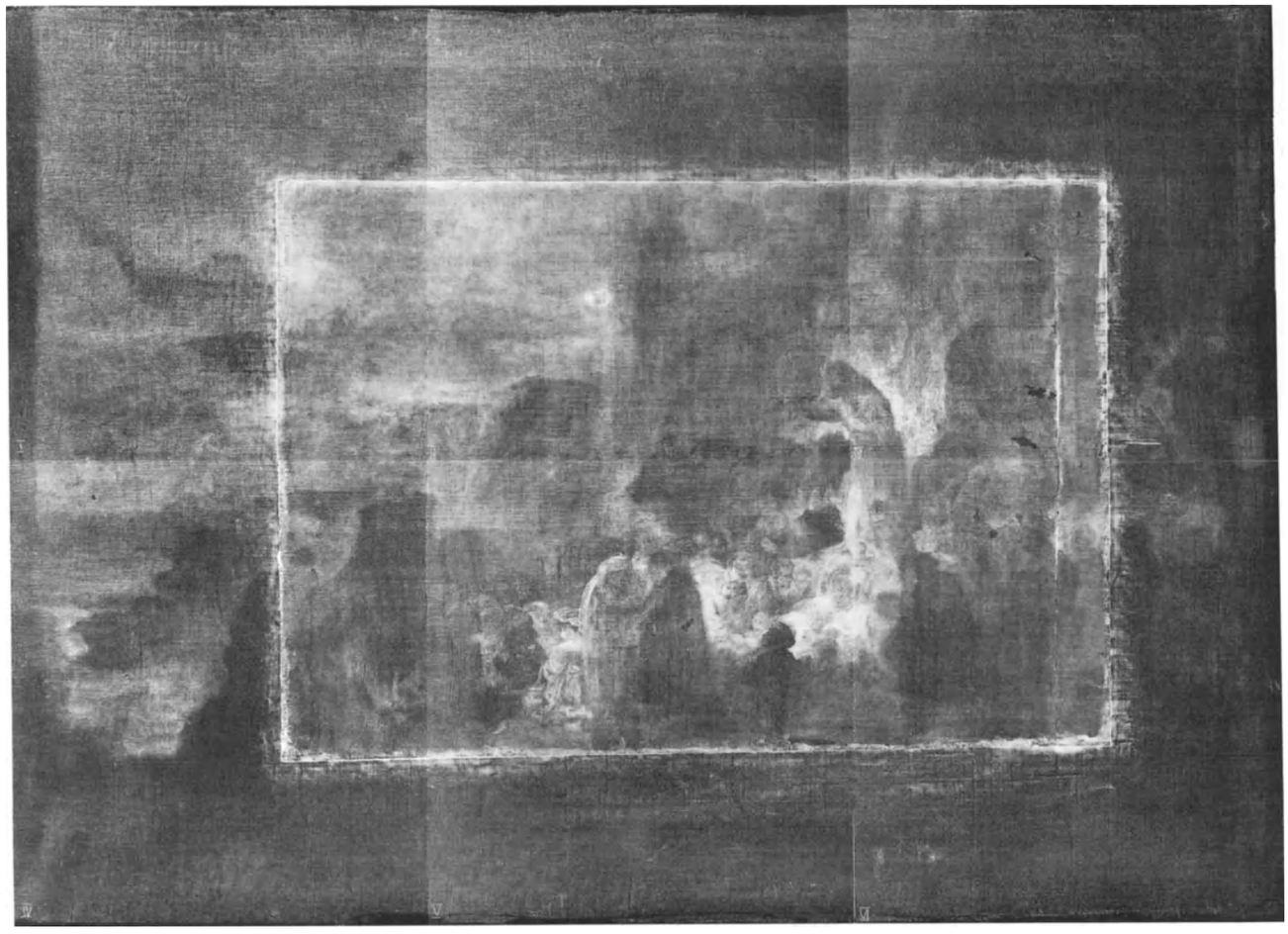
2. Description of subject

The picture is based on an episode that is described in all four Gospels. 'And the same John had his raiment of camel's hair, and a leathern girdle about his loins' and he preached in the desert of Judaea, saying 'Repent ye; for the kingdom of heaven is at hand. For this is he that was spoken of by the prophet Esaias, saying, The Voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.' 'Then went out to him Jerusalem and all Judaea, and all the region around about Jordan, and were baptized of him in Jordan, confessing their sins. But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees come to his baptism, he said unto them, O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come?' (Matthew 3: 3–7).

John, clad in a coarse garment held together with a leather girdle from which hangs a round bottle, is standing on a hillock with his left hand held to his chest and the right arm outstretched. He, and the figures at his feet, are brightly lit by a concentrated beam of light. The remainder of the scene is in the shadow from a grey, cloudy sky. A group of three old men, with their backs turned to John and talking among themselves, attracts attention by standing in the centre just at the edge of the beam of light, intersecting the swarming crowd. These are evidently some of the Pharisees and Sadducees to whom John spoke so harshly. Of these three, the man to the left wears hanging over his shoulders a headshawl bearing Hebrew lettering — a text from Deuteronomy 6: 5 '[And thou shalt love] the Lord thy God with all thy heart [and with all thy soul]' (information kindly supplied by Drs. E. van Volen, curator of the Jewish Historical Museum, Amsterdam).

The crowd — numbering almost 100 — is made up of a wide variety of figures. The majority of them are, judging by their dress, accessories and facial features, meant to represent various nations or parts of the world. On the left in the shadows, level with the group of Pharisees, sits a figure clad in Japanese armour. A little to the right is a figure with a short feathered headdress, possibly an Indian. Behind John and in his shadow sits a negro behind whom in turn stands an Indian with a tall

Fig. 2. X-Ray



feathered headdress and a long weapon — perhaps identifiable as a bow — slung over one shoulder and with a full quiver of arrows at his hip. To the right of the Indian in the shadow, and seen in profile, stands a figure in headgear somewhat reminiscent of an Egyptian wig. To the extreme right in the same group a standing figure, facing right, holds a large bow in his hand and has a quiver at his hip, a curved shield on his back and on his head a turban with a narrow part rising high in the centre — the type of turban often (for example in the woodcuts of Pieter Coecke van Aelst) depicted as typical of Turkish dress. To the left of this Turk and seated on the ground a figure, similarly looking to the right, has a bald head and may possibly be intended to represent an Asiatic type. The lit group directly at John's feet includes a wide variety of types and poses, so clearly defined and differentiated that one is inclined to lend these figures a special significance. To the left behind John a richly-clad young man leans with his head propped on his left hand, and in front of him immediately next to John's foot there is a sleeping woman — she seems almost to be intended as a pendant to a man to the right above John who, half-hidden in the foliage, is looking at him and listening intently. To the left below John sit an old man and an old woman, both with their head tilted devoutly — the woman is often described as being Rembrandt's mother. The figure with the plumed cap half in shadow between them, the only figure to be looking straight at the viewer, is — for understandable reasons — sometimes looked on as being a self-portrait.

While many of the figures appear to be listening, with a greater or lesser amount of attention, to the words of John the Baptist, there are some whose attention is occupied in other ways. The reason why the Turk and Asiatic are looking to the right (at a point outside the picture) is not clear. A woman, wearing a flattish headdress, seated in the shadow to the right of John, is looking at a thick book with the fingers of her left hand tucked between the pages; she reminds one of a Sibyl, and is perhaps looking up the prophesy of the coming of John the Baptist in the Book of Isaiah. In the right foreground there is a girl with a small child on her knee, on whose head she is placing a garland of flowers. To the right of her a boy sits near what seems to be a pool of water. In his right hand he holds a limply hanging rope apparently attached to a metal ring fixed in turn to an unidentifiable object (a wooden 'keep-net'?) floating in the water; in his left hand he has a rod with, fixed to its tip, a hanging cord that he is holding against the rod. (This is presumably a fishing-rod or, less probably, a whip.) To the right of this boy, a woman kneels and holds a small child who is defecating. Behind this woman are seated men in eastern dress, talking to one another. To the left of the Sibyl-like woman with the book two children are squabbling over a bunch of grapes. A bearded man turns and glares at them angrily, obviously bidding them to be quiet. To the left of him a woman tries, with her finger to her lips, to quieten a howling baby. A man — in the

Fig. 3. Infrared photograph



shadow of the group of Pharisees — turns towards a figure largely hidden behind this group, whose hands can be seen resting on the lap. Between these two figures one sees a dog, viewed three-quarters from the rear in a squatting posture that seems to indicate that it is defecating (as it does for the dog in the etching of *The Good Samaritan*, B. 90).

To the left in the shadow two richly-clad men on horseback are listening attentively; a man with a falcon on his arm close alongside may belong to their retinue. To the right of this sits a man recognizable as a pedlar from the large basket he carries slung over his shoulders on a strap. A tethered monkey squats on the basket. In front of the pedlar a man with a fur hat and long, shoulder-length hair, lies on his stomach; he has a long quiver trimmed with a fringe on his back, and a sword at his hip. Between the pedlar and this prone figure there are indistinct shapes that can best be described as two dogs fighting. In the left foreground, in the shadows, there are two more dogs fighting, and to the left again a pair of dogs coupling. Above them, leaning over a bank, two men are deep in conversation. Behind these the ground slopes sharply down to the river glistening far below, undoubtedly the River Jordan in which John is to baptize the gathered crowd. A turbanned figure seen from behind is leading a camel to the water. Animals are drinking on the other bank of the river.

The landscape is determined very largely by the course of the river. The water spills, beneath a high arched bridge, down as a waterfall to a lower level, from which it drops again over a wide edge on either side of a rock. Through the lefthand arch of the bridge can be vaguely seen a round shape that might be interpreted as the arch of a second bridge in the distance. To the left, on a high hill, is a town. A number of tiny figures can be made out with difficulty in the landscape; just above the flat sunshade of the eastern figure with the camel on the left can be seen two cows, one grazing and the other lying down. A few figures appear to be walking behind them. In front of the middle pillar of the bridge sits a figure with a fishing rod, and a few figures are visible to the right of him.

The transition from the comparatively enclosed and brightly-lit scene around John to the wide space of the landscape beyond is marked by a column on a pedestal, topped by a bust of an emperor (possibly a reference to S. Luke's version of the story of John preaching, which begins with the statement that it happened in the 15th year of the reign of Tiberius — Luke 3: 1).

3. Observations and technical information

Working conditions

Examined in November 1968 (S. H. L., E. v. d. W.) in good daylight and artificial light, and out of the frame. An old X-ray of part of the painting was available at the time of examination:

Fig. 4. Detail (1 : 2)



six X-ray films and five infrared photographs, together covering the whole painting, were received later.

Support

DESCRIPTION: Canvas stuck to an oak panel, 62.7 × 81.1 cm. There is every reason to believe that the original support, a piece of canvas now measuring 39.8 × 49.5 cm, has been enlarged to the present dimensions in two stages, and stuck to the panel on the second occasion. The last added piece of canvas surrounds the original one asymmetrically — it is 17.4 cm wide to the left, 10.9 cm to the right, 11.8 cm at the top and 11.5–12 cm at the bottom. Between the righthand edge of the centre canvas and the righthand inner edge of the surrounding canvas there is a narrow strip of canvas about 3 cm wide, attached to the central section. This strip must — as will be shown below — be looked on as forming part of a first enlargement of the canvas. Arguments have been put forward in the literature for the view that the painting was done only after the canvas was brought to its present dimensions. The most important of these arguments was that the legs of the group of three Pharisees and Sadducees are cut a little above the ankles by the join between the centre canvas and the surrounding part. Clarity on this point is important in connexion with a reconstruction of the genesis of the painting.

The following facts can be gleaned from observations on the painting itself and from the X-rays. One notices that the joins between the centre canvas (including the strip added on the right) and the surrounding piece are ruler-straight, and particularly clean-cut. The centre canvas and the surrounding piece have not been stitched together, but are to all appearances stuck down to the panel butted up to each other. They are separated by narrow gaps that have been partly filled in with a radioabsorbent material. The fact that the righthand cut runs to the right of the 3 cm-wide added strip indicates that this narrow strip forms part of an earlier enlargement of the original canvas. A hypothetical reconstruction of the final enlargement offers an explanation for many of the features already described or to be described below. For the nub of this hypothesis we are indebted to Mr H. Böhm, one-time Head Restorer at the Berlin Gemäldegalerie. The procedure followed must have been akin to a technique like that common today when, for example, laying floor-covering: the pieces to be fitted together are overlapped, and then cut through together. In the present instance, a 'window' was cut in the piece of canvas being added, and a strip was cut off all round the original canvas (including the narrow added strip on the right); this strip all round carried part of the original painting, which must have included the feet of the group of three Pharisees. Böhm assumes that this operation was possible only if the original and new canvases had been glued down to the panel out to the area where the cut was to be made. After the pieces cut off had been removed, the canvas would have had to be reglued on either side of the cut. That this is indeed what happened is corroborated by the fact that on either side of the cut the canvas is slightly bulged as if glue — or, as the X-ray suggests, priming containing white lead and used as an adhesive — was carefully worked in under the edges of the canvases and filled the gap between them. From the continuity of the painting on the canvas, enlarged and stuck down following the procedure thus reconstructed, one may deduce that the entire operation must have been carried out by Rembrandt — or at his instigation — and cannot be seen as a later affixing of the strips of canvas to the panel. There is further confirmation for this conclusion in the fact that dendrochronology examination has shown that the panel comes from the same tree as panels used for two paintings by Rembrandt dating from 1640 and 1644 respectively (see SCIENTIFIC DATA below). Radiographic examination of the canvas provides further evidence as to the genesis of the painting. In

particular, the cusping and other distortions of the weave of the three pieces of canvas offer interesting information, as do the thread-counts. In the case of the centre canvas there is normal cusping, at a pitch of 7–9 cm, at the left and bottom; there is admittedly no sign of nail or basting holes, but this is to be expected in view of the fact that a strip has been cut off along all the edges during the enlargement process. There is strong evidence that the original support — the centre area of canvas — was a piece of prepared canvas cut from the corner of a much larger sheet. Thus, cusping is entirely absent at the top, and normal cusping is also lacking on the right; on the right there is in fact a whole series of holes at a pitch of about 4 cm, with the canvas stretched a little towards the right in the immediate surroundings of each of these holes, which are filled in with radioabsorbent material. The nature of these distortions shows however that at this point the canvas was put under tension after the ground had dried. The canvas must — after being cut from a larger canvas — have been stretched anew, either with cords or with pins or nails on a board. That the holes can be seen only along the righthand edge of the original canvas can be explained by the fact of the canvas undergoing an initial enlargement on this side — with the narrow strip mentioned before. There is every reason to assume that there were holes like this along all four sides, and that these were trimmed off along the top, bottom and lefthand side during the final enlargement of the canvas. The distortions in the surrounding piece of canvas present features that are hard to interpret with any certainty. The weave of the surrounding piece of canvas is at some points very clearly apparent at the surface; this indicates that this piece of canvas was scarcely prepared at all, so that distortions in the weave must have occurred when it was being stuck to the panel. On first inspection of the X-rays this assumption seems to be disproved by the fact that on the left there is clear; 8–10 cm cusping to be seen. There is hardly any along the righthand side, while at the top and bottom the weave is disturbed in such a way as to prompt the idea that the canvas was stretched unevenly during the glueing-down and fixed in this position. The cusping on the left would then show that this canvas was attached to an underlying surface throughout the drying process. Combined with the absence of cusping on the right, these features suggest that the canvas was stretched by being pulled towards the right.

The panel to which the canvas was stuck consists of a single plank. The back is unevenly bevelled along all four sides, over a maximum width of 7 cm on the right and about 4 cm on the left, bottom and top. The back surface has been deeply gouged during planing. On the right, about 32 cm from the bottom, there is a crack over which a small piece of wood has been stuck.
SCIENTIFIC DATA: The cusping on the centre piece of canvas has a pitch of *c.* 8 cm (7.4–8.5) at the left, *c.* 9 cm (8–9) at the bottom, and *c.* 4.5 cm (3–5.2) at the right (where it is difficult to measure). Along the lefthand edge of the surrounding piece of canvas the cusping has a pitch of about 9 cm (8–10), except for the spans at the extreme top and bottom which curve outwards (they are 4.5 and 5.5 cm across, respectively) as if the canvas was stretched far more tautly at these places.

Thread-count of centre canvas: 12 vertical threads/cm (11–13), 14.3 horizontal threads/cm (13–15). Thread-count of the narrow strip added at the right: 14.1 horizontal threads/cm (13.5–14.5), 17.4 vertical threads/cm (16.5–19). Thread-count of the surrounding piece of canvas: 12.9 vertical threads/cm (12–15), 15 horizontal threads/cm (14.5–15.5).

In the central piece the density of the horizontal threads is more even than that of the verticals; from this one may deduce that the warp runs horizontally. In the narrow added strip the warp direction is hard to judge, as the vertical threadcount cannot be considered representative. In the surrounding canvas the horizontal density is so much more even that the warp can be taken to run in this direction.

In view of the strong resemblance in threadcount between the added strip and the canvases of the *Holy Family* datable in 1634 (no. A 88), the 1634 *Cupid* (no. A 91), the Vienna *S.Paul* (Br. 603) probably of *c.* 1635, the 1635 *Samson threatening his father-in-law* (no. A 109) and the central piece of canvas on which the original, paper support of the London *Lamentation* (no. A 107) is stuck, it must be assumed that all of them came from a single bolt (see also Vol. II, pp. 24 and 27).

The panel has been subjected to dendrochronology examination by Prof. Dr J. Bauch and Prof. Dr D. Eckstein of Hamburg, and is a radial board. Along the lefthand edge, above the heart part of the trunk, 192 annual rings of heartwood were measured (+ 1 counted); below the heart only the last 52 rings were measured. It has so far been impossible to give a dating. It was however discovered that the plank comes from the same tree as three other panels carrying paintings by Rembrandt, the Rotterdam *Portrait of Aletta Adriaensdr.* of 1639 (no. A 132), the New York *Portrait of Herman Doomer* of 1640 (no. A 140) and the London *Christ and the woman taken in adultery* of 1644 (Br. 566).

Ground

DESCRIPTION: The colour of the ground, yellowish, can be made out in the central part of the canvas — which is painted opaquely almost everywhere — at only a few places such as the head of the nearer horse. In the narrow added strip on the right the ground cannot be seen. In the surrounding canvas the ground is again a yellow colour. Despite the resemblance in colour between the ground of the original canvas and that of the enlargement framing it, there is one important difference — while the structure of the canvas in the central part is hardly visible, that in the surrounding portion is clearly apparent. This indicates that the canvas added later — which must have been attached when unprepared (see *Support* above) — can have been prepared only very perfunctorily.
SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

Paint layer

CONDITION: The paint layer is in excellent condition, apart from inexplicable cuts in the surface along the lower edge. Craquelure: in the thicker parts there is a mainly vertical and extremely fine craquelure evidently caused by working of the panel. Somewhat more pronounced craquelure can be seen in the narrow added strip.
DESCRIPTION: In describing the paint surface it is inevitable that one should discuss the problem of the likely phases in the production of the work. It must be stated first of all, in this connexion, that in no instance is any definite break in the brushwork to be seen directly at the occasionally open join that would indicate that the artist extended the central part, starting from exactly at the border between the two canvases. This means that after the support had been enlarged Rembrandt must have gone over the central part quite substantially. This is certainly true for the sky, nowhere translucent and done in opaque greys, which like the similarly painted landscape penetrates, so to speak, into the central area from the edges. In general it is impossible to detect the limits of the overpaintings with any degree of probability. Sometimes, however, they are quite evident, for instance in the upper righthand corner of the centre canvas, where the somewhat fluffy and loose strokes of brown, ochre and grey extend from the part of the rock on the surrounding canvas over an opaque, lumpy grey of an earlier version of this area of rock in the centre part. Other examples will be discussed later. Underlying strokes visible in relief to the left of the column suggest that there was originally a tree at that point, so one cannot dismiss the possibility of substantial changes having been made to the landscape (see further under *X-Rays*).

Differences in the manner of painting between figures on the inner and outer canvases can indeed be seen, but the question is whether these provide evidence for a substantial difference in date or indicate a change in the nature and function of the foreground figures connected with the enlargement of the composition. The figures in the middle area are predominantly

Fig. 5. Detail (1 : 1)



laid down in an off-white that merges sometimes into a darker tone of grey and sometimes into brown, occasionally with light highlights. The drawing, using succinct, often angular but supple brush-lines, is in many cases in a warm brown placed over lighter tints, while the shadows are for the most part done in a cooler grey-brown. The figures on the surround have been done from a brownish lay-in, with the detail drawn in general with fluent, rapidly applied and quite broad — and often coarse — lines of blackish brown. The lighter tones are applied thinly in shades of a yellowish brown. One figure that in its degree of detail resembles those on the centre portion — the Turkish warrior on the extreme right against the cliff-face — seems to come close to the central figures in colouring as well, and also shows similar treatment (though the degree of preciseness — e.g. in the turban and quiver — is taken a good deal further than in comparable passages in the centre part of the composition). Just as the Turkish soldier is in many respects like the figures on the inner part of the canvas, so the execution of the 'Sibyl' is akin to that of figures on the outer section. This can however be explained by assuming that this figure was added at the stage at which the composition was made larger. True, she did — according to the X-ray — have a reserve left in the light paint used for the surrounding figures (making it certain that her position, pose and form were planned), yet one gets the feeling that while the hands holding the book fit in well, stylistically, with the lit figures of the first phase, the rest of her is more like the figures on the surrounding portion of canvas than like the other shadowed figures from the first phase, such as the upper part of the Pharisee in shadow in the foreground, or the falconer. While these figures show a thorough control of the halftones, and a relatively fluent modelling and contour in a paint of easily workable consistency, the dark areas in the Sibyl are, like the figures in the righthand lower corner of the surrounding piece of canvas, drawn rapidly using a paint that could be worked only very unevenly, with a coarse and obviously harder brush. One gets the same impression from the passages along the lower edge of the clothing of the Pharisee on the left in the foreground, and from the lower half of that of the Pharisee in shadow; in both cases one sees a process connected with creating a transition from the original canvas to the added section. On the one hand it was clearly possible, when expanding the composition, to match up with the original version in the degree of fineness of execution where necessary, and even to exceed it; on the other, the artist went much further in the added section than in the middle canvas in using a sketchlike rendering.

There is a further aspect in which the surrounding part of the canvas differs from the centre section with its added strip — the paint used in extending the composition over the surrounding area of canvas has a good deal of reddish brown, and sometimes almost red brushstrokes are worked wet-in-wet into the fluidly-applied browns and blacks.

Despite these differences in treatment it is still difficult — for instance in the case of the woman in the left foreground next to the Japanese soldier — to say which parts of the inner section were painted during the enlargement stage; perhaps close microscope examination of the overlaps might allow greater certainty on this point. Abrupt differences in the degree of working-up and in the handling of paint are, after all, almost a hallmark of Rembrandt's style, and it would be going too far in every case to posit the existence of separate phases in the genesis of a work on the basis of these discrepancies alone.

The sky and the distant landscape on the left are executed in opaque, thin and muddy-seeming paint. A far more lively pattern of brushstrokes is — certainly in the sky — hidden beneath this layer; these strokes fan out from the column towards the left, prompting the thought, already mentioned, that there may originally have been a tree at that point. Unattractive though the handling of paint may be in the sky and vista, there is no reason to imagine that there is a later overpainting. The nature of these areas must rather be explained by the fact that various versions were, during the painting of the last, covered over in quick succession with a layer of opaque paint (see *X-Rays* below).

Along the edges of the composition a dark band is applied as a form of framing, with the inner edge curved in the upper corners. In contradiction to the fall of light from the upper left within the picture, a partly illuminated rebate at the top lefthand corner suggests light coming from the right. As may be seen from the radiographs, the sky continues underneath these spandrels, so one can assume that they are a later addition to the straight edge that is visible (at least on the left) in the X-rays. Whether these added spandrels are from Rembrandt's hand is unclear, but improbable (see also *4. Comments*).

SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

X-Rays

In the first place, the radiographs give a clear picture of how the three pieces of canvas on which no. A 106 is painted were fitted to, and into, each other. The interpretation of these observations has already been discussed when describing the *Support* and *Ground*. We shall consider here mainly the evidence the radiographic image can provide about the genesis of the painting.

The X-ray image shows that on a very large scale the artist essayed a variety of solutions, both in the groups of figures and in the landscape. The various stages in this search for the ultimate solution can be reconstructed only with difficulty. One can be certain that after the enlargement of the initial composition, too, he made radical alterations, in particular in the landscape.

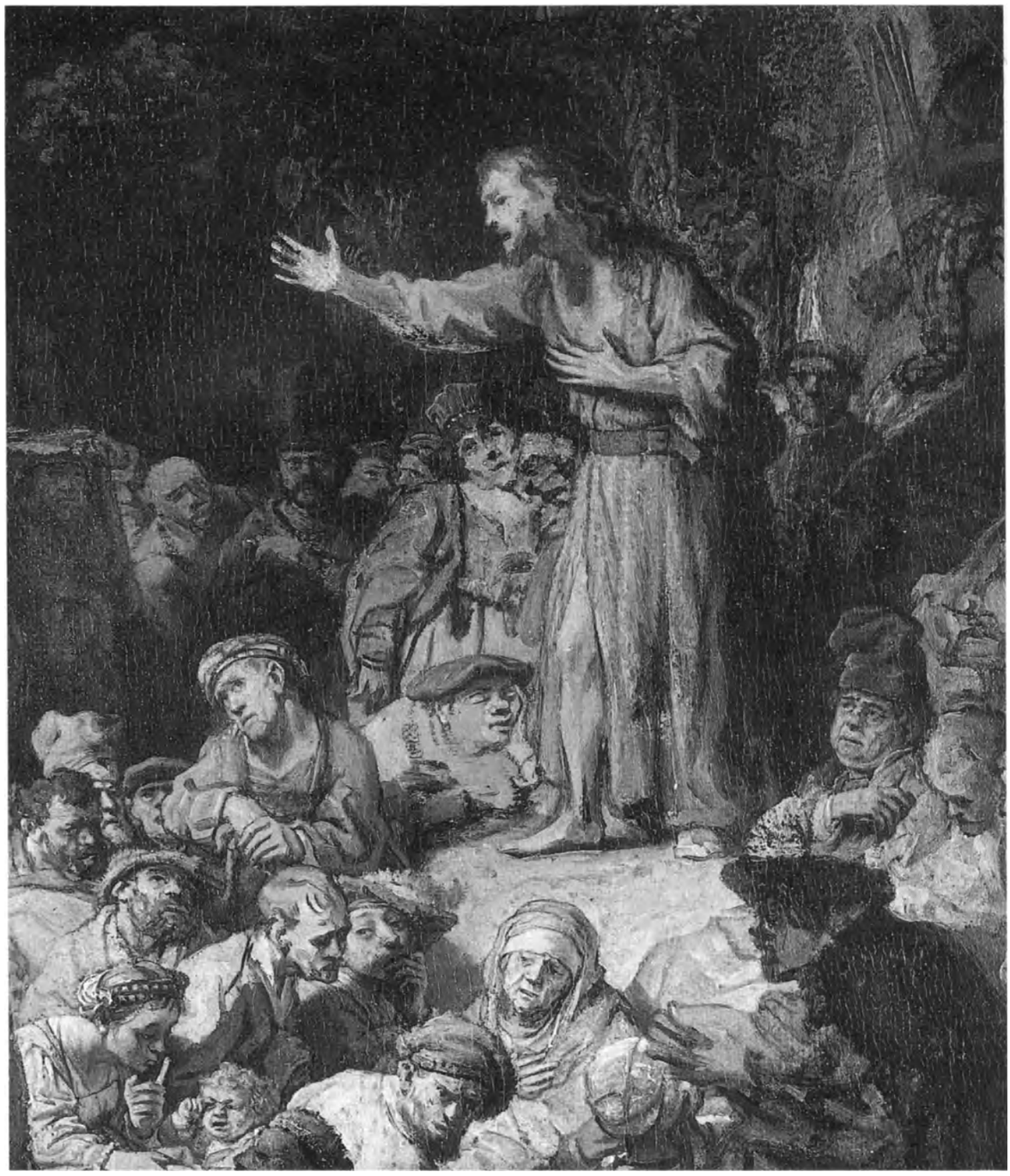
Modifications — obvious though hard to interpret — can be seen in the area around John's feet, where it is evident that changes were made to the grouping of the listeners. The most striking of these is the reserve, visible as a dark shape, left for a figure seen from behind that masked John's left leg up to the knee. The fleshy man with the tall cap, to the right of the overpainted figure, was — to judge from the shape of the reserve — also partly overlapped by this figure, while the reserve for the reading 'Sibyl' encroaches upon it. This to some extent locates this figure among the crowd — one has to imagine it standing close to the woman with the headscarf below John's right foot. Traces of this figure can still be detected at the paint surface — the head shows through in John's garment at knee level. The forearm and elbow of the fleshy man with the tall cap are placed, with several strokes of light paint, over a dark paint at the position of the back of the overpainted figure. It is not clear to what extent a patch in the headscarf of the woman just mentioned that shows up light in the X-ray belongs to this figure.

Changes can also be seen in the space between the woman and the old man with his head tilted, at the point where the 'self-portrait' is now found. The relatively large area of shadow here does not tie in with the dark shapes that can be seen in the X-ray. It is not improbable that the 'self-portrait' was not intended to be at this point, and that the lit eminence in the ground on which John is standing initially continued as far as the tilted head of the old man.

An alteration that is also apparent at the surface in relief is seen as a curved shape running through the chest and upper arm of the 'self-portrait'. The man glaring round angrily to the right below the 'self-portrait' has evidently been painted in his present form in a second essay — an assumption supported by the fact that the dark parts of this head show up just as light in the radiograph as do the light areas. This alteration slightly changed the shape of the dark, silhouetted head in front of the shoulder of the angry man — the headdress had originally a more bowl-shaped reserve.

The man's head between John and the figure of the negro

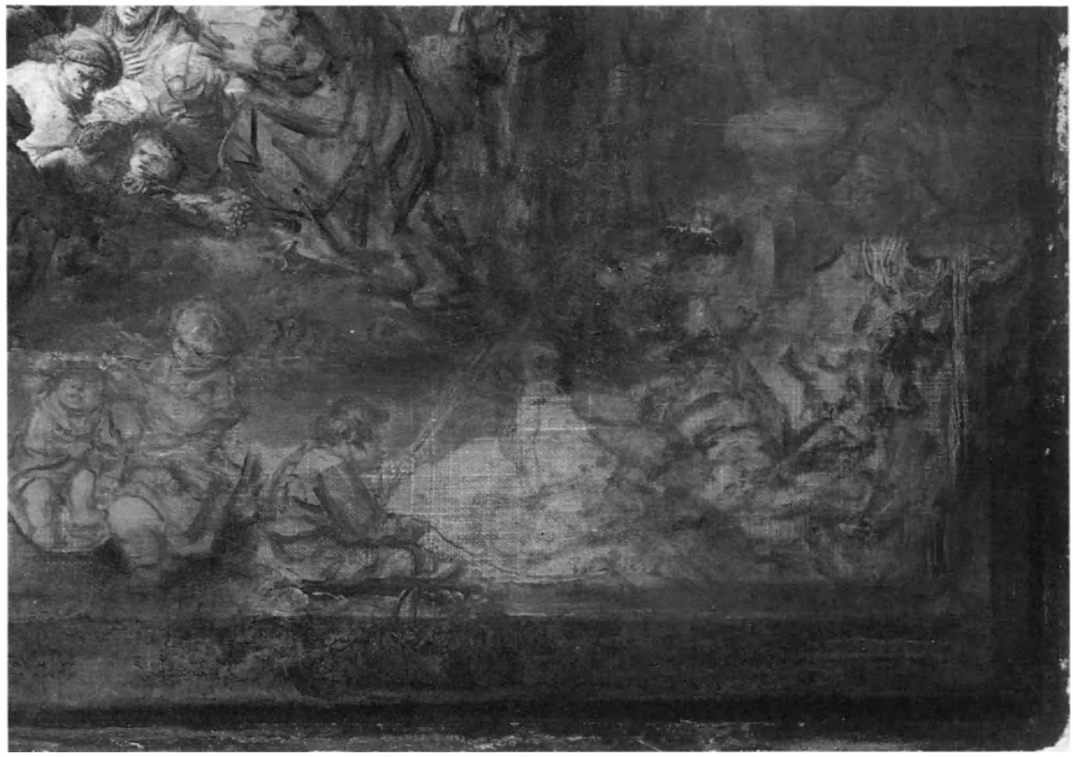
Fig. 6. Detail (1 : 1)



behind him on the right has no reserve left for it in the light image of the background, and was obviously not planned for in the initial design. The strong light area to the right of John continues around the head and partly to the left along this figure to the reserve left for the richly-clad young man; one may deduce from this that in an earlier version the lit rock face stretched further along towards the left. It is also not improbable that changes were made during the course of the work on the group in the lower lefthand corner of the centre canvas — the group with the pedlar and his monkey; a very pronounced dark reserve, to the left of the woman seen from the back and half hidden behind the group of Pharisees, does not for example correspond at all to what can now be seen at the paint surface. A change in the group of listeners is evident from the infrared photograph — above the falconer can be seen the head and shoulders of a figure that was painted out at a later stage.

The changes in the landscape must have been considerable. The area appearing light in the radiographic image here differs

Fig. 7. Detail (infrared photograph, 1 : 2)



totally from what might be expected from the paint surface. To arrive at a picture of what happened it is easiest to start with the lefthand part of the surrounding piece of canvas. A largely dark, but locally light, vertical band along the lefthand edge indicates that a second sky, done in paint that shows up light in the X-ray, has been placed on top of an earlier version that ran right out to the edge. This second sky runs only up to the edge of the dark framing, but continues under the spandrel done in dark paint. The different appearance of the present sky, which incidentally also continues up to the black edge visible today, makes it clear that this must — at least on the surrounding piece of canvas — be a third version. How the distant vista appeared on the centre canvas prior to this being enlarged — with the first sky initially expanding on the surrounding canvas — is not clear. With the second sky there appears at first sight to be a distant view that was quite low down, roughly level with the heads of the two listening horsemen. Yet dark forms in the 'sky' seem to belong to a slope that runs down steeply from the top left; all that one can say is that the sky and vista must have looked different in earlier versions. The landscape in the left foreground, too, seems to have had an entirely different character. To the left of the reserve for the Japanese sitting on his chunk of rock there is admittedly a light zone that to some extent matches the present view through to the Jordan flowing far below; but at the bottom left — where part of a large dark reserve running up to the edge still corresponds to some extent to one of the men now seen in conversation, silhouetted against the river — there must have been a much bigger corner repoussoir. To the right of this one can see very definite dark and light shapes that point to an arrangement of the view down towards the river quite different from that seen today.

The sky on the centre portion, showing up light in the X-ray and painted with readily recognizable brushstrokes, links up, close to the 'vista', with the second sky on the surrounding part — yet here the paint layer, producing a light image, does not present the same pronounced brushwork. This could indicate that with the second (and hence also the first) version of the sky on the surrounding part of the canvas the artist was trying to extend the first sky on the centre canvas, and that only subsequently did he arrive at a totally fresh concept for the whole landscape.

It is not clear how the initial version of the landscape in the central area of the canvas may have looked. Where there is now the arched bridge, the landscape seems originally to have been set out somewhat differently: at the position of the righthand arch there is a dark reserve that though of similar height is very irregular in shape. To the left of this there is a large, lighter zone with a horizontal boundary, sitting rather lower down than the bottom edge of the dark reserve just mentioned. This light area has a consistently vertical pattern of brushstrokes, so that it may perhaps be read as the first version of the waterfall dropping down over a cliff-face (the large, dark reserve). The distribution and intensity of radioabsorbency in the other passages in the upper lefthand corner of the central piece of canvas seem to show that there was a dramatic sky above a vista that took a quite different form from the one we see today. Although the column can be seen as a slightly vague, dark reserve, there is so much radiotranslucency connected with forms outside its outline that the possibility certainly cannot be dismissed of the column not being present in the first version — especially since there is to the left of it a reserve spreading out towards the left, in an area of brushstrokes that creates a very light image and obviously belongs to the area of sky that is underneath the present, far more blandly painted sky. It is thus by no means impossible that the traces of relief fanning out to the left of the column, already described under *Paint layer*, are indeed vestiges of a large tree that would have been to the left of the figure of John.

The narrow strip used for the first enlargement of the canvas shows light brushstrokes unconnected with what can be seen on

the other two areas of canvas. This seems to indicate that this is a strip from a canvas that had already been painted on. The extremely fine weave of the canvas may mean that it once formed part of a considerably older painting.

Signature

None.

Varnish

A layer of yellowed varnish hampers observation slightly.

4. Comments

In a work as complex as this painting the description and the interpretation of what is being described can hardly be separated one from the other. Much of what ought to be included in here has already been discussed when describing the support, ground, paint layer and X-rays. Yet there are a number of aspects that still call for comment. They do not include the matter of authenticity — this is beyond all doubt, on the grounds of the documentary evidence coupled with the internal evidence of the very complex genesis of the work and, especially, on that of its style and quality. What remains to be discussed is the work's function, its dating and the time at which the composition was extended, as well as the relationship to the drawings that are usually linked to this painting.

Where function is concerned, Haverkamp-Begemann[1] and Tümpel[2] have in recent years considered it possible, and Bauch[3] and Kelch[4] have judged it probable, that — as Bode[5] and Six[6] assumed earlier — the grisaille was done in preparation for an etching. There is much that can be said for this assumption, especially as far as the canvas in its original format (including the narrow added strip along the righthand side) is concerned. In 1633 and 1635 Rembrandt published two particularly ambitious etchings, of roughly the same large size — the *Descent from the Cross* (B. 81, I and II), as a reproduction of his own painting now in Munich (no. A 65), and the *Ecce homo* (B. 77) based on the London grisaille of 1634 (no. A 89) done specifically for this purpose — and one can assume that the Amsterdam grisaille of *Joseph relating his dreams* (no. A 66) was also intended to serve for an etching of, again, the same size. If this latter grisaille can be dated in 1633, one can detect a certain climax in the degree of intricacy of the compositions and their wealth of interesting and exotic types, both of which give an idea of the impression the artist wanted to make on his public with these elaborate and effort-consuming prints. The *John the Baptist preaching* fits in extremely well with this kind of composition meant for etchings, not only because of the wealth of detail but also, as will be seen from the survey below, because of the size. Allowance has to be made in this for the fact that the *Joseph relating his dreams* has been reduced slightly in width, and that the *John the Baptist preaching* was trimmed down all round when the canvas was being enlarged (see above under *Support*).

	larger dimension	smaller dimension
Descent from the Cross, etching (B.81 I)	51.6	40.2 cm
Descent from the Cross, etching (B.81 II)	53.2	41.3 cm
Joseph relating his dreams, grisaille (no. A 66), 1633?	55.8	38.7 + ... cm
Ecce homo, grisaille (no. A 89), 1634	54.5	44.5 cm
Ecce homo, etching (B.77), 1635/36	55.3	44.2 cm
John the Baptist preaching, grisaille, (including the narrow strip added to the right)	53 + ...	39.8 + ... cm

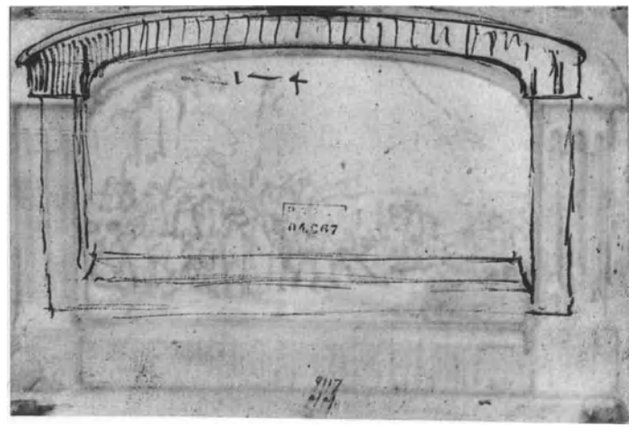
The similarities in format — obviously connected with a standard size for copper plates or paper or both — are so striking that one can almost think of them as making up a single project. This project would not have so much the character of an iconographically and formally homogeneous series — this is already contradicted by the fact that *John the Baptist preaching* has a horizontal format, while the other completed or merely planned etchings are upright — as that of a sequence of large (and hence costly) prints of biblical subjects that are similar in conception; as Bode has already remarked, Rubens' successful publication of numerous prints after his own work may have inspired Rembrandt to emulate him. One can only guess at the reason why, after the *Descent from the Cross*, only the *Ecce homo* was in fact committed to etching form, and published. Commercial considerations or problems in the execution (which in both etchings appears to have involved the help of an assistant) may have led Rembrandt to abandon the project.

The difference in the material — paper or canvas — on which the various grisailles were done does not argue against their being seen as working documents of a similar kind. One finds that Rembrandt did literally alternate between paper and canvas for sketches of this kind. Thus the (smaller) grisaille of the *Lamentation* in London (no. A 107) was first painted on paper, which was subsequently cut, with a very irregular edge, and stuck onto a larger piece from a corner of a canvas that had already been stretched and painted on. In the case of the *John the Baptist preaching*, a piece from the corner of a larger, already prepared canvas was used and, as one must assume, painted while temporarily tacked down (see above under *Support*). For the first extension by a strip along the righthand side, use was made of a strip from a canvas probably already painted on — to judge from the weave, the same one that yielded

Fig. 8. Rembrandt, pen and wash drawing of the painting in a frame, 14.5 × 20.4 cm (Ben. 969 recto). Paris, Louvre, Département des arts graphiques (L. Bonnat Bequest)



Fig. 9. Back of the previous drawing (Ben. 969 verso)



the strip onto which the London *Lamentation* was stuck (the sticking onto panel must in this latter case have been done later, and by another hand). The choice of material, and the way it was handled, are unmistakeable pointers to these being working documents that could be discarded after use. This makes it all the more interesting that in the case of the *John the Baptist preaching* the status of the painting evidently underwent a change during the course of the work. At the time of the final enlargement it was stuck onto a well-made panel, while the other grisailles remained as loose sheets.

The question then is whether the enlarged grisaille, too, was still meant to serve for a (very much bigger) etching; the answer, will depend on — apart from the maximum size that 17th-century printing presses allowed — what interpretation one gives to the composition (see below), and also to the painted black surround that, besides that in the upper corners and on the left, can be seen along part of the bottom and righthand sides, most clearly so in the infrared photograph (fig. 7). By itself, this surround does not point clearly to either an independent painting or a draft for an etching. Sometimes Rembrandt included a painted surround in a painting — cf., for instance, the Kassel *Self-portrait with helmet* of 1634 (no. A 97) or the Kassel *Holy family* of 1646 (Br. 572) — but on a few occasions he also did the same in an etching, e.g. in the *Raising of Lazarus* of *c.* 1632 (B. 73). In enlarging the canvas Rembrandt may originally have meant to extend the crowd only to a limited extent, and was mainly thinking in terms of having a broader picture area. It was in this stage that the black surround was applied. A number of figures were added to the composition only afterwards, i.e. after he had discarded the surround; this is evident from the fact that they partly intersect the framing. This is true of the Turk on the extreme right, of the group of listeners below him (who form a whole with the standing man with the turban to the right of the 'sibyl'), of the figures in the bottom righthand corner, and the copulating and squabbling dogs at the lower left. Remarkably, the painted surround does not continue along the upper edge, and on the left Rembrandt has perhaps left open only the straight-edged reserve (visible in the X-ray), without painting the surround. It is not clear whether the two stages in which he expanded the composition have to do with a change in function for the painting.

The question of when the grisaille was produced, and whether any time elapsed before Rembrandt expanded the composition (and if so, how long), has found a wide variety of answers. Bode[5], who was the first to address the problem in 1892, when the Berlin museum bought the painting, corrected the dating of 1656 that was then current. This had been based of an inscription on an etching by Norblin, where it is located above the squabbling dogs (see *6. Graphic reproductions*, 1; fig. 20); when the painting was cleaned in 1892 (revealing the overpainted copulating dogs), no trace of any signature or date was found. On the grounds of stylistic comparisons and the facial features of a number of figures identified as members of the Van Rijn family, Bode arrived at a dating of 1637/38; the enlargement would have taken place soon — at most one or two years — afterwards. In 1907 Six[6], who believed that eight pieces of canvas had been added to the central portion, thought that the enlargement had taken place considerably later than the execution of the middle part of the composition; this he put at around 1656, basing himself on the one hand on a date that he reported (erroneously) as being mentioned in the catalogue of the Cardinal Fesch sale in 1845 and that (as Six added in 1918[7]) was also on Norblin's etching, and on the other on the treatment of space in the composition in its enlarged form and the stylistic similarity with Rembrandt's clearly later drawing — datable in the 1650s — in the Bonnat collection in the Louvre (Ben. 969; our figs. 8 and 9). According to him, this latter drawing was a

sketch not only for a frame — in 1918 he spoke of wooden panelling into which the painting was to be recessed — but also for the composition in its expanded form. This view was convincingly refuted by Neumann[8]; he pointed out that in both composition and style the painting was typical of the 1630s, and that the drawing differed so radically from it that this must be a later reproduction made as a design for a frame. Lugt[9] later pinpointed the moment at which the drawing would have been done, by assuming that this had to do with the sale of the painting to Jan Six in the mid-1650s (cf. *5. Documents and sources*). Neumann thought that the painting was done in rapidly-consecutive phases which he put at around 1634/1636, mainly on the ground of the far-reaching similarity of the landscape to that in Rembrandt's etching, dated 1634, of *The angel appearing to the shepherds* (B. 44; our fig. 10). Neumann's interpretation of the Paris drawing as a later design for a frame has won general acceptance. His view — which was also Bode's idea — that the enlargement of the grisaille took place shortly after the painting of the central section was adopted by Kelch[4] and (apparently) implicitly also by Bauch[3] and Tümpel[2], while others including Sumowski[10] and Gerson[11] left open the possibility of an enlargement some 15 years later, around 1650.

Both these theories in fact left one point unexplained — how it was possible for the feet of the three Pharisees and Sadducees, who occupy a prominent place in the composition, to be on the added, surrounding piece of canvas. It is thus quite understandable that Benesch[12] drew a radically different conclusion; according to him, the canvas had already been enlarged from the very beginning, before the composition took shape on the centre part of the canvas. Benesch thought he had evidence for this view in a privately-owned pen-and-ink drawing which, in a very broad way, reproduces the present composition of the grisaille and which in his Addenda he listed as an autograph composition sketch done by Rembrandt for the painting (Ben. Addenda 10). While Benesch's conclusion is, on its own, already something of an anomaly — certainly with what we now know about how Rembrandt sometimes trimmed down and enlarged his grisailles on paper and canvas during the course of the work — his evidence is in fact unacceptable. The drawing in question is so coarse and so lacking in cohesion and clarity that it cannot be looked on as either a composition sketch or a work by Rembrandt; Rosenberg[13] already regarded it as an imitation. The singular fact that the feet of three protagonists are outside the surviving centre part of the canvas must find its explanation in the way this centre part was enlarged; in line with a suggestion made to us by H. Böhm, head restorer at the Berlin Gemäldegalerie,

Fig. 10. Rembrandt, *The angel appearing to the shepherds*, etching (B. 44 II)



one has to assume that as this was being done strips were — as described earlier under *Support* — lost from the centre canvas. The placing of the small group of Pharisees and Sadducees (who, according to the X-rays, have always occupied the same position) cannot provide any argument for the assumption that the canvas was enlarged from the very outset.

Surveying the various datings and interpretations of how the grisaille came about, one is inclined to give most credence to the arguments and conclusions of Neumann, who thought that it was produced in rapidly-consecutive phases starting in 1634. This preference is based on the general stylistic features of the painting, on its execution and on specific similarities with dated works and (admittedly undated) related drawings.

In its spatial organization the composition is dominated most of all by the lighting; a strong beam of light falling from the left strikes a strip of terrain that rises towards the rear, together with the figures on it, thus creating a diagonal axis in depth. This applies to the painting in its present state, but will also have been true of the composition on the original, smaller canvas on which the figures placed towards the front of the beam of light must have occupied the extreme foreground, more or less as is the case in two works dated 1634 — the Anholt *Diana with Actaeon and Callisto* (no. A 92) and the etching of *The angel appearing to the shepherds* (B. 44; our fig. 10). Neumann rightly pointed out the great resemblance to the lastnamed work, where the lively structure of

Fig. 11. J. van Noordt, *John the Baptist preaching*. Oldenburg, Landesmuseum



a composition containing a great many free-moving and mostly only partially-lit figures, and the three-dimensional effects suggested by chiaroscuro contrasts, produce a closely similar effect. On top of this there is the similarity, already mentioned, in the structure and lighting of the landscape — in the etching, too, there is a river glistening far below on the left, with the ground rising steeply on the other side to a high arched bridge and a town set on top of a hill. The degree of similarity shown by the landscape in the grisaille in its present (according to the X-rays, altered) state with the etching dated 1634 can be seen as one indication that the process of production did not extend much beyond 1634, and probably (as Kelch, too, assumed) to not later than 1635 when, as it happens, Rembrandt used landscape motifs of the same kind in *Abraham's sacrifice* (no. A 108). That would mean that the alteration in composition, for which Rembrandt needed a larger canvas, reflected the stylistic intention of more or less the same moment. The original composition can no longer be fully visualized, even with the help of the X-rays. A painting at Oldenburg (fig. 11), attributed convincingly to Jan van Noordt and associated with Rembrandt's *John the Baptist preaching* by W. Sumowski (*Gemälde* I, pp. 140, 163), may well be based on the latter picture before its enlargement. Several of Rembrandt's figures recur in slightly varied form and different arrangement, and especially the two (instead of three) disputing old men in the foreground give a clear idea of the position and function this group had in Rembrandt's initial composition. When he enlarged the canvas, the addition of a more generous foreground and, mainly to the right, of animated, shadowy figures, must have resulted in a greater viewing distance and a stronger, diagonal effect of depth. It is remarkable to see how in the Paris drawing from the 1650s (Ben. 969) Rembrandt — evidently working from imagination — summarized the composition as a far more horizontally-structured frieze.

In this connexion one has to wonder once again whether the composition was, in its enlarged form as well, intended for an etching; one can offer only a tentative answer. One could imagine that the alteration and enlargement were connected with a change in intention, not in respect of the style in the real sense of the word, but of the reversal of the picture that would occur in an etching. If the smaller, original picture was meant for an etching, John would have been to the left in the print and, following the convention of reading from left to right, the moving of the Pharisees and Sadducees towards the right would have been more strongly emphasized. One cannot tell from the X-rays exactly how the landscape was originally constructed, but it could not, as it does now, have had the deep valley opposite John seen in the enlarged composition; the two horsemen (with the falconer?) must have formed roughly the edge of the picture. The fact that in the enlarged composition Rembrandt introduced the deep valley and the distant mountainous scenery and an arched bridge with the same form and same function as is seen in the etching of *The angel appearing to the shepherds* may indicate that in this phase he was not thinking of the reversal of the composition in an etching. Later, in the 1640s, he was to come back to the idea of a subject of this kind in an etching of more modest size, *The hundred guilder print* (B. 74).

The execution reveals, as has already been described under *Paint layer*, a variety of treatments — more careful and detailed modelling contrasting with a more sketchlike manner using deft dark paintstrokes that act as contours —, but this difference does not seem to have been the outcome of a stylistic development. For the most part it has clearly to do with the degree of light or dark, and although the more sketchy manner is used mainly in the figures on the added, surrounding canvas, it tells one more about a function of these passages in the enlarged composition than about a stylistically different treatment (as the result of a difference in date). In the London grisaille for the *Ecce homo* both these treatments are found side by side. In general, this latter grisaille offers the closest analogies in execution with that in Berlin, despite the somewhat larger scale of the figures.

This similarity with the *Ecce homo* of 1634 also extends to a number of the motifs employed. This is true most of all of the group of Pharisees and Sadducees (mainly on the original, centre canvas) who in type and costume are very like the high priests at the feet of Pilate; in both works one of the figures has an inscription in Hebrew on his headdress (cf. *2. Description of subject*). A further motif that both pictures have in common is the figure looking down from above — from among the foliage above John's head in the Berlin grisaille, and from a

Fig. 12. Rembrandt, *The pancake woman*, etching (B. 124 II)



Fig. 13. Rembrandt, Studies of John the Baptist, red chalk, 17.6 × 18.6 cm (Ben. 142A). London, The Courtauld Institute Galleries (Princes Gate Collection)



window in the *Ecce homo* — at the main character, and apparently serving the function of reinforcing the dramatic cohesion of the picture. A number of other figures, this time from the second phase after the canvas was enlarged, show striking resemblances with work by Rembrandt dated 1635 or with drawings that can be grouped around these. The pose of the 'Sibyl', seen obliquely from behind reading a book, is readily comparable with the etching of the *Pancake woman* (B. 124; our fig. 12) and the way she is used as a sketchily indicated repoussoir is very reminiscent of drawings that Benesch places in 1635 (Ben. 405 and 406). The crying child to the left below John is also almost the same as in the same 1635 etching. Around two drawings (Ben. 112 and 455) used for this etching one can group a number of freely-done drawings of women and children in pen-and-ink (such as Ben. 402, 403 recto) or chalk (e.g. Ben. 278, 308, 403 verso, 421 and 422), which in turn come very close in style and character to the little scenes being acted out in the right foreground. There is every indication that Rembrandt was here using 'model' drawings of motifs that were common in his drawings around these very years 1634/35. This is at all events true for some of the dogs depicted — motifs for which he demonstrably made use of the same 'model' drawings on various occasions (where the dogs are concerned, only one of these survives, Ben. 455); the dogs fighting on the left occur exactly like this in the 1634 *Diana with Actaeon and Callisto* and later in a drawing of Titus van Rijn (cf. A. Welcker in: *O.H.* 55, 1938, pp. 268–273, fig. 4); the dog defecating had already appeared in the *Good Samaritan* of 1633 (B. 90). Although strictly speaking the occurrence of these motifs in the Berlin grisaille do not provide a *terminus post quem*, they do in combination indicate that the enlargement and completion of the painting during the year 1635 is, at the least, not improbable.

Apart from model drawings that had not been done with this composition in mind, use has also been made of a number of figure sketches that have long been connected with it and that must have been drawn with the grisaille in view. It is perhaps no mere chance that Houbraken comments, in relation to this very painting, that various of Rembrandt's pupils had told him that the artist sketched a face in as many as ten different ways before he painted it (see *5. Documents and sources*). Rembrandt is found to have done these sketches sometimes with chalk and sometimes in pen-and-ink. A red chalk drawing, which entered the Courtauld Institute Galleries in London with the Princes Gate collection (fig. 13), was recognized by J. Wilde and J. G. van Gelder[14] as a twice-repeated sketch for the figure of John, with the gaze and gesture directed less to one side than in the grisaille and more towards the place where the Pharisees and Sadducees are standing; Rembrandt must have given up this idea at an earlier stage, since the X-rays show no trace of the figure of John having had a stance different from the one seen today. A second sheet of sketches, this time done with the pen, is now in Berlin (Ben. 141; our fig. 14) and shows mostly various versions of the group of Pharisees and Sadducees. A third sheet, again in pen-and-ink,

Fig. 14. Rembrandt, Studies in pen and bistre, 16.7 × 19.6 cm (Ben.141). Berlin (West), Staatliche Museen Preussischer Kulturbesitz, Kupferstichkabinett (KdZ 3773)



Fig. 15. Rembrandt, Studies of figures, pen and wash 12.7 × 12.6 cm (Ben. 142 recto). Chatsworth, Devonshire Collections



at Chatsworth; our figs. 15 and 16) contains yet another version of this group and, on the back, three sketches for a tall headdress like that worn in the grisaille by the middle of the three figures. For the head of the same man Rembrandt drew a pen sketch now in the Pierpoint Morgan Library, New York (Ben. 336; our fig. 17). It was Kauffmann[15] who looked on a pen-and-ink drawing in Berlin (Ben. 140; our fig. 18) as a sketch of listening figures intended for *John the Baptist preaching*; though none of these figures reappears in the painting exactly as they appear in the drawing, there is much to be said for the idea that the drawing was made with this in mind, especially since the almost caricature-like old woman with a flat hat, sitting above and to the right of the drawn group with her head propped forward on her hand, does seem to have been used, albeit freely, for the reading 'Sibyl'. A drawing of a Mongol or American Indian archer in Stockholm (Ben. A 20; our fig. 19) shows a clear resemblance to the figure lying on his stomach to the left alongside the pedlar; its authenticity is dubious, but it may well be a copy done in Rembrandt's workshop, particularly as a note on the back ('.. lderij 2-0-0/3 [altered to 5]-0-0') seems to be in his handwriting. All these drawings, the majority of which Benesch dated at 1637 on the grounds of the dating he gave the grisaille, can be readily imagined as being done around 1635.

One weighty argument appears to militate against the assumption that the grisaille was begun, enlarged and completed in rapidly-consecutive stages, to be put in 1634 and 1635 and at the latest in 1636. The panel onto which — in all probability during the process of enlargement — the various pieces of canvas were stuck cannot, it is true, be dated by dendrochronology; but it has been found to come from the same tree that yielded the panels (likewise radial boards) on which the 1640 *Portrait of Herman Doomer* in New York (no. A 140) and the London *Christ and the woman taken in adultery* (Br. 566) of 1644 are painted (see above under *Support*). This discovery suggests that the panel used during the enlargement of the Berlin grisaille came available only in the early 1640s. Against this one has however to say that the time that elapsed between using each of the other two panels can be termed considerable; from this one might get the impression that Rembrandt did sometimes keep his panels — and perhaps especially radial boards, which must have been relatively uncommon — in stock for quite a long time before using them. In some instances this seems to be the case (cf. nos. A 72 and C 77, both from 1633, and no. C 119, probably from about 1640). Although the results of dendrochronology examination must not be treated too lightly, they do not rule out a dating, based on different and cogent grounds, of around 1635 for the enlargement and completion of the *John the Baptist preaching*.

The Paris drawing already mentioned, which Rembrandt made years later in the 1650s (Ben. 969), was primarily a design for a frame; a simpler version of the same design was drawn on the back of the sheet. In its form the frame matches quite closely the painted frame for the *Holy family* of 1646 in Kassel (Br. 572), and there too the image area is bounded at the top by a flattened arch. This kind of boundary occurs — apart from the Detroit *Visitation* of 1641 (no. A 138) where it appears to be original — mainly in etchings from the 1650s; two landscapes (B. 217 dated 1651, and B. 227) and a biblical scene (B. 70 dated 1657). Whether it was already in his mind when the grisaille was completed around 1635 is doubtful. Today, black edges are to be seen all round the

Fig. 16. Rembrandt, Studies of a headdress, verso of fig. 15. Chatsworth, Devonshire Collections

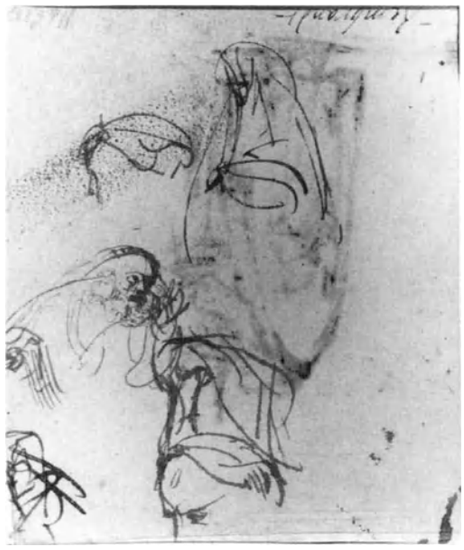


Fig. 17. Rembrandt, Studies in pen and bistre, 10.5 × 9.6 cm (Ben. 336). New York, The Pierpont Morgan Library (I, 174 A)



picture, and the two upper corners are occupied by black spandrels. It is evident that this painted surround is not wholly from a later date, from the fact that the straight edge on the left appears dark in the X-ray. In the X-ray the sky however continues under both spandrels (though it is not entirely clear which paint layer corresponds to what is seen in the X-ray). That means that Rembrandt probably, when completing the painting, had a rectangular picture area in mind. Whether the present spandrels were added by his or by a later hand is not clear; at all events they were already present in 1808, when Norblin did his etching (see *6. Graphic reproductions*, 1; fig. 20).

The extent to which what began as a sketch for an etching grew into an admired painting is evident not only from the frame that Rembrandt designed in the 1650s, perhaps for the new owner Jan Six, but also from the high price that was paid for it after Six's death and from the fact that it remained in the family's possession until 1803 (see *8. Provenance*). Moreover, the work was singled out for special mention by Samuel van Hoogstraten in 1678 and by Arnold Houbraken in 1718 (see *5. Documents and sources*).

The picture is unique among Rembrandt's work for the variety of exotic figures, with specific facial types and attributes. The latter remind one of the interest in and substantial importing of naturalia and artefacts from foreign lands common in Amsterdam. According to the inventory made of his possessions in 1656, Rembrandt too collected specimens of these, such as 'een Indies Koppie' (a small Indian head), 'Een Japanse hellemet' (a Japanese helmet), 'Een moor nae 't leven afgegoten' (a Moor's head cast from life), 'Een turcxe kruijtfles' (a Turkish powder horn), '60 stucks soo indiaens hantgeweer, pijlen, schichten, azegaijen en bogen' (60 pieces of Indian hand weapons, arrows, shafts, javelins and bows), '.. een turcxe boogh' (a Turkish bow), '. . .jndiaense waijers' (Indian fans), 'een jndiaens mans een vrouwe cleet' (a pair of costumes for an Indian man and woman), etc. (Strauss *Doc.*, 1656/12, nos. 148, 158, 161, 184, 313, 316, 339, 340; cf. also R. W. Scheller, 'Rembrandt en de encyclopedische kunstkamer', *O.H.* 84, 1969, pp. 81–147). This multiplicity, shown with almost ethnographical precision, is undoubtedly here evidence of the meaning that Rembrandt was giving to his subject. Alongside the Pharisees and Sadducees, the mothers with their children and the various figures, listening or otherwise, the Japanese, Indians, negroes and Turks represent the whole of the known world, the sinful world that pays scant attention to the message from the man preaching the Kingdom of Heaven. The sinfulness of the world is further emphasized by the fighting, defecating and copulating dogs (of which already in 1678 Hoogstraten was unable to grasp the point), by the behaviour of the children (which especially since Bruegel stood for the futility of human endeavour) and also by the tiny fisherman hidden in the landscape who (as in many of Rembrandt's landscapes) represents idleness and voluptuousness. That the contrast between large areas in shadow and the lit central group has, in this respect, a symbolic significance can scarcely be doubted. Although in earlier pictures of the same subject — by Jan Swart and Herri met de Bles, Pieter Bruegel the Elder and his school, and Abraham Bloemaert — a meaning of this kind was not entirely

Fig. 18. Rembrandt, Studies in pen and bistre, 19 × 12.5 cm (Ben. 140). Berlin (West), Staatliche Museen Preussischer Kulturbesitz, Kupferstichkabinett (KdZ 5243)



Fig. 19. Ascribed to Rembrandt, Studies in pen and bistre, 15 × 11 cm (Ben. A20). Stockholm, Nationalmuseum



absent, it does not seem to have been incorporated so emphatically in a picture, even by Pieter Lastman, to whose lost painting of 1611[16] Rembrandt's initial composition shows some similarity in layout. Less probable is an interpretation given by Keller[17], according to which Rembrandt was, in various biblical scenes including *John the Baptist preaching*, expressing a theological concept — an antithesis between faith and ecclesiastical rigour, which Rembrandt would have depicted in a polemical way in the contrast between John the Baptist on the one hand and the Pharisees and Sadducees on the other.

5. Documents and sources

1. The painting is first mentioned in a deed dated 13 September 1658, in which two previous agreements between Jan Six and Rembrandt were annulled. In the first of these, made at Jan Six's request on 5 October 1652, it was stated that Rembrandt had sold him the portrait of his wife (cf. no. A 85, *Documents and sources*); in the second, made at Rembrandt's request — on a date unknown because Rembrandt had lost the document — unspecified conditions were laid down concerning two paintings, a *Simeon* (presumably identical with a painting of this subject by Lievens that was in Jan Six's estate in 1702) and a *Sermon of John* [the Baptist]; the penalties mentioned in this deed for the case of one of the parties failing to keep to the agreement were cancelled (Strauss *Doc.*, 1658/18):

'de heer Joan Sicx Comissaris
contra
Mr. Henricus Torquinius, Advocaet, als curateur over den boedel van Rembrant van Rhijn.
Commissarisen hebben met consent van parthijen geannullert beijde de acten d'eene bij Rembrant van Rhijn ten behoeve van den eijsscher verleden op ten 5 October 1652, waer bij den voorn. Rembrant van Rhijn aen den eijsscher bekent verhandelt te hebben sijns huijsvrouwe conterfeijtsel, ende de andere bij den eijsscher ten behoeve van den selven Rembrant verleeden (vermeldende van twee schilderijen d'eene van een Simeon, ende de andere van een Johannis predicatie), welcke acte geseijt wert onder hem Rembrant vermist te sijn, te weeten voor sooveele aengaet de respective peenen in deselve Acte vermelt in cas deen ofte d'ander van parthijen contrarie den inhouden van dien quame te doen.
Actum den 13.[en] September 1658. presentibus de heeren Michiel Pancras, Cornelis Abba, ende Nicolaes van Waveren, Commissarisen [van de Desolate Boedelskamer]'.
(Mr. Joan Sicx, commissioner,
vs.
Mr. Henricus Torquinius, advocate, as the administrator of the property of Rembrant van Rhijn:
By mutual consent of the parties the commissioners have annulled both formal agreements, the first made by Rembrant van Rhyn with the petitioner on 5 October 1652, whereby the aforementioned Rembrant van Rhijn certified that he had sold to the petitioner his wife's portrait and the second in Rembrandt's favour (pertaining to two paintings, one of Simeon and the other of a Sermon of John [the Baptist]), which Rembrant stated he had mislaid — to wit, [the annulment is] limited to the respective penalties mentioned in the above agreement in the event of one or the other acting contrary to their provisions.
Done on 13 September 1658 in the presence of Michiel Pancras,

Fig. 20. Etching by J.-P. Norblin, 1808 (reproduced in reverse)



Cornelis Abba, and Nicolaes van Waeveren, Commissioners [of Bankrupt Estates]).
The date of the second deed is not known; it does not seem necessary to assume that it dated from 1652 like the first, as has sometimes been thought (cf. Strauss *Doc.*, 1652/7, 1658/18). What its content was is unclear. In 1893 Six[18] stated that it could not be connected with a loan of 1000 guilders made by Jan Six to Rembrandt in 1653, since this debt had been taken over by Gerard Ornia in 1657. In 1907 the same author assumed[6] that when selling the *John the Baptist preaching* to Jan Six Rembrandt had reserved the right to make an etching of it. That the one of the named paintings was at all events no. A 106 can safely be concluded from the pedigree (see *8. Provenance*).
2. Samuel van Hoogstraten mentions the painting in his *Inleyding tot de hooge schoole der schilderkonst . . .*, Rotterdam 1678, p. 183, in connexion with 'gevoeglijkheyt' (or decorum). He rejects the combination of disparate objects in a single picture, and warns young painters 'om geen heerlijke ordinantien door beuzelmart te onteeren. 't Gedenkt my dat ik, in zeker aerdich geordineert stukje van *Rembrant*, verbeeldende een *Johannes* Predicatie, een wonderlijke aendacht in de toehoorderen van allerleye staeten gezien hebbe: dit was ten hoogsten prijslijk, maer men zach'er ook een hondt, die op een onstichtlijke wijze een teef besprong. Zeg vry, dat dit gebeurlijk en natuerlijk is, ik zegge dat het een verfoeilijke onvoeglijkheyt tot deze Historie is; en dat men uit dit byvoegzel veel eer zou zeggen, dat dit stukje een Predicatie van den Hondschen *Diogenes*, als van den Heyligen *Johannes* vertoonde. Zoodanige uitbeeldingen maeken het onnoozel verstant des meesters bekent; en zijn te bespotlijker, alsze in geringer opmerkingen dwaelen.' (not to spoil sublime compositions with trivialities. I recall having seen a marvellously composed painting by Rembrandt showing John preaching, a striking depiction of attention by his hearers of all ranks and degrees; this was worthy of praise, yet one saw also a dog that in a most scandalous manner was mounting a bitch. One might well say that this is something that can happen and is natural; but I say that it is an abhorrent indecency in the context of this story, and that one would rather suppose, from this addition, the painting to show a discourse by Diogenes the cynic than the holy John preaching. Such scenes betray the artist's lack of judgment, and are all the more absurd when the errors have to do with minor details).
3. Arnold Houbraken mentions the painting in his *De groote Schouburgh der Nederlantsche konstschilders en schilderessen*, Amsterdam 1718–1721, vol. I, p. 261, in connexion with Rembrandt's ability 'de werking der beelden, en wezenstrekken . . . zoo natuurlyk naar de gesteltheyt van het geval' [uit te drukken] 'als te bedenken is' (to express the appearance of the figures and facial features as naturally in accordance with the specific situation as one can conceive): 'Dus is ook het stukje 't Vroutje in overspel bevonden, genaamt, by den Heere en Meester Willem Six oud Scheepen der Stadt Amsterdam. Als ook het stukje de predikinge van Johannes den Dooper, in 't graauw geschildert; verwonderlyk om de natuurlyke verbeeldingen der toeluisterende wezenstrekken, en veranderlyke bekleedingen by den Heere Postmeester Johan Six mede tot Amsterdam te zien. Waarom ik ook vast moet besluiten dat hy daar inzonderheit zyn werk van gemaakt, en op de rest zoo veel agt niet gegeven heeft. Hier in word ik te meer verzekert, om dat verscheiden van zyne leerlingen my hebben verklaart, dat hy zomtyts een wezen wel op tienderhande wyzen afschetste eer hy 't zelve op paneel bragt; ook wel een dag of twee konde doorbrengen om een Tulleband naar zyn zinlikheit op te tuigen.' (Thus is also the little painting named The woman taken in adultery in the possession of Willem Six, gentleman, formerly magistrate of the city of Amsterdam. As also the piece of the sermon by John the Baptist, done in grisaille; admirable for the natural depiction of the facial features of the listeners and their varied dress, to be seen also in Amsterdam in the house of the Postmaster Johan Six. From which qualities I must surely conclude that he concentrated particularly on these and did not give as much attention to the rest. In this I am the more assured, since various of his pupils have told me that he sometimes sketched a face in as many as ten ways before committing the same to the panel; and spent one or two days arranging a turban to his liking).
Houbraken makes no adverse comment about the dogs to which Hoogstraten objected. They may in his time have already been overpainted; at all events they had been by 1808, as can be seen from the etching by Norblin (see *6. Graphic reproductions*, 1; fig. 20).

6. Graphic reproductions

1. Etching, large folio, by Jean-Pierre Norblin de la Gourdaine (Misy-faut-Yonne 1745 — Paris 1830) (fig. 20), signed and dated 1808 i.e. two years after he did the drawings mentioned under *7. Copies*, 1. Reproduces the picture in reverse and in great detail, including the dark spandrels in the two upper corners, but without the two copulating dogs which appeared from beneath an overpainting during cleaning in 1892. On the ground above the two dogs fighting is written *Rembrandt.fc.* / 1656, suggesting that this is reproducing a signature. There is none on the painting in its present state, and Bode[5] — under whose supervision the cleaning in 1892 was carried out — does not mention any inscription that might have disappeared with the removal of the overpainting.

7. Copies

1. Nine drawings of various figures by Jean-Pierre Norblin in Warsaw, Muzeum Narodowe; cat. exhn. *La tradition rembranesque. Dessins-estampes*, Warsaw 1961, nos. 23–31 (cf. J. Białostocki in: *N.K.J.* 23 (1972), pp. 139–140, figs. 6 and 7). One drawing is dated 1805, five others 1806. Norblin thus did the drawings after his return to Paris from Poland in 1804, and two years before the etching mentioned above.
2. A copy by Benjamin West (1738–1820), sold in his sale, which is mentioned by Smith in 1836[19].

8. Provenance

— It may be assumed from a deed dated 13 September 1658 (*5. Documents and sources*, 1) that the painting was then already owned by Jan Six (1618–1700), who had by then twice been portrayed by Rembrandt and was later to become burgomaster; at all events it

does not appear in the 1656 inventory of Rembrandt's possessions, but is in the sale of Jan Six's estate, Amsterdam 6 April 1702 (Lugt 183), no. 38: 'St Jans Predicatie, in 't Graauw, van Rembrand van Ryn, zo raar en ongemeen konstig als te bedenken is' (The Sermon of St John, in grisaille, by Rembrand van Ryn, done as exceptional and uncommon skilfully as may be imagined). (710 guilders to J. Six, according to an annotated copy in the Six Foundation).
— Coll. Jan Six (1668–1750), second son of the foregoing; described as in his possession by Houbraken in 1718 (see *5. Documents and sources,* 3). Subsequently passed on through the estate of Pieter Six (1686–1755), grandson of the elder brother of the burgomaster Jan Six, and remained in the family until 1803 when the painting was sold to the dealer Coclers of Amsterdam[18].
*— Apparently seen by Jean-Pierre Norblin in an unidentified collection in Paris (cf. *6. Graphic reproductions* and *7. Copies*).
— Coll. Cardinal Fesch, sale Rome 17 March 1845, no. 189 (14 000 scudi).
— Coll. P. Norton 1857[20].
— Coll. Lord Ward, later Earl of Dudley, London; sale London 25 June 1892, no. 19 (£2625 to the Berlin Museum).

9. Summary

The grisaille of *John the Baptist preaching* can be regarded as one of the best documented of Rembrandt's works, and because of this and of its outstanding quality and complicated genesis there can be no doubt as to its authenticity. The painting was most probably initially intended as a draft for an etching, and must be linked with a project for producing a number of very large etchings that must have occupied Rembrandt between 1633 and 1635. It cannot entirely be ruled out that the grisaille still served the purpose of a design for an etching after its enlargement to the presentday format, but there is some evidence that this was not the case.

On stylistic grounds it can be assumed that the enlargement took place not long after the painting of the smaller centre canvas. When it was being enlarged the painting was stuck to an oak panel the wood of which came from the same tree as two panels that were not used by Rembrandt until 1640 and 1644 respectively. The X-ray image shows repeated and drastic changes in the landscape at various stages of the work when — at least on the last occasion — the landscape on the centre canvas was totally recast. Motifs from both the first and the second phase of the work are connected in so many ways with work by Rembrandt from the years 1634 and 1635 that it is hard to date the execution of the whole picture as much later than those years. The wealth and variety of ethnic types among the crowd for the greater part give a picture of the sinful world that is untouched by John's preaching of repentance.

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A 107 The Lamentation

[1634/35]

LONDON, THE NATIONAL GALLERY, INV. NO. 43

HDG 136; BR. 565; BAUCH 69; GERSON 89

1. Summarized opinion

A reasonably well preserved and autograph grisaille, in all probability done around 1634/35 in preparation for an etching (that was never executed). The grisaille has been extended at top and bottom by another hand, and parts of the original were overpainted in the process.

2. Description of subject

In writing this description, use has been made of the infrared photograph of the painting and of clarifying information provided by a print from 1730 made after the painting by Bernard Picart. The scene depicted here is not described in the Bible.

Lit strongly from the left, the scene is taking place at the foot of the Cross set on a high point in the landscape — the hill of Golgotha — with the city of Jerusalem in the background. Christ lies stretched out on the ground. His head, tilted back, lies in Mary's lap as she sits on the ground to the right with her legs stretched out to the front. She sinks back, swooning, and the attention of those standing, kneeling and squatting around her is concentrated mainly on her. An old man (Nicodemus?) supports her from behind, and her head, lolling to one side, rests on his chest. Further to the left an old woman wearing a white headscarf holds Mary's senseless right hand. On Mary's other side a richly-clad young woman tends her. At her feet is what could be a shallow bowl, with lying next to it in the foreground a bone. On the far right there is a sketchily-shown figure gazing upwards, with hands clasped.

A young man (John?) leans forward towards the right from behind the old woman with the white headscarf, gesturing towards Mary with his right hand. Picart (see *6. Graphic reproductions*, 1 below) and Ferdinand Bol (see *7. Copies*, 1 below) believed they could recognize his left hand in shapes that may belong rather to lit folds in his left sleeve. It may be that the young man's left arm is meant to pass behind the back of the old man (Nicodemus?) in order to support him. To the left of this young man are two kneeling or squatting figures, one a bearded man in a fur cap who looks towards Mary, the other a turbanned figure with hands raised. Behind them stands a weeping woman, brushing tears from her eyes. A young woman, undoubtedly Mary Magdalene, has thrown herself to the ground at Christ's feet and clasps them in her arms. In the left foreground, seen three-quarters from behind and mostly in shadow, stands a man with a turban a long loose end of which hangs down his back; he has a sash round his waist, and his right hand hangs by his side with the sleeve drooping in long folds from the elbow. Four figures can be seen to his left; one of these is visible only as a headdress, another is an old bearded man wearing a turban with ear-flaps of whom one sees the head, part of his shoulder and the right forearm held horizontal. Left of this are, one above the other, the profile head of a man with a long, curved nose and below this the tilted head, seen three-quarters from the front, of a bearded man in the shadow. (Both these heads are — as discussed under *Support*, DESCRIPTION and *Paint layer* — later additions by another hand. An unidentifiable dark shape filling the lefthand bottom corner also belongs to these later additions.) On the left, by the feet of the standing turbanned man, there seems to be a dog, whose bent head and front paws stretching forwards are vaguely seen.

Two ladders are propped against the empty cross, with a man standing on that on the left. Another man is engaged in moving the righthand ladder. The heads of two men wearing bonnets can just be glimpsed as dark silhouettes below this ladder; they are otherwise hidden behind the standing, weeping woman. Behind this group, seen square-on and strongly lit, one of the two thieves (no doubt the 'good thief') hangs with outspread arms on a cross. On the extreme left the other thief — in his present state painted entirely by another hand, as we shall discuss below under *4. Comments* — hangs, seen from behind, with his arms over the crossbar.

In the middle ground to the right a group of figures, two of them on horseback, descend the slope of the hill; a figure walks alongside the front rider, while between them is a figure with a plumed cap. The front rider is turbanned and carries a lance, and can perhaps be seen as the centurion Longinus. An old, turbanned man meets the group, with bowed head; this may be Joseph of Arimathea, who begged Pilate for the body of Jesus (Matthew 27: 57–58).

To the left, in the distance, there is a large, arched bridge seen in shadow, with (as a dark silhouette on the nearer bank) a truncated tower, possibly a gatehouse. Various figures are crossing the bridge, one of them with a long stick. Further back, appearing as a sea of houses, lies the city crowned by the Temple, which is shown as a high, long building flanked by the two towers, rendered here as columns. On the right, behind the group of riders and rising above the city, there is a castle-like building.

3. Observations and technical information

Working conditions

Examined in May 1968 (B. H., E. v. d. W.) in good daylight and out of the frame, with the aid of fullsize X-ray prints, IR, UV and raking-light photographs, which were also available later. In 1982 the painting was examined again under a binocular microscope (E. v. d. W.) in collaboration with Mrs C. M. Groen.

Support

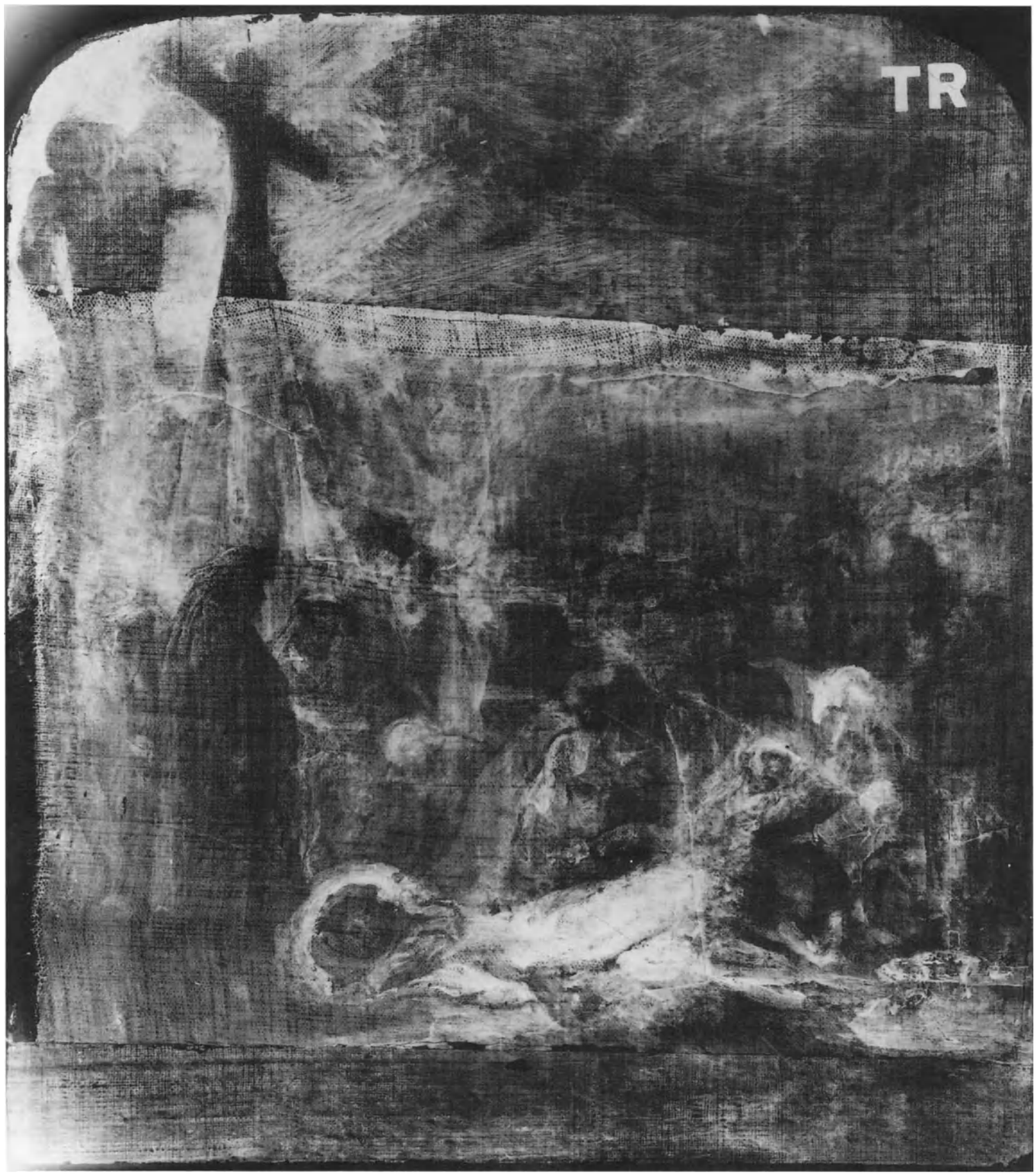
DESCRIPTION: The support is very complex. An irregularly-shaped piece of paper measuring *c.* 19 × 26 cm, first torn and then trimmed, is stuck to a canvas 21.4 cm high on the left and 20 cm high on the right, and 26.7 cm wide. Along the top edge the shape of the paper is, as may be seen from the radiograph, very irregular. At the position of the ladder and thief in the middle ground, a large chunk of paper has been cut and torn out. The shape of the gap this leaves is such that the head of the man moving the ladder falls entirely outside the paper, as do the trunk, head and right arm of the thief. The upper edge of the paper runs 1 cm to several centimetres below the top of the canvas. At the bottom, a large triangular piece of paper has been torn and cut away at the righthand corner. The lefthand side of this triangle runs through Christ's ear and along his jaw to a point to the right of John's head. The other side of the triangle passes through Mary's head to the left hand knee of the richly-dressed woman on the extreme right. The canvas to which the paper is glued has cusping at the top and left, indicating that it is a fragment from a previously stretched and primed canvas (see SCIENTIFIC DATA below). This piece of canvas has at some time been stuck on a larger oak panel, rounded at the top corners and measuring 31.9 × 26.7 cm. When this was done, another strip of canvas *c.* 8 cm at the left and 9 cm at the right was stuck along the top, and a piece of what is probably the same canvas, some 3.5 cm wide, was added at the bottom. These added strips of canvas cover parts of the panel that were left exposed by the first canvas at the top and bottom. The three pieces of canvas must have been stuck on in a single operation; the two seams are dead straight, and were evidently produced by cutting simultaneously through the middle canvas and the added canvases as they overlapped it. This must have been done after the paint on the middle canvas was dry and hard, to judge from the way the paint has crumbled along the cuts. As we shall discuss below it cannot on stylistic grounds be assumed that Rembrandt himself painted the added strips.

The panel is very probably oak, and has pieces of paper bearing writing stuck on the back (see *5. Documents and sources*).

Fig. 1. Paper stuck to canvas, subsequently stuck to panel 31.9 × 26.7 cm



Fig. 2. X-Ray



SCIENTIFIC DATA: According to the X-ray, the middle canvas has cusping along the lefthand edge, with the only full cusp 9 cm long. The bottom has cusping at pitches of 10 and 8 cm. Threadcount: 18.5 vertical threads/cm (18–19), 13.1 horizontal threads/cm (12.5–14). Because of the greater regularity and density of the vertical threads and the fact that most of the thickenings are in the horizontal direction, it may be assumed that the warp runs vertical. Canvases with the same threadcount and weave characteristics, and thus probably coming from the same bolt, are the supports of the *Holy family* of *c.* 1634 (no. A 88), the *Samson threatening his father-in-law* of 1635 (no. A 109), the *Cupid* of 1634 (no. A 91) the Vienna *S.Paul* (Br. 603) and the narrow added strip in the *John the Baptist preaching* of *c.* 1634/35 (no. A 106). The lastnamed strip and the canvas for the *Lamentation* could also come from the piece of canvas that was trimmed from the bottom of the *Cupid* before it was painted on (see Vol. II, Introduction, Chapter II).

The upper added strip has cusping (7 and 8.5 cm in pitch) along the upper edge. Threadcount: 13.25 vertical threads/cm (13–14), 14.3 horizontal threads/cm (14–14.5). There is no cusping in the lower added strip, which has a threadcount of 14.25 vertical threads/cm (14–14.5) and 14.5 horizontal threads/cm (14–15). The warp cannot be determined with certainty in either piece. On the grounds of threadcount and weave characteristics it is not unlikely that both come from the same bolt of canvas.

Ground

DESCRIPTION: A light yellowish tint shows through at many places in the section painted on paper — probably that of the paper itself. This tint is also visible, showing through a brownish tint that possibly belongs to the first lay-in, in damages in, for instance, the head of the front rider. No ground was observed in the other parts.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: According to recent investigations, no ground appears to have been applied to the paper. A two-layer ground was found on both added strips; the lower layer contains an orange-red pigment, while the upper is a mixture of white lead and charcoal black (for further details, see cat. exhibn. *Art in the making. Rembrandt*, London 1988–'89, pp. 70, 72).

Paint layer

CONDITION: Generally good. Small vertical blisters, mostly in the part painted on paper, have become fixed in the past. Such blistering must in an earlier stage have led to some paint loss and retouching, in view of the presence of a number of dark, vertical patches in the X-ray image, at the group of riders and above them. These retouches show up partly dark under UV fluorescence, indicating that there has been retouching in the none-too-distant past. The same is true of a fairly large damage a little below the upper seam, along the contour of Christ's chest, at the place where the two ladders touch the cross, and in the upright of the cross itself. A number or more or less clearly distinguishable overpaintings in the middle section are probably mostly connected with the enlargement of the picture at top and bottom, and will consequently be discussed in that context (see *Paint layer,* DESCRIPTION). Craquelure: fine cracks are seen at some places in the thickly painted passages.

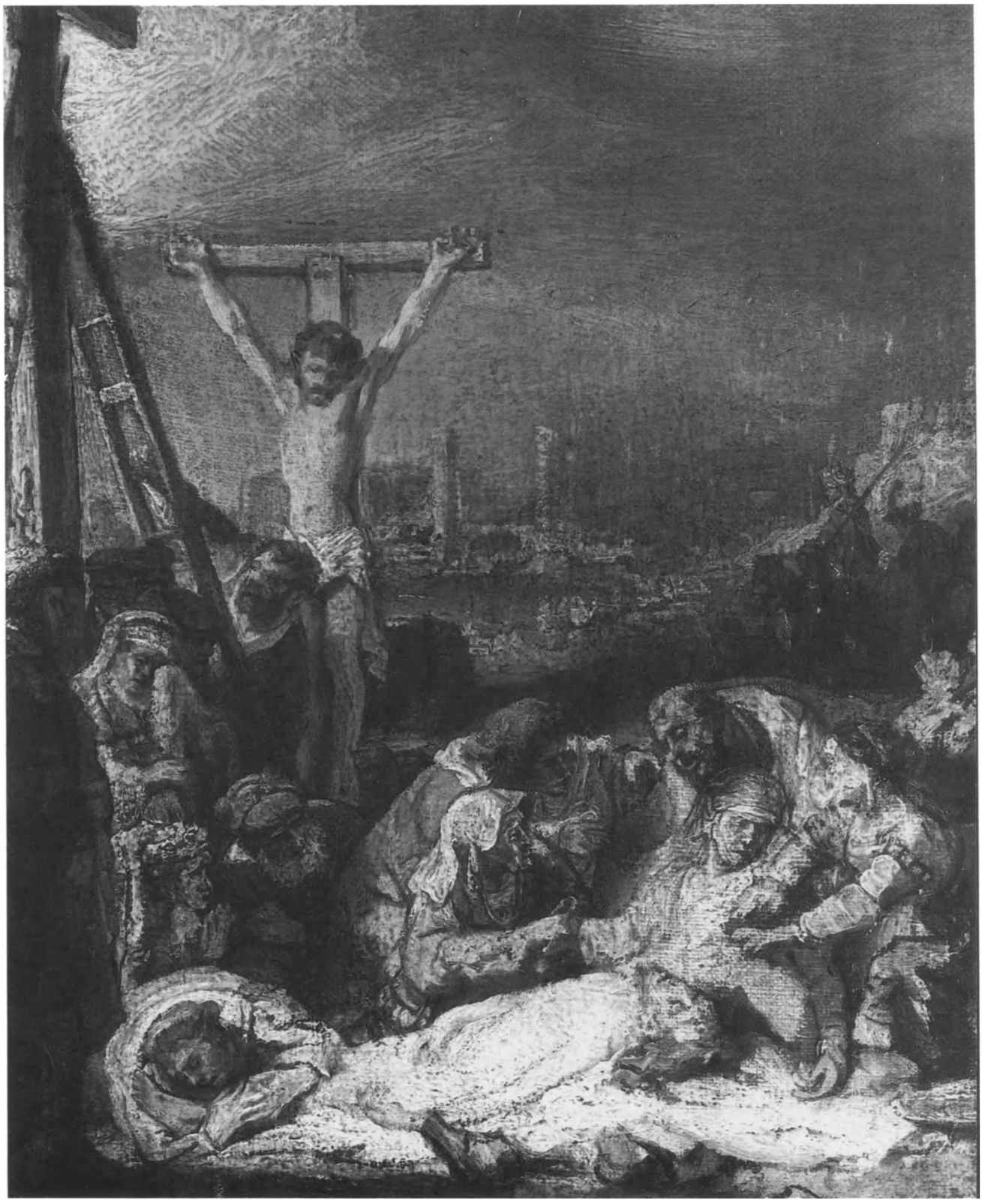
DESCRIPTION: The painting technique, brushwork and degree of detail vary greatly, partly because of the nature of the work as a preparatory sketch for an etching, and partly as the result of the complicated genesis and later enlargement of the work. In the parts of the composition that have remained in their initial form (the repoussoir figures in the left foreground and the main group around Jesus and Mary) one sees a technique of showing the lit passages with firm strokes and dabs of light paint placed on top of a thin tonal preparatory layer that can be seen in the shadow areas. In these grey-brown shadows the grain of the paper is apparent throughout, as is the imprint of the underlying canvas. The detail of lit parts of costume and of faces is here and there added with dark lines over lighter paint. Many of the linear elements however consist of parts of the tonal lay-in left exposed between the lights — and in the latter there are occasional dark brushlines most of which probably belong to the lay-in.

The lights in these passages seem to have been executed predominantly in white and yellowish and brownish intermediate tints. Despite the broad treatment, the suggestion of form is in general remarkably differentiated and effective. Exceptions to this are the figure with clasped and raised hands on the extreme right — evidently added at a late stage — and the head of the richly-clad woman to the right of Mary, which consists of little more than a shapeless, impasto patch of light paint. The drawn copy (see *7. Copies*) shows more detail at this point, possibly lost through abrasion. The figure with raised hands on the left of the old man, wearing a cap with ear-flaps, is also done remarkably sketchily, but this too appears — in view of the alterations to the London drawing at this place — to be an addition or the consequence of a radical change made here at a later stage in the production process.

In the alterations that Rembrandt himself certainly made in the second stage, after the main body of paper had been stuck to the canvas, the technique is necessarily different. Little or no use could be made of the underpainting left exposed for the shadow areas; the shadows are done in opaque paint, applied partly wet-in-wet with the paint of lighter areas. This is seen, for instance, in the two men with the ladders, as well as in Christ's cross (which may have been strengthened at this stage) and in the good thief and his cross. The background and sky, too, are executed mostly in this way.

In the upper addition the paint in the sky is, especially in the light areas, applied thickly with bold strokes — only in the dark parts can anything be seen of the weave of the canvas. The border of the overlap of this paint on that already present on the middle section makes more or less one line with the underside of the crossbar of the good thief's cross. To the left of the other thief the overpainting runs downwards to the left of the man with a turban with ear-flaps, in a narrow strip. The two figures on the far left form part of this zone. The bad thief and the cross on which he hangs are also, as a whole, part of the later painting done in connexion with the enlargement. The figure is done with fairly long strokes, with the tones worked into each other wet-in-wet, producing a muddy appearance made the more so by a fairly thickly applied cool grey worked into the shadows of the figure. At some points a rather striking brown-red has also been used in this figure, a colour that does not occur in the passages that can be regarded as autograph. It is also used in Christ's cross, at the underside of the further arm of the horizontal crossbar. The fact that the same colour occurs again in the paint used for the headdress of the richly-clad woman to the right is strong evidence that this and probably also a few other minor changes to the middle section were done at this stage (by a hand other than Rembrandt). The headdress of the richly-dressed young woman to the right of Mary, for instance, must originally have been much larger; one can see, from the drawn copy by Ferdinand Bol (see *7. Copies*, fig. 8), that it was a flattened, slightly turban-like hat. The copy must in this respect have accurately resembled the prototype, since the same shape can be partly made out in the X-ray and in relief under the present hair and its surroundings. The paint used for this alteration is different from that of the original passages. One may deduce, from the fact that it shows up markedly dark in the infrared photograph, that it contains a good deal of black pigment. The same is true of the minor additions already mentioned, i.e. small strokes in the cross of the good thief, to the right of his waist and below and to the right of his loincloth and the (pointed) ear that has been sketched to the left of the head of this figure. Similar sketchy lines, intended to add clarity, can be seen in and alongside the hip and across the chest of the man on the ladder to the left. The fact that a similar alteration can be seen in the same area, viz. by the instep of the bad thief, makes one wonder whether these changes — or some of them — were

Fig. 3. Detail (1 : 1)



done by an even later hand than that responsible for the overpaintings linked with the enlargement

SCIENTIFIC DATA: Analyses of pigments and medium were carried out and some 12 cross-sections prepared during cleaning in 1987. For observations relating to technical differences between the original and the added areas, see cat. exhibn. *Art in the making. Rembrandt*, London 1988–'89, p. 72.

X-Rays

The radiographic image reveals, first of all, the complexity of the support, as already described under *Support*, DESCRIPTION. Partly because of this the X-ray is difficult to read. On the whole it matches reasonably well what one expects from the paint surface, though on a few points it does differ. In the lower righthand corner a remarkably large amount of radioabsorbent paint has been used; possibly the skull shown in the drawn copy by Ferdinand Bol (see *7. Copies*, 1) was at this point. Where the bowl is seen on the right at the feet of the richly-clad young woman there are shapes that suggest that originally other objects were depicted here. A patch showing up very light above her head is an indication that here too alterations were made as the work progressed. Above the figure of John there are curved shapes giving a light image, possibly the first lay-in for the head of a figure that was not worked up further (cf. Rembrandt's drawing in the British Museum, which will be discussed further under *4. Comments*).

Rather difficult to interpret are forms that appear light to the right and diagonally to the right above the man with the plumed cap in the middle ground, the reserve for whom can be clearly seen in the light paint, while that for the rider to the right of him is lacking.

On the left, alongside the clear reserve for the repoussoir figure below the cross, there is paint that shows up unexpectedly light; this could indicate that this passage was altered during the work, although the reserve left for the face of the old man with a turban is proof that this figure was always intended to be there. A large shape in the background shown with a few light strokes and also visible in the IR image — perhaps a tower (as in Rembrandt's own drawing, fig. 4)? — is also apparent in the X-ray.

Signature

None.

Varnish

A fairly thick layer of yellowed varnish was removed during cleaning in 1987.

4. Comments

Before going into the close links there are between this work and other grisailles by Rembrandt — which are such that there can be no doubt as to the attribution — some time needs to be spent looking at the history of its production.

It will already be clear, from the description of the support and paint layer, that the genesis of this work was eventful. The irregularly shaped piece of paper that accommodates most of the main group obviously represents the rump of a once rectangular composition of unknown size. The fact that parts of this fragment have obviously been deliberately removed — the gap by the righthand ladder and the good thief, and the triangular gap by Christ's head and Mary — is evidence of intent. The natural supposition is that the parts of the composition retained on the paper fragment were judged satisfactory by Rembrandt, while improvements or additions were to be done on the new support (the canvas to which the paper fragment was glued). The only strange thing is that when looked at closely the straight top and bottom edges of the paper too are found to have been irregularly trimmed and torn, which can only mean that there is more of the original composition missing than the gaps just mentioned. One cannot tell if anything is missing at the sides because it is impossible, from the X-ray evidence, to say anything about the course taken by these edges of the paper; the iconographic tradition into which the picture fits makes it hardly likely, however, that the composition was originally very much larger. Finally, the grisaille was enlarged — in Rembrandt's workshop or elsewhere — at top and bottom; this complicates the situation further, especially since when this was done the autograph core of the work was overpainted, to an extent it is impossible to gauge precisely, by a hand that cannot be thought to be that of Rembrandt himself.

We shall start by looking at the authentic part of the painting, on the irregularly outlined piece of paper and the canvas to which it is glued. The key to interpreting the substantial changes that Rembrandt had obviously decided on before he radically amputated his original composition along the top can be found with a large measure of certainty in a drawing by him in the British Museum (fig. 4; Ben. 154). This drawing is very closely connected with the grisaille and, as will be shown below, had an equally complicated genesis. The two works, taken together, form exceptional documents in Rembrandt's oeuvre for a working process that in the case of this composition must have been very labourious. It is generally accepted in the Rembrandt literature that the purpose of all this must have been to produce a sketch for an etching. This places the grisaille in a small but important group of works, done on paper or discarded fragments of canvas and all in greyish or brownish tints, only one of which — the *Ecce homo* grisaille of 1634 also in London (no. A 89) — in fact resulted in an etching (which was partly executed by another hand).

To understand the sequence of events properly it is essential to determine where the drawing comes in the process of production of the grisaille. Gerson[1] saw the drawing as preliminary study for the painting, just as Benesch[2] too had talked of a 'preparatory sketch'. Stechow[3] had however as early as 1929 pointed out how difficult it was to understand the relationship between the drawing and the grisaille. Bauch[4] did not go into the question. In 1969 Harris[5] gave an enlightening analysis of the genesis of Ben. 154, but still looked on it as a preliminary drawing. It is however far more likely

Fig. 4. Rembrandt, *The Lamentation*, pen and ink, red and black chalk, wash and oil paint, 21.6 × 25.3 cm (Ben. 154). London, The British Museum



that the London drawing was produced not before the grisaille, but after it was well advanced, or even completed, in its first version. As mentioned in Vol. I, Introduction, p. 22, there are other cases where it has turned out that drawings that have traditionally been looked on as preparations for a composition owe their existence to changes undertaken at a stage where the painting involved was already largely or totally completed. As explained in that reference, Rembrandt generally prepared his compositions not as drawings but directly on the support for the painting. Probably the drawing of the *Lamentation* too, or at least the part done in pen and ink, was based on the grisaille before the latter was altered, and was made in order to work out ideas that could subsequently be (wholly or partly) incorporated in the grisaille.

The drawing in any case has to an unusual degree the character of a working document, the stage of development of which can to some extent be reconstructed thanks to various media (pen-and-ink, washes, red and brown chalk, and oil-paints) having been used.

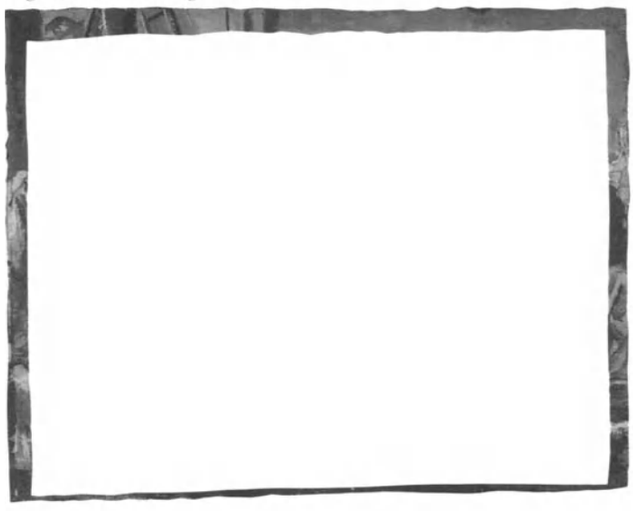
An inscription by Jonathan Richardson Jnr. on the back of the grisaille (see *5. Documents and sources*) states that the drawing was a collage made up of 17 pieces of paper. As Harris[5] pointed out this gives an unnecessarily complicated idea of what has actually happened. According to his reconstruction of the genesis and the accompanying illustrations (on which our figs. 5–7 are based) the drawing was in the first place enlarged somewhat by being stuck onto a piece of paper, thereby adding about 2 cm to the picture area all round. In a subsequent stage this entity was cut through, the two parts moved apart and stuck onto a still larger sheet. It is found that pen-lines appear on the drawing only in its first enlarged state, and not on the third sheet. On the other hand the materials that can be found on the third sheet (chalk and oil paint) do occur on the central section and the first enlargement. This may be seen as evidence that all the elements executed in these materials were painted after it had been decided to cut the drawing apart and stick it down. The way the two separated parts of the drawing have been moved apart suggests that, as Harris already concluded, Rembrandt was doing this primarily to make room for the ladder leaning against the righthand side of the cross. Pen-lines seen here and there in Christ's cross form a substantial indication that the position of the cross was already fixed. Just like the man with the ladder, a considerable number of other elements seem to have been done only in chalk and oil paint; these include the other ladder with the figure on it, the crosses of the two thieves, the woman behind the

Figs. 5–7. Reconstruction of the genesis of Rembrandt's drawing (according to Anthony Harris)

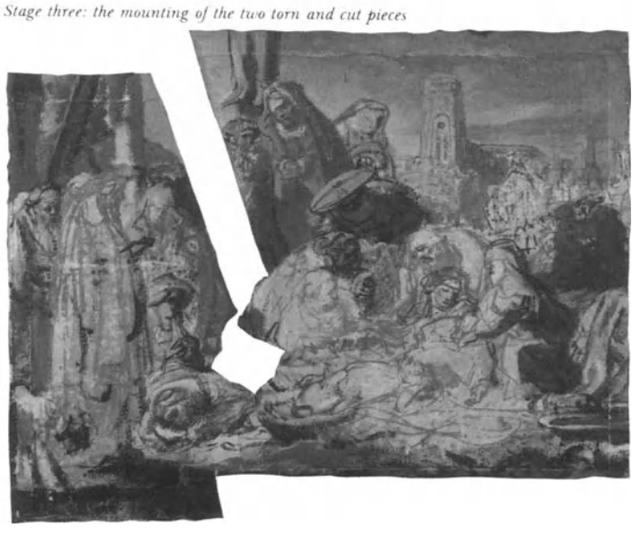
Stage one: the size of the original drawing



Stage two: the added marginal areas



Stage three: the mounting of the two torn and cut pieces



central group, and the background in its present form. This can be seen as a strong argument that what is involved here is changes and additions intended to be carried out subsequently in the grisaille.

Only some of these were in fact incorporated in the grisaille — the two ladders with the associated men, the crosses of the two thieves, and the dog in the left foreground. The figures in the middle ground of the drawing, the view of the city and the drapery in the right foreground were not taken over. This made it possible for the figure of the thief to be inserted into the grisaille lower down, and shown in its entirety. At the place where in the drawing there is the forward-leaning woman with a round hat, done in oil paint, the radiograph of the grisaille shows light shapes that can, with a little difficulty, be read as a figure. In the grisaille the new elements that were in fact taken over from the drawing are to a great extent on the canvas to which the fragment of paper was stuck; this would explain its irregular shape. The kind of changes that have been made to both the drawings and the grisaille gives the impression that Rembrandt, apart from adding the ladders and making a number of changes, was concerned with introducing the crosses of the two thieves. Apart from the alterations in the grisaille that Rembrandt made on the basis of the drawing, he also added the old man in a fur-trimmed bonnet behind John's back and, very sketchily, the woman wringing her hands on the extreme right. One notices that in the parts of the grisaille that match the parts of the London drawing done only in pen and ink, the execution is rather thin — at many places the paper shows through. In the additions, on the canvas and at places where in the drawing changes have been made in chalk and oil paint, the paint of the grisaille is for the most part thicker and coarser. MacLaren[6] has tended to see significant stylistic differences in this, and has consequently put the stages in the production of the grisaille at some remove from each other. A more plausible explanation is that when these additions or alterations were made underlying passages in the grisaille must have been covered over, resulting in a heavier handling of paint. The phenomenon of Rembrandt appearing to have made changes and additions to such sketchlike works with impatient haste — e.g. in the *John the Baptist preaching* (no. A 106) and the *Concord of the State* (no. A 135) — might also explain such 'stylistic differences'.

MacLaren[6], probably rightly, dubbed the righthand thief the 'good' thief, presumably because he hangs in the light and does not exhibit the tormented posture one expects of the bad thief. The fact that the latter is placed on the right hand of Christ's cross might then indicate that the grisaille was indeed done as a design — in reverse — for an

Fig. 8. F. Bol after Rembrandt, *The Lamentation*, brush and brown ink over black chalk, 16.3 × 24.5 cm. New Zealand, private collection



etching. Unfortunately the posture of the bad thief was executed by the painter who made the enlargement, so the difference in posture between the two thieves does not allow any definite conclusion to be drawn. What is shown of this thief in a drawn copy attributable to Bol (fig. 8; see *7. Copies*, 1) is however in shadow; this may indicate that in Rembrandt's grisaille before the overpainting this figure was indeed intended as the bad thief.

Opinions on the dating of the grisaille vary a great deal. On the grounds of a not very convincing connexion that Hofstede de Groot[7] made with an etching of the *Descent from the cross* from 1642 (B. 82) he arrived at a date around that year, as did Haverkamp Begemann[8]. Stechow[3] believed in a date even after 1642, and Bredius too put it in the early 1640s[9]. Benesch[2] and Gerson[1], on the other hand, placed the grisaille in the period 1637–38, with Gerson assuming that Rembrandt continued work on it for some considerable time after 1638. He may have based himself on MacLaren's belief that Rembrandt must have worked on it over a period of some years[6]. In the figures at the foot of the cross, and the bearded man behind Mary Magdalene, MacLaren recognized stylistic features from works (not identified specifically) from around 1637/39 and earlier; but the style in which the good thief is painted made him think that Rembrandt must have been still working on the grisaille in the early 1640s. Possibly on the same grounds Sumowski has recently again suggested a date between 1640 and 1645[10] while Tümpel on the other hand gives 1635–'42[11].

There is one important reason, not yet touched upon, for thinking that the grisaille was produced well before 1640. This lies in the existence of a painting dated 1637 by Govaert Flinck (Von Moltke *Flinck*, no. 59; Sumowski *Gemälde* II, no. 612); it treats the same subject, and contains features that are hard to explain other than through knowledge of the Rembrandt grisaille. Flinck too combines in his painting the grieving round the dead Christ, the concern around the fainting Mary and the action around the empty cross. Although Flinck's much larger painting contains no literal quotation from the grisaille, one cannot escape the impression that he based his composition on that of Rembrandt, albeit in a vertical format, and repeated a number of motifs (some in reverse). Such a procedure is not unusual with Flinck or with Rembrandt's other pupils, and echoes the way Rembrandt himself used works by his teacher Pieter Lastman.

A date around the mid-1630s is thus, on the grounds of Flinck's use of Rembrandt's design, more likely than the later datings that have been assumed up to now. It would also chime with our findings, which indicate that the grisailles that Rembrandt made in preparation for etchings (only one of which was in fact executed) can be placed within a fairly limited period, between 1633 and 1635. In the present instance 1634 seems a plausible date, because of the strong suspicion that the piece of canvas onto which the paper is stuck was taken from the prepared canvas on which the *Cupid*, dated in that year, was painted (see no. A 91; cf. Vol. II, Chapter II, table B). What is more there is — for all the diversity evident in the execution of the whole of the central part (varying from quite detailed to extremely cursory) — a convincing similarity in motifs and style with work done around 1634; a similarity that not only warrants an attribution to Rembrandt, but also provides more precise evidence for the date. His preoccupation with the Passion pictures he was producing for Prince Frederik Hendrik may have prompted Rembrandt to explore related themes like the Lamentation that are not included in the series. This is borne out by a pen-and-ink drawing in Berlin (fig. 9; Ben. 100 recto), in which a number of components of the grisaille occur in a different arrangement; the body of Christ is stretched out below the only partly-visible cross, with a single, diagonally-placed ladder, a few standing figures and a group of kneeling figures (rather as in the engraving of the *Descent from the Cross* in Dürer's Little Passion); Mary hugs the body of the dead Christ in a way reminiscent of early 16th-century Netherlandish versions of the *Pietà* (Gerard David, Quentin Massys). Similar motifs occur in an etching of the *Crucifixion* generally dated around 1635 (B. 80), where the body lying on the ground is not Christ but, just as for example in the Munich *Descent from the Cross* of 1632/33 (no. A 65), the unconscious figure of Mary. In the grisaille — which thus does not necessarily postdate these two works — these motifs are combined with each other, as well as with a compact group of figures bending over the two bodies and a less compact group of standing figures who (as in the etching) are partly used as a repoussoir. To this is added on the extreme right, at a late stage (i.e. later than the half-finished drawing in the British Museum), the figure of a woman wringing her hands

Fig. 9. Rembrandt, *The Lamentation*, pen and bistre, 17.1 × 15.4 cm (Ben. 100 recto). Berlin (West), Staatliche Museen Preussischer Kulturbesitz, Kupferstichkabinett (KdZ 2312)



which appears to be based on the figure of John seen on the extreme right of Mantegna's print of the *Entombment* (B. 3), a drawn copy of which was later to be made in Rembrandt's workshop (Ben. 105a). The old bearded man wearing a bonnet who leans over Christ's feet was on the other hand planned from the start, and (in reverse) closely matches a greybearded and bareheaded man in the Glasgow *Entombment* (no. A 105), which we put at 1635 at the latest. In style of painting the grisaille comes closest however to the three grisailles that were done with an etching in mind — the *Ecce homo* dated 1634 (no. A 89) and the *Joseph telling his dreams* (no. A 66) which we date at *c.* 1633 (both of which have the figures on a much larger scale), and the *John the Baptist preaching* (no. A 106) which should probably be placed in 1634/35 (and where the scale of the figures is about the same as in the *Lamentation*). This grisaille's greatest similarity to the *Joseph telling his dreams* lies in the mainly sketchlike rendering of form and in a detail like the profile head of John with his reddish hair, reminding one of the figure of Joseph. But more detailed passages such as the lit draperies and facial features of the standing figures on the left and some of the others are very reminiscent of the treatment of corresponding motifs in the *Ecce homo* and, even more, the *John the Baptist preaching*. Other features reminding one of the latter work are the use of scarcely-lit and picturesque figures as a repoussoir, and the great attention paid to posture, clothing and facial expression; a similar dating, around 1634/35, thus seems justified. The first phase of the work can be placed in 1634 because of, in particular, the almost graphic way lit folds and facial features — in the standing figures on the left and the old woman with the light-coloured headdress turning towards Mary — are shown with streaks of thick paint; something very similar is found not only in the *Ecce homo* of 1634 but also in the Moscow *Incredulity of Thomas* (no. A 90), likewise dated 1634. This does not mean that further very detailed passages were not added in the final stage. This is especially the case in the background, where a distant city and a middle ground with a bridge and figures are shown; they had not yet appeared in the British Museum drawing. The figure of the crucified good thief must also come from the same late phase; in the drawing he was placed higher up so that only his legs were seen, whereas here, through some of the figures in the drawing being eliminated, he could be moved lower down. It may have been the rather summary rendering of this figure that prompted MacLaren to put the execution of it later than that of the main group, perhaps even in the early 1640s. This conclusion seems unwarranted. The difference in the amount of detail, comparable with that between the figure of Christ and that of Pilate and the high priests in the *Ecce homo*, can be accounted for by the more distant placing of this figure.

So far there can be no reasonable doubt that the work and alterations described — and the motives for them — can be attributed to Rembrandt himself. The same cannot be said of the final enlargement of the grisaille. This involves, along the upper edge, a broad strip including a large part of the sky, the upper part of the empty cross and the upper part of the body of the good thief, and along the bottom a narrow strip. The enlargement was made by taking the centre piece of canvas, partially carrying stuck-on paper and partially painted-on, and sticking it in turn onto a taller upright panel together with extra strips of canvas along the top and bottom. This enlargement must at all events have taken place before 1730, when the grisaille was reproduced in this state in an etching by Bernard Picard (see *6. Graphic reproductions*, 1). One cannot in fact rule out the possibility of it having been done in Rembrandt's lifetime or indeed in his workshop; the same method of enlargement was used for the *John the Baptist preaching* (no. A 106) and the type of ground applied to the two added strips (see under *Support,* SCIENTIFIC DATA) was a common one in Rembrandt's studio (though also elsewhere, of course). If the 1637 painting by Flinck already mentioned, which closely matches the grisaille in its enlarged form in dimensions and layout, was in fact also derived from it in these respects, then one would even have to assume that the final enlargement took place no later than 1637. It cannot however be taken for granted that Rembrandt himself was responsible for the painting on the added strips. This painting,

which besides the passages already mentioned also takes in a strip along the lefthand side with the legs of the bad thief and the two figures to the left of his cross, is so insensitive and primitive that one has to assume another hand. Technical reasons for thinking that the additions are 'most certainly not by Rembrandt himself and quite possible not even of his studio' were given in the catalogue of the exhibition *Art in making. Rembrandt*, London 1988–'89, p. 72.

The final enlargements and additions do not affect the way the subject is presented, unlike the changes that Rembrandt himself made earlier to the composition, and that give a surprising insight into his sequence of thought. From the very first lay-in he departed from the iconographic tradition, by bringing in the motif of Mary swooning (which is of pre-Reformation origin, and is normally used not with the Lamentation but with the Crucifixion, the Descent from the Cross and sometimes with the Entombment). The alteration that he made subsequently — at first as an experiment in the drawing, and then in the grisaille itself — must have been aimed at incorporating in the picture even more aspects of the Passion story. Cutting-out the paper — preceded by a try-out done in the drawing — made room for the righthand figure seen manhandling a ladder against the cross, a motif that (like the man with the ladder done at the same time on the left) again calls the Descent from the Cross to mind. The two thieves' crosses, added at this stage, introduced a fresh element into the depiction of the Lamentation, one that alludes to the previous episode in the story and emphasises on the continuity of the latter. If the figures shown in the middle distance are indeed meant to represent Joseph of Arimathea coming out from Jerusalem (after asking Pilate for Christ's body) and the centurion Longinus carrying his lance and descending the hill on horseback with his retinue, this means a further ramification of the narrative. All these changes and additions seem to reflect an attempt by the artist to incorporate into his depiction of one instant during the Passion as many aspects of the latter as possible, without however violating the dramatic unities of time, place and action.

It is not improbable that the grisaille was still in Rembrandt's possession in 1656 (see *5. Documents and sources*). At an unknown moment between 1730 and 1738 it appeared in Venice, where the composition made a clear impression on Giovanni Battista and Giovanni Domenico Tiepolo[12]. In the late 1820s it was among the first Rembrandts to enter the National Gallery, London.

5. Documents and sources

The inventory of Rembrandt's possessions made in July 1656 mentions, in the room behind the 'sydelcaemer' (side room): '79 Een cruijstingh Cristi gemodelt vanden selven' (A crucifixion of Christ modelled by the same i.e. Rembrandt) (Strauss *Doc.*, 1656/12). No. A 107 may be identical with the work thus described. Although the word 'gemodelt' is not entirely clear — elsewhere there is talk of 'Een *schets* van de begraeffenis Cristi van Rembrant' (no. 111; cf. no. A 105) and of 'Een excehomo *in 't graeuw*, van Rembrant' (An ecce homo *in the grey*) (no. 121; cf. no. A 89) — it must almost surely relate to a sketch.

Two pieces of paper stuck to the back of the panel bear inscriptions in three different hands. On the uppermost piece, the edges of which have suffered local damage, there is in the handwriting of Joshua Reynolds[6]: '[. . .] Picture [. . .] graved by [Pi] cart / in what he calls his *Impostures* / *Innocentes* whilst in the Cabinet / of M. I. (de?) Barrij of Amsterdam. / It passed afterwards into that of / M^{r} Smith Consul at Venice, / and from thence to the King, His / Majesty having purchased his ['his' has been crossed out and 'Smith's' written above] Collection / and library of Books for ten thousand / pounds. At the sale of M^{r} Dalton / who was keeper of the Kings Pictures / it was bought by Sir Joshua / Reynolds April 21 1791'. In another hand, evidently that of Jonathan Richardson Jnr. there is: 'Sir Joshua has the Drawing which Rembran [. . .] / made for this picture behind which / is wrote by Jon^{n}. Richardson Jun. these words'. On the lower piece of paper, again in Reynolds' handwriting (copied from Richardson Jnr.'s inscription on the back of Rembrandt's drawing in the British Museum): 'Rembrant has labour'd this study for the lower / part of his famous descent from the Cross / graved by Picart, & had so often changed / his mind in the disposition of the *clair obscur*, / which was his Point here, that my Father / & I counted I think seventeen pieces of / paper'. In another hand, evidently that of Sir George Beaumont: 'Bought by Sir George Beaumont at Sir Joshua Reynolds / sale Monday March 16 1795.'

6. Graphic reproductions

1. Etching by Bernard Picart (Paris 1673 — Amsterdam 1733). Inscribed: *Gravé par B.Picart en 1730, sur le Camayeux peint par Rembrandt, haut d'un / pied, sur 10. pouces de large* [= 32.5 × 27 cm] *appartenant à J. de Barij a Amsterdam;* published in Picart's *Impostures innocentes ou Recueil d'estampes d'après divers peintres illustres*, Amsterdam 1734. Reproduces the picture from the enlarged grisaille in reverse, with the top corners rounded. The high degree of detail may on the one hand be seen as evidence that in 1730 many details were better visible than they are today, but on the other could be due to the etcher 'sharpening-up' the forms. On 'J. de Barij', see below under *8. Provenance*).

2. Chiaroscuro woodcut by John Baptist Jackson (1702 — Newcastle-on-Tyne? *c.* 1780), inscribed: *Rembrandt pinxit.alt.p.1.lat unc.X.Extat Venetiis in domo J.SMITH. J.B.Jackson figuras juxta Archetypum Sculp & excudit 1738.* Cf. cat. exhibition *Gravures sur bois, clairs-obscurs de 1500 à 1800* (coll. F. Lugt), Paris-Rotterdam 1965–1966, no. 272 and fig. XXXVII. Reproduces the grisaille in the same direction as the original.

7. Copies

1. Drawing by Ferdinand Bol, brush and brown ink over a sketch in black chalk, 16.3 × 24.5 cm (fig. 8). New Zealand, private collection; Sumowski *Drawings* I, no. 146. Earlier generally described as a copy after Rembrandt's drawing in the British Museum (fig. 4) but, as Harris[5] and Sumowski[10] have already said, certainly done from the grisaille when this was in a fairly late stage or even completed. In the latter case the artist has shown some motifs — the legs of the good thief, the woman on the far right wringing her hands, the middle distance and the

background — only very cursorily and partly as reserves. It is unlikely that these motifs were at the time not worked up any further than this in the grisaille itself; some are, in the grisaille, quite obviously placed on top of passages done previously, and cannot really ever have been seen as reserves. In the more fully worked-up parts the drawing matches the grisaille fairly exactly; only the headdress of the kneeling woman on the right and the skull on the ground in front of her are now missing in the grisaille, though they may well once have been there (see *X-Rays*). The drawing seems to have been trimmed along the top — there the edge does not correspond with that of the grisaille after this had been stuck on the canvas; at the bottom, it does match. This makes one think that the drawing was done from the grisaille before the latter was enlarged at top and bottom, an assumption confirmed by the fact that the visible legs of the bad thief do not have the shape they are given in the final enlargement. The drawing would then have been done in 1637 at the latest (see *4. Comments*), which would mean that Bol (who probably came to work with Rembrandt in 1636) had by then mastered the very painterly manner of drawing seen here. A later date of production is not however ruled out. Sumowski (op. cit.) puts the date as probably *c.* 1643/45, though he works from a date in the years 1640–1645 for Rembrandt's grisaille.

2. A painted copy, known to us only from a photograph, in the Muzeum Narodowe, Warsaw, shows the picture of the enlarged grisaille in reverse, and is evidently done after Picart's etching (see *6. Graphic reproductions*, 1).

8. Provenance

*- Perhaps still in Rembrandt's possession in 1656 (see *5. Documents and sources*).

- According to the inscription on the etching by B. Picart (see *6. Graphic reproductions*, 1), owned in 1730 by 'J. de Barij a Amsterdam', probably one Jacob de Bary, whose collection of coins and medals was auctioned in Amsterdam on April 1730 (Lugt 397) and who thus may have died in 1730, the year of the etching.

- Coll. Joseph Smith, Venice, by 1738, according to the caption to the chiaroscuro woodcut by J. B. Jackson (see *6. Graphic reproductions*, 2). A grisaille auctioned at Amsterdam on 25 September 1743 (Lugt 585), when it was described as: '13. De aflaating van 't Kruys, in 't graauw, door Rembrand van Ryn (The descent from the Cross, in the grey, by Rembrand van Ryn)' (14 guilders 5 stuyvers) (Hoet II, p. 123) cannot, as Hofstede de Groot[7] believed, be identical with no. A 107 (which was by then already in the coll. Joseph Smith in Venice) but may have been a copy (perhaps no. 2 above?).

- Among the Dutch and Flemish pictures acquired with the Smith collection by George III of England in 1762: 'Rembrandt 149 A Deposition from the Cross with numerous figures on board This is the Piece Engraved by B. Picart in the stil of the Author & again in wood plates in Colour by Jackson of the same size 1 [foot] × 10 [inches]' (see: A. Blunt, *Venetian drawings . . . in the Collection of H.M. the Queen*, 1957, p. 23).

- Coll. Richard Dalton, Surveyor of the King's Pictures (together with a few other paintings bought for the king from Smith), sale London (Christie's) 9–11 April 1791 (Lugt 4704), 2nd day no. 19: 'Rembrandt. The descent from the cross in chiaro oscura [sic], engraved by Picart' (25½ guineas to 'Grosier' — probably Joseph Grozer, who either bought it for Reynolds or sold it to him later[13]).

- Coll. Sir Joshua Reynolds (d. 1792), sale London 11ff (postponed to 13ff) March 1795 (Lugt 5284), 3rd day no. 38: 'Rembrandt. The Descent from the Cross, a capital sketch of this master, engraved by Picart. A particular account is to be seen on the back of it in Sir Joshua's handwriting' (41 guineas to Sir George Beaumont Bart.).

- Coll. Sir George Beaumont, Bart.; presented by him to the British Museum for the proposed National Gallery in 1823, and transferred to the National Gallery in 1828.

9. Summary

Like other grisailles done by Rembrandt in the years *c.* 1633–35, the *Lamentation* must have been intended as a fullscale sketch for an etching (which was never executed). In its present state it comprises a variety of materials, and an analysis of this complicated structure throws light on the history of its production and on the artist's sequence of ideas. At the start, the sketch was done in oil paint on a sheet of paper; this was then divided into two and cut and torn along the edges before being stuck onto a canvas of oblong format. This operation was tried out in a drawing now in the British Museum (fig. 4), which underwent similar alterations. Some of the changes introduced — such as the addition of the ladders and the crosses of the two thieves — were incorporated in the grisaille; other elements, such as the middle distance and background, were finally given a different form. For a number of reasons, some relating to the canvas used and others to do with style, Rembrandt's work on the *Lamentation* can be put in *c.* 1634/35. Finally, perhaps in Rembrandt's studio and perhaps as early as 1637, the oblong composition that thus resulted was expanded by sticking the canvas, together with a broad strip along the top and a narrow strip along the bottom, onto an upright panel; the primitive painting of the added strips must be attributed to another hand.

Rembrandt's intention with a draft like this, and in particular with the changes he made to it, could be described as an increasing 'amplification' of the central theme by adding motifs that represented other episodes in the Passion story.

REFERENCES

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4 Bauch 69.
5 A. Harris, 'Rembrandt's study for the "Lamentation for Christ" ', *Master drawings* 7 (1969), pp. 158–164.
6 N. MacLaren, *The Dutch School*, National Gallery Catalogues, London 1960, p. 306.
7 HdG 136.
8 E. Haverkamp Begemann. 'Review of Otto Benesch, *The drawings of Rembrandt . . .*', *Kunstchronik* 14 (1961), pp. 10–28, esp. 23.
9 Br. 565.
10 Sumowski *Drawings* I, no. 146.
11 Tümpel 1986, cat.no. 62.
12 F. W. Robinson, 'Rembrandt's influence in eighteenth century Venice', *N.K.J.* 18 (1967), pp. 167–196, esp. 180–190.
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A 108 Abraham's sacrifice

1635

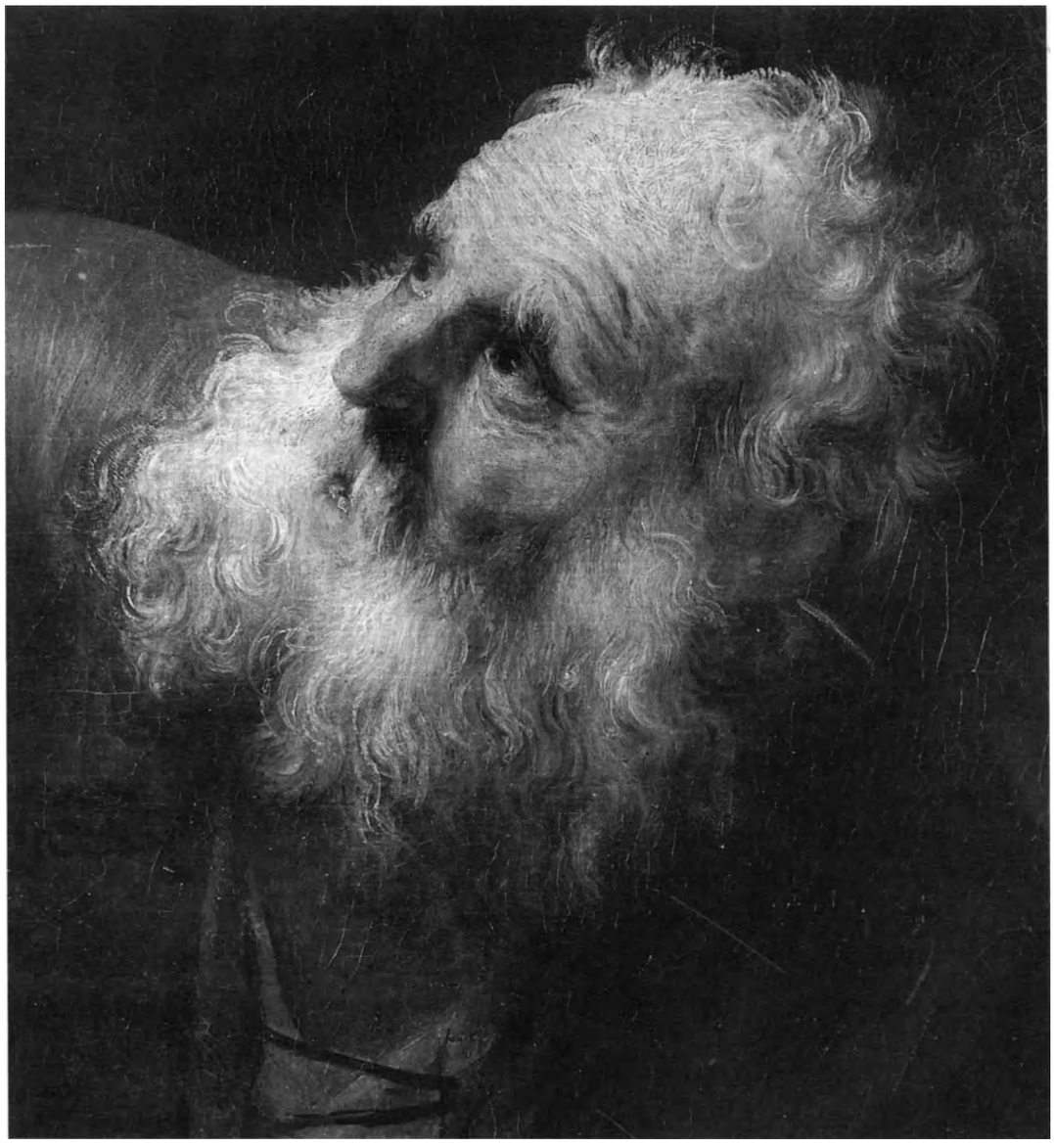
LENINGRAD, THE HERMITAGE MUSEUM, CAT.NO. 92

HDG 9; BR. 498; BAUCH 13; GERSON 74

Fig. 1. Canvas 193.5 × 132.8 cm



Fig. 2. Detail (1 : 2)



1. Summarized opinion

A reasonably well preserved, authentic and characteristic work, reliably signed and dated 1635.

2. Description of subject

The subject is taken from Genesis 22: 1–13, where God tests Abraham by asking him to sacrifice his son Isaac on a mountaintop in the land of Moriah. At the last moment — when it is plain that Abraham is going to bow to God's will — an angel sent by God interposes himself between them.

On a high place covered with undergrowth and a tree, Isaac lies on the bundle of wood brought for the sacrificial fire, with his hands bound behind his back. Part of his pleated shirt is wound round his otherwise naked body as a loincloth; his overgarment lies beneath him, on the wood and spread over the ground to the left. On the right, behind the pile of wood, stands a pot containing fire, with tiny flames licking above the rim (in the present state the appearance of this object is probably determined partly by overpainting (see *Paint layer*, CONDITION). Abraham kneels beside his son, bending Isaac's head back with a hand pressed over the lad's face. His tear-streaked face is turned towards the angel who has appeared behind him from a cloud. The latter seizes his other hand from which the knife is seen falling. Behind them, in the distance, can be seen a wooded valley, with an arched bridge and, further back, a sheet of water.

3. Observations and technical information

Working conditions

Examined in August 1969 (J. B., S. H. L.) in good daylight and out of the frame. Three X-ray prints were available later.

Support

DESCRIPTION: Canvas, relined, 193.5 × 132.8 cm (measured along the stretcher). Just above the centre, some 108 cm from the bottom, is a horizontal join that probably belongs to the original canvas. The canvas on which the Munich copy is painted (see *7. Copies*, 2) is similarly divided into two unequal parts by a horizontal join (for more on this, see Vol. II, p. 40). An inscription on the back in Russian states that the painting was transferred from the old to the new canvas in S. Petersburg by F. Tabuntsov in 1850[1]. No cusping can be detected, even in the X-rays (q.v.)
SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

Ground

DESCRIPTION: Not seen for certain; a grey that shows through the translucent paint of the shadow on Abraham's temple can probably be taken as being the ground.
SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

Paint layer

CONDITION: Generally quite good, although somewhat flattened; a distinct relief is now seen only in the handle of the knife Abraham is dropping, and in the scabbard with a small knife that hangs at his side. Some areas show varying degrees of overpainting — the brown of the earth close to Isaac's knees, the brown of the cloud (lying over grey) in the top lefthand corner, the browns in the front surface of the angel's uppermost wing, the browns of the treetrunk on the right, and probably the part to the right of Abraham's left arm and knee. The angel's head exhibits retouches around the nose and in the shadowed cheek on the left. Small local paintlosses have been painted in, either in the same colour as the surrounding area (e.g. in Isaac's body) or in red-brown (e.g. in the landscape on the left, in particular level with Isaac's left knee). It is natural to assume that at least part of the damages and restorations are connected with the 1850 transfer. It is (leaving aside a layer of yellowed varnish) also probably because of restoration that the legibility of some parts of the background is poor. The fire-pot to the right of Abraham's left arm seems specially to have suffered; if two 18th-century prints can be believed (see *6. Graphic reproductions*, especially 2) this was adorned with festoons and had a baluster-shaped foot. Craquelure: an irregular pattern is distributed evenly over the entire surface.
DESCRIPTION: In general the paint is opaque; only here and there does a warm-tinted underlayer, probably belonging to the underpainting, show through. Flatly painted passages include the blue-grey of the sky (above the landscape), the dark brown and grey of the cloud and the broadly brushed, thick blue of the angel's cloak (to each side of his right wing). The brushwork is careful and not very pronounced in the mountain landscape, done in shades of brown, green and bluish grey. The brown and grey-brown of the tree and firewood on the right are applied broadly and sketchily, as are the greys and whites of the angel's wings, and large areas of the garments in the shadows, as well as some clothing in the light such as Abraham's sleeve to the right, where strokes of ochre yellow have been placed over an opaque grey to represent the sheen of light, and the grey-blue, heightened with thin strokes of white where the light catches it, of his fur-trimmed overgarment. The lit areas of flesh, hair and beard are done with clear modelling and articulation, as are parts of the angel's pleated shirt in which small colour accents in pink and light blue indicate a pattern on the long strokes of broken white and grey that alternate with thinner brown in the folds. Firm strokes of brown mark the shadows and cast shadows between and on the fingers. In Abraham's head a yellowish flesh tint, applied on the forehead with long strokes that indicate the wrinkles and lying just over the background on the left, exposes along the nose, below the cheekbone and in the temple a grey (belonging to the ground) and some brown (from the underpainting). Fine white and grey highlights show the moisture rimming the white of the eye (done in grey), the drooping eyebrows and the tears (one of which is seen running down his beard!). Isaac's body shows a yellowish flesh colour, applied with a bold, modelling stroke with pale impasto highlights and reflexions of light, with a light brown in the folds of the neck and in the remaining shadows where a thin grey provides a transition; this same grey gives subtle modelling in the hollow by the collarbone. Dark brown marks the deepest shadows. The pleated shirt serving as a loincloth is painted in broken white and grey with brown shadows in the folds, and has a pattern shown in brown and light grey; to judge from a vaguely wandering line of relief in the paint surface, the edge of the loincloth initially ran higher up, close to the navel. To the right below Isaac's body and to the left of his legs his overgarment is done in blue with light blue sheens of light and dark brown shadows; in colour and treatment it somewhat resembles that of Abraham.
SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

X-Rays

An adhesive containing white lead, used for the transfer, prevents a legible radiograph.

Signature

At the lower left in dark paint <*Rembrandt. f. 1635.*>. In sound condition, apart from some restoration of the *R* and *b*, and wholly convincing through the spontaneity of the script and its similarity to other Rembrandt signatures.

Varnish

A layer of yellowed varnish somewhat hampers examination.

4. Comments

In execution and approach this painting fits in convincingly among Rembrandt's work, and in line with the apparently reliable signature and date it bears it can be placed in 1635. In format and scale, and in the execution which is obivously designed for viewing at a certain distance, it comes closest to the Munich *Holy family* datable in 1634 (no. A 88) and the London *Belshazzar's feast* (no. A 110) which can likewise be put in 1635. It is however more homogeneous and richer in treatment than the former, where one can find in the Mary's veil a similar indication of pattern to that seen here in the shirts of the angel and Isaac. Seen overall the handling of paint, varied though it may be, brings about an extremely homogeneous whole, in which the contrast effect clearly serves the spatial relationship between the three figures. The way areas of the background are kept in an indifferent dark colour and, for instance, parts of the angel's blue cloak are painted flatly are typical examples of how the artist avoids distracting the viewer's attention from to the centres of dramatic significance.

In composition the picture has similarities to both the *Holy family* and *Belshazzar's feast*. The two diagonals described by the angel and Isaac's body, crossing at right angles, together define the

Fig. 3. Detail (1 : 2)



relatively shallow space in which the action is occurring, just as the similarly placed figures do in the *Holy family*. They are 'linked by the curve of Abraham's extended arms' in a similar way to the gesture of the king in *Belshazzar's feast* — and, besides, to that of the wife in the London *Portrait of the shipbuilder Jan Rijcksen and his wife* of 1633 (no. A 77) — 'which, in its turn, crosses the curve of the patriarch's body'[2]. In this spatial construction built up from contrasting axes Rembrandt has found a solution of perfect logic and strong expression for the problem of embodying the twofold conflict of this dramatic moment — Isaac's submission to Abraham, and the interruption of the latter's action by the angel. To an extraordinary extent the hands of the two active dramatis personae play individual roles; only those of the defenceless Isaac are not seen. Whatever prototypes Rembrandt may have had in mind, the strong formal link and the concentrated action in the painting are very much all his own, and mark a culminating point in his production of large-scale compositions in the 1630s.

On this matter of possible prototypes, a number of suggestions have been made. One must however say that the depiction of the subject has long shown a number of almost generally-employed features,

and that Rembrandt's composition shows too few specific resemblances to some of the suggested prototypes for any direct connexion to be assumed. For example Weisbach[3] rightly points to Titian's ceiling for the Santo Spirito, now in S. Maria della Salute in Venice, as a prototype in a general sense for a common dramatic rendering of the subject in the 16th and 17th centuries. There are more specific reasons for thinking that a composition by Rubens, which was engraved by Andreas Stock and is mentioned especially by Broos[4] in this connexion, did play some part in Rembrandt's imagination; several motifs that can be interpreted as deriving from Rubens — Abraham's outstretched arms, for instance, and Isaac's back-tilted body — even though they may be placed differently in the composition. In particular the flaming sacrificial vessel decorated with festoons that in Rubens, too, appears on the right indicates a direct link. It is even more natural to think of the three versions of the subject painted by Lastman — the painting dated 1616 in the Louvre that is referred to by Stechow[5] in particular, a painting that though lost is reproduced in a mezzotint by Jan van Somer (1645 — after 1699) and in which Müller[6] saw the main group as forming a startingpoint for Rembrandt, and an undated grisaille in the Rembrandthuis in Amsterdam. The resemblance between the upper half of Rembrandt's composition, with Abraham's head turned towards the angel, and the lastnamed work by Lastman where the angel is seen in profile has already been stressed by Bredius[7] and more recently by Bruyn[2]. Bruyn moreover mentions the great similarity (in reverse) of this very part of Lastman's composition with Caravaggio's second altar-piece of *S. Matthew and the angel* in the S. Luigi dei Francesi in Rome, and looked on the Caravaggio as being Rembrandt's indirect source. These somewhat speculative ideas do at least have the merit of focussing attention on how much Rembrandt, whatever precise prototypes he may have used, placed himself squarely in a stylistic current that radiated from Italy. Finally, Rembrandt's composition has a similarity with that of Jan Lievens' large undated painting in the Galleria Doria-Pamphili in Rome. Schneider[8] assumed that this resemblance can be explained by both artists independently basing themselves on Lastman's prototypes. Broos[4] has pointed out that this explanation is not entirely satisfactory — the works by Rembrandt and Lievens have elements in common (for instance Abraham's kneeling posture) that cannot be found anywhere in Lastman. This latter author therefore assumed a direct relationship between the two paintings; he believed that Rembrandt possessed the work by Lievens — the inventory of his belongings in 1656 mentions a painting of this subject by Lievens — and made use of it for his own painting in 1635. The premise for this assumption, i.e. that Lievens produced his painting before 1635, does however for the moment seem extremely dubious.

Where colour is concerned no. A 108 stands somewhat on its own, in having an unusually large amount of blue in various shades, not concentrated only in the centre of the composition as it is in the Dresden *Ganymede* of the same year (no. A 113), but spread over the angel's cloak, Abraham's and Isaac's clothing and the sky above the landscape as well. The rather matt nature of the blue is somewhat reminiscent of the liking for broken tints that Rembrandt had already shown earlier in the Leningrad *Flora* of 1634 (no. A 93) and the Munich *Holy family*; but while there the light green and matt purplish red respectively was concentrated in a single large area, here the dispersed blue in the middle of whites and greys, browns and flesh tint lends the whole colour-scheme a noticeably cool character. Matching in with this is the distant landscape on the left, the presence of which in a composition with largescale figures may be termed exceptional. It does not form an atmospheric whole with the figures lit strongly from the left, and with its low horizon it acts mainly as a contrasting backdrop that accentuates the scale of the towering group of figures. In form and colour — the receding planes of trees and hills in green, a high bridge done in browns and a grey sheet of water with a blue vista — it most resembles a late 16th- and early 17th-century landscape type from Antwerp, in the same way as a number of landscapes by Hercules Seghers and Rembrandt himself follow a similar scheme.

Finally the painting, and especially the way the lefthand edge cuts through the ends of the angel's right wing and cloak, prompts the question of whether it has kept its original dimensions. A suspicion that it has not is created mainly by a mezzotint dated 1781 by John Murphy (see below under *6. Graphic reproductions*, 2; fig. 4) that shows the composition in a frame that is wider especially on the left but also slightly so on the right. There are however a number of complications that prevent Murphy's print being taken as valid evidence. In the first place, the canvas of the free copy made in Rembrandt's workshop and now in Munich (see *7. Copies*, 2) is exactly as wide as the Leningrad painting, which certainly does not suggest that the latter has been cut down. And secondly, the dimensions given by the inscription to the print match those of the painting today; these same dimensions were already given in an earlier print by Johann Gottfried Haid (see *6. Graphic reproductions*, 1 who reproduced the painting with its present format in 1767, and even in the first, 1747 edition of the description that Horace Walpole gave of the collection of paintings owned by his father Robert Walpole (see *8. Provenance*). Finally, this collection

Fig. 4. Mezzotint by J. Murphy, 1781



Fig. 5. Copy 1. Red and black chalk, wash and white body colour, 19.4 × 14.6 cm. London, The British Museum



had already left England in 1779, i.e. two years before the appearance of Murphy's mezzotint (which was made after a drawing). All things considered, there is every reason to look on the Murphy print as a misleading reproduction with arbitrary additions; the painting thus appears to have preserved virtually all its original dimensions.

5. Documents and sources

Nothing is known of the painting's history until it was described in the collection of Robert Walpole, first Earl of Orford (see *8. Provenance*). From a note made by Rembrandt (Strauss *Doc.*, p. 594) on the back of a drawing from his hand in Berlin (Ben. 448) it may be deduced that around or soon after 1635 he sold copies of his work by pupils — in succession one whose name is not given or is illegible, 'fardynandus' and 'Leendert' — and that these included an '*Abraeham*' by 'fardynandus' Bol. One might assume that these copies, which fetched 4.6 to 15 guilders, were detailed drawings. We know of such a signed copy by Ferdinand Bol (cf. no. A 114), and two far more skilful brush drawings after the *Standard-bearer* (no. A 120) and the *Flora* (no. A 112) in the British Museum may be identical with the 'vaendraeger en floora' that are mentioned in the note as being the work of an unknown pupil or collaborator. A drawing of this kind done after *Abraham's sacrifice* is not known, though there is a sketchy drawing with a number of changes (cf. *7. Copies*, 1).

6. Graphic reproductions

1. Mezzotint by Johann Gottfried Haid (Kleineislingen or Salach 1710 — Vienna 1776) with, on either side of the arms of George Walpole, 3rd Earl of Oxford, the inscription: *Rembrandt pinxt. E. Edwards delint. — J. Boydell excudit — London 1767 — J. G. Haid fecit. / Abraham offering — Up his Son Isaac. / From the Original Picture, Painted — by Rembrandt; In the Collection / of the Right Honourable the — Earl of Orford, at Houghton. Size of the Picture F4 I 3¾ by F6 I3 in height* [= 190.7 × 131.1 cm] (Charrington 65). Reproduces the painting in its present format; on the right, next to Abraham's elbow, a decorated vase is more distinctly seen than it now is in the painting. In the 1760s Haid worked in London for a time, for Boydell; he is mentioned as being back in Vienna in 1766.

2. Mezzotint by John Murphy (Ireland c. 1748 — London before 1820), with in the second state, on either side of the same arms, the inscription: *Rembrandt Pinxit. — John Boydell excudit 1781. — I. Murphy Sculpsit. / Abraham's Sacrifice. In the Gallery — at Houghton. / Size of the Picture F4 I3¾ by F6 I3 high. / Publish'd Sepr 1st 1781 by John Boydell Engraver in Cheapside London* (Charrington 114; our fig. 4). Included in *The Houghton Gallery*, II, published by John and Josiah Boydell, 1 January 1788. Reproduces the painting in a framing that is slightly broader on the left and right. The area to the right of Isaac's head and Abraham's left arm is rendered even more distinctly than in Haid's print. The drawing after which the mezzotint was made was exhibited by the publisher in London in 1770 (*Mr.Boydell's Exhibition of Drawings from many of the most capital pictures in England: at Mr. Ford's Great Room in the Hay Market*, no. 239).

7. Copies

1. Drawing, red and black chalk, wash in Indian ink, heightened with white, 19.4 × 14.6 cm, London, British Museum (A. M. Hind, *Catalogue of drawings by Dutch and Flemish artists . . .* I, London 1915,

p. 16 no. 6; Ben. 90; our fig. 5). At the lower left is a vague inscription, readable as *Rembrand*, which is quite unlike any genuine signature. Until some time ago it was regarded as the work of Rembrandt, in preparation for either no. A 108 or the free copy in Munich listed as 2. below; unlike the former and like the latter it has the angel swooping forward from the rear, and there is a ram beside Abraham on the left. The very broad framing and the position of Isaac's legs differ from both the paintings. We agree with Haverkamp-Begemann[9] that the drawing must probably be seen as a variation of the Leningrad painting done by a pupil, perhaps the same as did the Munich painting. A further but not very likely possibility is that it is by a third hand, working from the Munich painting. The manner of drawing, which is singularly lacking in articulation in some places (e.g. in Abraham's head) might indicate that the artist concentrated on making departures from Rembrandt's original, and in particular on a different version of the angel; he too, however, is depicted rather cursorily, especially in the wings which are moreover very different from those in the Munich painting.

2. Canvas, lined, 195 × 132.3 cm (measured along the stretcher). Munich, Alte Pinakothek, inv.no. 438 (figs. 6–10). At the bottom, to the right of centre, is the inscription with dark paint: <*Rembrandt.verandert. En overgeschildert. 1636*> (Rembrandt. altered. And overpainted). The second part (after 'verandert') has been done in slightly blacker paint and with greater irregularity, yet evidently by the same hand as the preceding words. To judge by the weak horizontal cohesion and the shape of individual letters, neither part of the inscription can be regarded as autograph. Examined in February 1969 (S. H. L., P. v. Th.) out of the frame, with the aid of 30 X-ray films together covering almost the whole painting, copyfilms of these were received later. Along the right and large stretches of the left side the original canvas has been pulled round the stretcher to a maximum of 1.5 cm. A horizontal join runs at 106 cm from the bottom edge, i.e. at practically the same height as in the original. The canvas is, to judge from the weave, from the same bolt as that of the London *Belshazzar's feast* of *c.* 1635 (no. A 110) and the *Minerva* dated 1635 (no. A 114); on this see Vol. II, Introduction, Chapter II, pp. 24, 28 and 40, figs. 7 and 8. This may be taken as evidence that the painting was done in Rembrandt's immediate circle. The light ground that shows through here and there lies exposed on the right along the upper edge for 15 cm, and is grey. According to Kühn (p. 204) there is underneath this a red layer consisting of (red) ochre and some white lead in an oil or resin medium; evidently this is the formula common in the 1630s.

The scene resembles in its main features that in no. A 108, apart from the different position of the angel flying forward from the rear and the addition, to the left of Abraham, of a ram with one horn entangled in a branch, as is mentioned in the biblical text; on the right next to Abraham's arm, the flaming sacrificial vessel is replaced with foliage painted with broad strokes in a rich gamut of browns over grey. In general the execution is typified by a bold treatment, which in the draperies, for instance, models the forms most effectively. In some cases the corresponding passage in the Leningrad painting is followed closely (as for the most part in Abraham's clothing, though the right sleeve of this is in different colours — not ochre yellow strokes over grey, but red and red-brown over grey); sometimes, however, the form is done differently, as in the vividly modelled garment on which Isaac is lying, which is in light greys and white instead of blue with light blue sheens and dark brown shadows. The brown edges along fingers that act as cast shadows (especially in Abraham's left hand) and the draperies are even more emphatic than in the Leningrad painting. This greater degree of boldness is also seen in passages such as Abraham's head, where the shadow areas make a stronger contrast with the flesh colour, and where the hairs of the eyebrows and moustache are placed over the dark areas with strong and almost straight strokes of thick broken white in a way that differs markedly from Rembrandt's supple strokes, suggestive of depth, used for the corresponding details in the Leningrad work — but which is on the other hand similar to the treatment given to the old man's eyebrows in Rembrandt's *Samson threatening his father-in-law* of 1635 in Berlin (no. A 109)! The tendency to accentuate the form by means of bold drawing is, perhaps not coincidentally, most evident in the areas where the Munich painting differs from that in Leningrad. This applies to the head of the ram, especially its eyes and horn; in the corner of the eye on the left a touch of bright red is proof that the artist also had colouristic daring. The tendency to a draughtsmanlike treatment is specially evident in the figure of the angel, most so in the greatly foreshortened head that is executed in a ruddy tint with forms indicated mainly in greys, and that through a lack of an effective handling of light is least in keeping with what one would expect Rembrandt to have made of it. But elsewhere, too, this figure has, with its poor cohesion and primitive management of light, not been all that successful.

After having been regarded as an autograph Rembrandt by, among others, Karl Voll who on hardly convincing grounds declared it superior to the Leningrad work[10], it has mostly been assumed that this painting was for the most part the work of a pupil and, because of the inscription, that Rembrandt altered it by means of overpaintings. The words *verandert. En overgeschildert* were then interpreted as 'altered and overpainted'. The question of who this pupil may have been has not been fully answered. The name of Govaert Flinck, which has repeatedly been put forward[11], is not wholly convincing — the vague and often rather woolly shaping of form in Flinck's early work would not seem to match the style of this painting, and to judge from signed works of his from 1636 Flinck's status was by then already that of an independent painter. Nor has there been any satisfactory identification of the changes made by Rembrandt. Haak[12] consequently rejected this interpretation, pointing out that the execution appears to be homogeneous and that the X-ray too does not provide any evidence of alterations. Indeed the painting shows only minimal alterations compared to the first lay-in (in the angel's wing on the left, on the right along his left forearm, and in Abraham's falling knife). Haak's conclusion was that Rembrandt produced the whole of the painting as a replica, incorporating his own alterations, of the work in Leningrad. The *verandert* in the inscription would relate to this, and *overgeschildert* would not mean overpainted (in modern Dutch 'overgeschilderd') but painted afresh (by analogy with 'overdoen' = do over again). Ernst Brochhagen and Brigitte Knüttel[13] also emphasized the homogeneous execution of the painting and its closeness to Rembrandt's own way of painting; they concluded that Rembrandt's contribution in the form of overpainting ('Überarbeitung') must indeed have been very extensive. Stechow[5] saw the Munich painting as '[Rembrandt's] own version of the 1635 painting', and Broos too again attributed the entire work to Rembrandt (op.cit. pp. 146–148), though on the grounds not of manner of painting but rather of his interpretation of the inscription. He felt that *verandert. En overgeschildert*, like the word 'geretuckeert' (retouched) that appears on three of four etchings of 1635 freely copied after Lievens (B. 286–289), refers to improvements that Rembrandt made to Lievens' version of the subject in the Galleria Doria-Pamphili in Rome. This interpretation must however be termed scarcely acceptable: it is improbable that Lievens' painting predated Rembrandt's version (see above under *4. Comments*), and if the word *verandert* does not (as would seem most obvious) have to do with alterations to the painting itself, then one could at most assume (like Haak) that it relates to changes compared to the Leningrad version.

The inscription, unique in its wording, seems not to be from Rembrandt's hand but does appear contemporaneous, and thus deserves careful consideration. 'Overschilderen' is a synonym for retouching ('retokeren'), and means the application of paint on earlier paint, either to complete a painting or to make

Fig. 6. Copy 2. Rembrandt workshop, canvas 195 x 132.3 cm. Munich, Bayerische Staatsgemäldesammlungen, Alte Pinakothek

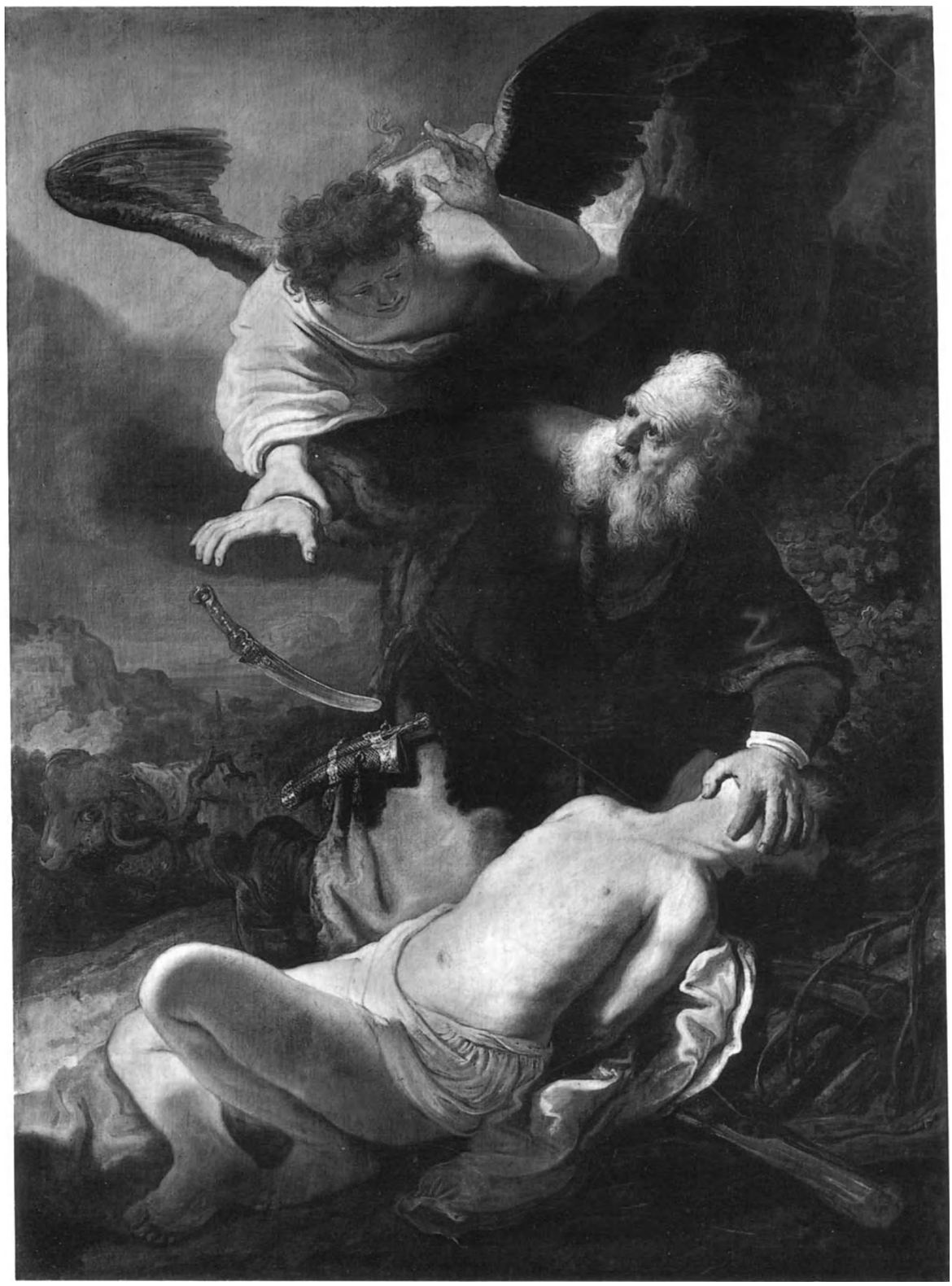
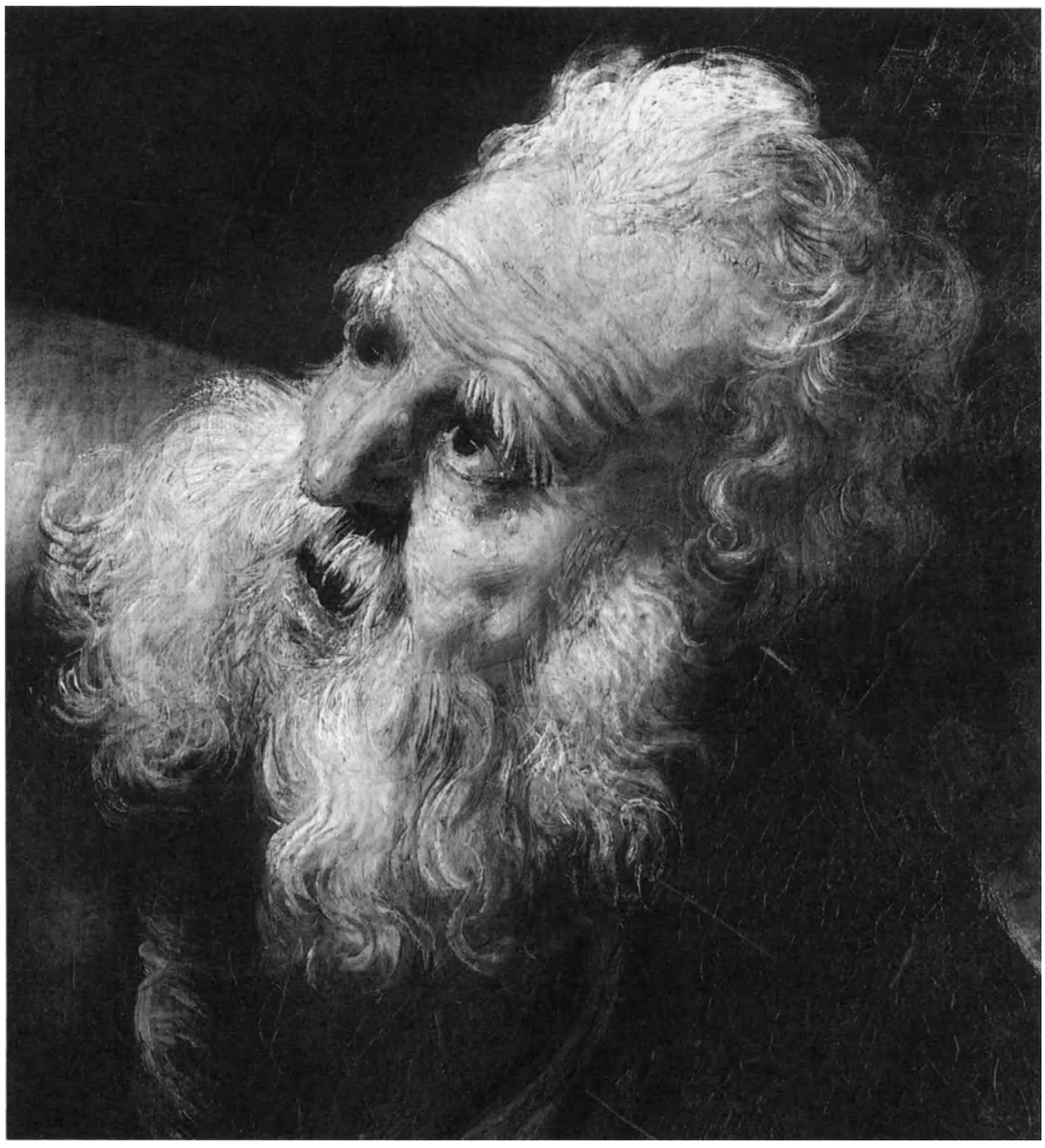


Fig. 7. Copy 2, X-Ray



Fig. 8. Copy 2, detail (1 : 2)



corrections or restorations to it; in particular it could have to do with what Mrs de Pauw calls 'the adding of the master's paintstrokes'. In this meaning one also finds the word 'overdoen' (past participle 'overdaen') used (see L. de Pauw-de Veen, *De begrippen 'schilder', 'schilderij' en 'schilderen' in de zeventiende eeuw*, Brussels 1969, pp. 282, 306–309). The past participle of 'overschilderen' occurs as both 'overschildert' and 'overgeschildert'. There should consequently not be much doubt as to the meaning of the inscription: Rembrandt helped to complete it (the work of another) and according to the word *verandert* this was coupled with changes to its form. The problem however remains that unless this means changes compared to the Leningrad original (which is not all that likely) there is hardly any trace of such changes to be found in the painting, from either the paint surface or the X-rays. The X-rays do however shed some new light on the problem in as far as they suggest that the painter of the Munich picture worked with greater freedom in the figure of the angel than in those of Abraham and Isaac. In the latter the radioabsorbent passages match exactly the light areas that can be seen at the surface. This close correspondence supports the view that these parts were copied from the Leningrad prototype. In the angel, however, the areas showing up light do offer a number of interesting differences from the paint surface. The reserve for the hair is broadly shaped and stays within the sinuous contour of the hair in the final execution. Directly adjoining the contour of the cheek on the right one sees radioabsorbent paint that runs into the lit shoulder. Evidently, the distribution of light in this area was altered during the work. The reserve for the angel's raised arm is somewhat narrower at the wrist; as may also be seen in the paint relief at this point, the artist shifted the outline. In the upper lefthand corner there is the image of a number of curved strokes running towards the lefthand edge, that can also be detected to some extent in the paint relief. This might be taken as evidence

Fig. 9. Copy 2, detail (1 : 2)



that in the first lay-in the angel was copied faithfully from the prototype. The decision to move the angel into his present position would then have been taken during the course of the work, and probably in connexion with the London drawing (see copy 1). In the final execution the passages that differ from the original — the ram and, most of all, the angel — give no cause to see Rembrandt's hand in them. Both are done with a certain linear bravura and a clearly Rembrandtesque use of the brush, but do not stand out by having a firm structure; both of them are more an assembly of parts than a suggestive representation of the whole by indication of form or play of light and shade. Of the passages that do match those in the Leningrad work it may be said that their execution does, with some variations in colour, follow that of the original but generally (and especially in the cast shadows) with rather more emphasis; as a result the balance achieved in the original somehow gives way to overemphasized, self-concious effects. This applies, for instance, to the marked shadow cast by the scabbard at Abraham's side; and the change made in the garment beneath Isaac's shoulder, from a dark blue jacket into a white one, reveals the same urge for a stronger contrast and so does the more pronounced modelling of trees and mountains in the distant landscape. There is therefore every reason to assume that not Rembrandt's but another hand was responsible for the whole, or near enough the whole painting. Rembrandt's participation in the execution, though explicitly mentioned in the inscription, is not borne out to any significant extent.

That the handling of the brush gives a Rembrandtesque impression need not be surprising — not only did the painter undoubtedly have the Leningrad original before him, but there is still a number of copies evidently painted in Rembrandt's workshop in these very years around 1635 that show how much pupils made the master's technique their own (cf. e.g. nos. A 109, A 112, A 116 and A 121).

Fig. 10. Copy 2, inscription



The question of which pupil was responsible for (almost all of) the painting cannot be answered with any certainty. As has already been said Govaert Flinck, whose name has been mentioned on stylistic grounds[11], is not really acceptable as a candidate, and in 1636 — the year of his earliest known signed and dated painting — he was probably no longer in Rembrandt's workshop. An attribution to Lievens (J. N. van Wessem in: exhibition cat. *Rembrandt als leermeester*, Leiden 1956, p. 6) has very little to recommend it. A note made by Rembrandt (see *5. Documents and sources*) gives one reason to think in particular of Ferdinand Bol or Leendert Cornelisz. van Beijeren. The latter was Rembrandt's pupil at the time since he was described, as a buyer (presumably on Rembrandt's behalf) at a sale on 9 March 1637, as 'disipel van Rembrant' (Strauss *Doc.*, 1637/2; A. Bredius, *Künstler-Inventare* VII (Supplement), The Hague 1921, p. 10). No works by him are however known of and grounds for an attribution to him are therefore lacking; it is worth mentioning that when he died in 1649 his possessions included 'een groot stuck schildery met vergulde lyst uytbeeldende Abrams Offerhande' (a large painting in a gilt frame showing Abraham's sacrifice) (A. Bredius, *Künstler-Inventare* I, The Hague 1915, p. 252). The other candidate, favoured by Valentiner[14], is Ferdinand Bol. The liking for strong contrasts evident in the painting would not seem to point to his style, yet the inscription does have some similarity to Bol's earliest signatures (see Introduction, Chapter III, figs. 19 and 20) and the treatment of the landscape is not unlike the scattered specimens of his landscape production (see nos. C 116, C 121, B 12 and Introduction, Chapter II). The possibility of the Munich *Abraham's sacrifice* belonging to a group of copies that Bol executed in Rembrandt's workshop cannot be ruled out. It should be noted that Bol too owned, according to his marriage contract of 1669, a picture of 'Abraham's offerhande' (Blankert *Bol*, p. 77 no. 1).

The Munich painting (not, as Hofstede de Groot[15] thought, the Leningrad one which was by that time already in England) was bought for 100 guilders at an anonymous sale in Amsterdam on 16 September 1760 (Lugt 1111), no. 1 'De historie van Abraham, daar hij zyn Zoon Isaak offert, zeer kragtig en konstig geschildert door Rembrandt, hoog 7 breed 4½ voet [= 198.2 × 127.4 cm]' (The story of Abraham sacrificing his son Isaac, very skilfully and artfully painted) by the dealer Hendrik de Winter, from whom it was bought in the same year by Lambert Krahe (1712–1790), court painter to the Elector Palatine Carl Theodor, for his own collection. Subsequently it came into the Elector's gallery of paintings in Mannheim, and moved with them in 1799 to Munich.

3. Canvas 183.6 × 132.8 cm. Columbia, Missouri, University of Missouri (Kress Collection). Earlier Richmond, Surrey., Cook Collection (cat. 1914, no. 323). Reproduced (wrongly as being the Leningrad original) by C. Hofstede de Groot in: *Feest-bundel Dr Abraham Bredius*, Amsterdam 1915, pl. 20 fig. 7; C. Eisler, *Paintings from the Samuel H. Kress Collection. European schools excluding Italian*, Oxford 1977, pp. 140–141. Not seen by us.

4. Canvas 87 × 70 cm. Coll. Félix Ravaisson-Mollien, sale Paris 23 November 1903, no. 87.

5. Canvas 194.8 ×162.4 cm, described in the Lenglier sale, Paris (Lebrun) 10ff March 1788 (Lugt 4280), no. 105: 'Par le même [Rembrant V. R.]. Un Tableau représentant Abraham au moment de sacrifier son fils, & l'Ange qui vient lui arrêter le bras prêt à frapper le coup. Ce Tableau harmonieux est d'un grand caractère de dessin; l'exécution en est facile & savante. Hauteur 6 pieds, largeur 5 pieds. T[oile] [= 194.9 × 162.4 cm]'.

6. A canvas of 159.3 × 116.1 cm, described in the de Montribloud sale, Paris 13ff February 1784 (Lugt 3673), no. 42, was subsequently described in the second François Tronchin sale, Geneva (cat. 1780) as containing a ram lacking from Rembrandt's painting in Leningrad. It may have been a copy after the Munich version (no. 2 above). After the Tronchin sale, Paris 23–24 March 1801 (Lugt 6220) where the painting appeared as no. 152 (177 francs to Lhomme), it has been without trace (cf. exhibition cat. *De Genève à l'Ermitage*, Geneva 1974, no. 201).

8. Provenance

– Coll. Robert Walpole, first Earl of Orford (1676–1745), prime minister until 1742; first mentioned in supplementary page to 1736 ms list of pictures[16]; at first in 10 Downing Street, London, later (presumably after 1742) Houghton Hall, Norfolk. Described by his third son Horace Walpole (1717–1797) in: *Ædes Walpolianae: or, a Description of Pictures at Houghton-Hall in Norfolk, the Seat of the Right Honourable Sir Robert Walpole, Earl of Orford*, 1st edn London 1747, here quoted from the 2nd edition of 1752, p. 88: '*Abraham*'s Sacrifice, by *Rembrant. Abraham*'s Head, and the naked Body of Isaac, are very fine; the Painter has avoided much of the Horror of the Story by making *Abraham* cover the Boy's face, to hide the Horror from himself. Six Feet three Inches high, by four Feet three and three quarters wide [= 190.5 × 133.2 cm]'.

– Coll. George Walpole, 3rd Earl of Orford (1730–1791). Sold with his whole collection in 1779 to the Czarina Catherine II of Russia. Then valued at £300, according to: *An Account of the Pictures purchased by the Empress of Russia being nearly the whole of the Walpole Collection at Houghton Hall with the price fixed to each Picture according to a valuation made by Mr West and Cypriani 1779*, 26 December 1798.

– Coll. Catherine II of Russia; described in *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, Leningrad, Ermitage) under no. 2290: 'Paul Rembrand. Le Sacrifice d'Abraham. La Tête d'Abraham et le Corps nu d'Isaac ont de la plus grande perfection. Le peintre a su diminuer l'horreur de ce Spectacle en faisant couvrir au pere le Visage du fils. La Surprise et l'étonnement d'Abraham y sont aussi très bien exprimés par le Couteau qui lui tombe des mains, quand l'Ange vient lui porter les ordres de Dieu. Sur toile. Haute 2.arch.[ine], 10½ Verch.[okk]. Large 1.ar. 9½ V. [= 188.8 × 114 cm]'.

9. Summary

The work, dated 1635, fits entirely in approach and execution into the group of paintings from the mid-1630s when Rembrandt dealt with compositions in which lifesize figures are placed in a dynamic relationship to each other and the action has a strong dramatic character. It may be assumed that in this instance a traditional type of composition played a role, and that Rubens and Lastman in particular had a certain influence on Rembrandt's conception. The combination of a large-scale figure group with a far-off vista in the form of a landscape in the Flemish style is unusual with Rembrandt.

As is also true of other work from these years, there is a copy (now in Munich) of *Abraham's sacrifice* that can be regarded as having been done in Rembrandt's workshop. This is certain from the very Rembrandtlike and bold execution, the canvas used (of the same weave as two Rembrandt paintings of 1635), and a quite unusual — somewhat enigmatic — inscription with the date 1636.

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A 109 Samson threatening his father-in-law [1635]

BERLIN (WEST), STAATLICHE MUSEEN PREUSSISCHER KULTURBESITZ, GEMÄLDEGALERIE, CAT. NO. 802

HDG 31; BR. 499; BAUCH 14; GERSON 78

Fig. 1. Canvas 159 × 131 cm



Fig. 2. X-Ray



1. Summarized opinion

A moderately and in some places poorly preserved, authentic work, with a reliable signature and incomplete date that must have read 1635.

2. Description of subject

The subject comes from Judges 15: 1–3. Some time after the unhappy outcome of the feast to celebrate his marriage to a Philistine woman from Timnath (see no. A 123), Samson went to visit her, taking a kid goat as a gift. Her father would not however allow him to see her, and Samson was told that she was now the wife of one of his companions; it was suggested that instead her younger sister could become Samson's wife. Samson's response was that the Philistines would be to blame for the harm he would bring them.

Samson is seen down to the knees, standing before the door of his father-in-law's house, which is closed to him. He raises his clenched right fist towards his father-in-law. The latter, a grey-bearded old man wearing a red skullcap, leans out of a window holding onto one shutter with one hand and raising the other. A shaft of light falls from the left onto the two figures and part of their surroundings; the cast shadow of Samson's fist falls on the wall of the house.

Samson's thick locks of hair — the seat of his strength — hangs down onto his shoulders. He is richly and exotically garbed with a headband set with jewels, a halflength tunic of shiny dark yellow material decorated with a flower pattern, and a purple-red cloak that on the left hangs down over his back and on the right falls wide over his left arm and hand, which is planted challengingly on his hip. The panels of the tunic are braided, and held together with a sash wound round the waist; one end of this, and a short curved oriental sword on a sling, hang down over the hip. On the left in the shadows behind Samson are two young Moorish boys, the lefthand one seen only partly and in profile, the other full-face. The doorframe in the background is made of thick, profiled posts topped by a flattened arch. The wall to the right of Samson is divided up by fluted pilasters on carved pedestals, on either side of the window frame (which is hidden from sight).

3. Observations and technical information

Working conditions

Examined in November 1968 (S. H. L., E. v. d. W.) in good daylight; 24 X-rays, together covering the whole of the picture, were received later from the museum.

Support

DESCRIPTION: Canvas, lined, 159 × 131 cm measured along the stretcher and not including strips of the painted canvas about 1 cm wide that have been folded over the stretcher at the left, right and bottom.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: At the top there is cusping with a pitch ranging from 16 to 20 cm, extending some 26 cm into the canvas; on the right the pitch is between 16 and 19.5 cm and the depth *c.* 12 cm. The cusping at the bottom varies in pitch from 14 to 16.5 cm and extends about 14 cm into the canvas, while that at the left has a pitch of 15.5 to 19.5 cm and extends inwards about 13 cm. Threadcount: 18.5 vertical threads/cm (18–19.2), 14 horizontal threads/cm (13–15). The pattern of thickenings shows no clear difference between vertical and horizontal threads. Because of the similarity in threadcount (showing a marked difference between warp and weft) and weave structure, one may assume that this canvas came from the same bolt as the Munich *Holy family* of *c.* 1634 (no. A 88), the 1634 *Cupid blowing a bubble* (no. A 91) and the Vienna *Apostle Paul* (Br. 603). The same bolt also supplied the canvas to which the London *Lamentation* (no. A 107) (painted on paper) is stuck, as well as the narrow strip used for the first enlargement of the Berlin *S. John preaching* (no. A 106). By analogy with the conclusion drawn in respect of the *Holy family* it may be assumed that the warp is vertical in this canvas as well.

Ground

DESCRIPTION: A yellowish brown may be seen in scratchmarks in Samson's hair and in the profile of the doorframe on the left. If this is the ground colour it would be exceptional. The observation may however also relate to an underpainting or have been influenced by varnish.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

Paint layer

CONDITION: In places the painting is in a fairly poor state. Horizontal, painted-in cracks in the paint layer are found at the top in the background, in the shutter above the old man's head and, a little lower down, in his skullcap, running through into the fluting of the pilaster to the right of it. In the figure of Samson the lit areas are reasonably well preserved but the shadow passages have been partly strengthened — with dark paint in the hair and a ruddy brown in some places on the shadow side of the face and of the wrist and hand. Small stoppings have been applied in the lit cheek, and a large number of retouches in dark paint elsewhere in the face and neck — the eyes and borders of the eyelids, the tip of the nose and nostrils, the upper lip on the left, the chin, the beard and the shadow side of the neck. The greatest damage has however occurred in the lower half of the painting. The X-ray shows that there has been a great deal of paint loss in a strip about 30 cm wide along the whole bottom edge, as well as further up in the left and, especially, right of Samson's cloak. The appearance of these passages is thus now determined to a great extent by inpaintings. At Samson's knee on the right two holes have been repaired with small inset pieces of canvas. At the lower right the outline of the figure as it now exists is due wholly to a restoration: this may be seen from a comparison of the picture in its present state with two copies (see *7. Copies*). In rendering this passage both copies, which must have been produced independently of each other, are in total agreement — Samson's tunic, and especially his cloak, are a good deal shorter at this point, and the latter's outline is intersected by the angular shape of the tunic. Craquelure: an irregular craquelure in a pattern varying in size can be seen all over the painting.

DESCRIPTION: The paint is in general applied fairly thickly, and the weave of the canvas can be detected only here and there and even then only vaguely. Some relief may be seen in the paint with which Samson's jewelled headband, the sheens of light on his tunic and the hilt of the sword have been done. The shaded background is executed in greys — thin but mostly opaque in the door, worked up with darker grey for the hinges, keyhole and ring and with a few spots of lighter grey for matt highlights; similarly opaque in the doorframe (as already mentioned, a yellowish brown shows through however in a vertical band on the left), where the grey merges into a darker tint both upwards and downwards, and the profiles and capitals are shown with a dark grey. The lit areas of the wall are painted in a yellow-grey that in the pilaster at the front becomes a more varied ochre colour. Dark brown is used in the fluting and at places in the cursorily defined area of carving beneath; the latter also has some black. Towards the edge, below the horizontal ledge of the pilaster, is a pair of semicircles in red, the significance of which is not clear. The open windowshutter is depicted in a flatly-brushed ochre colour toned down with some darker paint, the edging of light at the front with a light ochre, and the bottom with a reddish tint that merges into a red towards the left. The bolt, in grey, is worked up with thick strokes of black and small glancing touches of white.

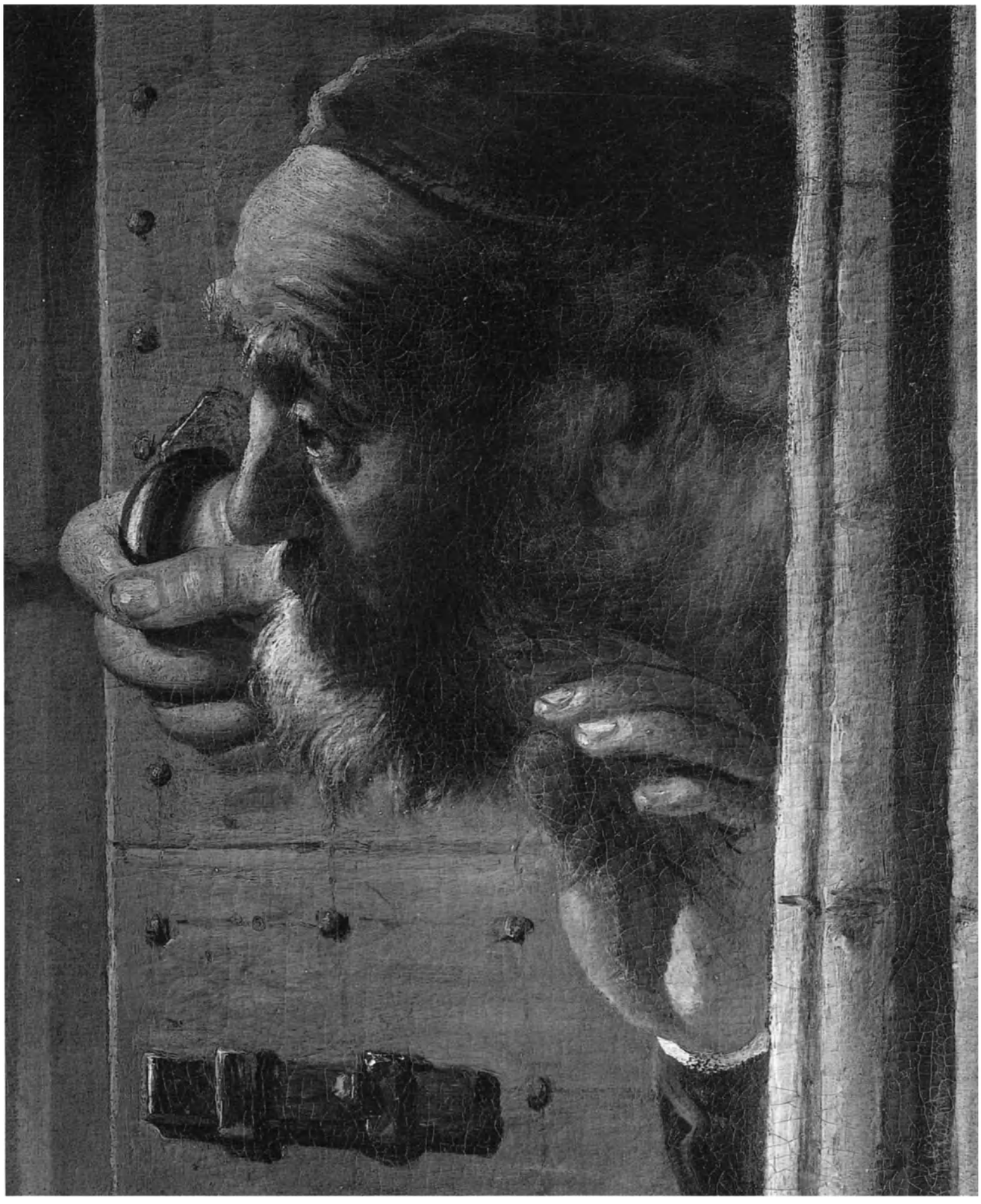
The lit parts of Samson's face are painted with mainly short

Fig. 3. Detail (1 : 2)



strokes using quite warm tints — a pink-red in the cheeks, yellow on the nose and below the eye on the left. In this eye (which as we have said has been somewhat strengthened) the white is done in an off-white, the oval iris is grey and the pupil black. A bright and long-drawn-out highlight runs partly over the iris and partly over the white of the eye; along the lower eyelid are some small strokes of pink. The shadow side of the face, in a ruddy brown, likewise has a warm tint, but has been in part gone over, including the eye on this side. The moustache is done partly with thick strokes; in between these the lit upper lip is indicated with

Fig. 4. Detail (1 : 2)



an accent in pink. The mouth opening is shown in black, the lower lip in a full red on top of which is placed some pink on the left. The mass of hair standing out on both sides of the face is shown on the left in very thin dark grey paint in which the curls are rendered with numerous curving scratchmarks that go through to the ground. Towards the shadow side increasingly more black is mixed in, and to the right of the face there are no longer any scratchmarks; along the contour, loose, curling strokes have been placed over the grey of the background. The very convincing modelling of the wrist and hand results from firmly-drawn outlines and a well-chosen interplay of colour — flesh tints on the side towards the light, over which the relief is then picked out with small strokes of white, and a brown-red in the shadow where a reflexion of light is shown along the contour with pinkish red. Greys and browns form the basic colour for the tunic, depending on the fall of light. On top of these small, generally curved strokes and dabs of thick paint are used to indicate the pattern, in an ochre colour with yellow in the highest lights. Blue-green has been used for the sash, worked up with thick white highlights and merging, in the folds, into grey and black. The blue-green recurs, to suggest reflected light, in the hilt of the sword and in the scabbard next to it. The catchlight on the hilt is in a thickly applied yellow, while that on the scabbard has dots — and on the right a long line — of white. The purple-red of the cloak is applied, around the hilt, with strokes that follow its outline. Along the lefthand contour of the cloak there is a sheen of light done in grey-white.

The head and hands of the father-in-law consist of broadly-brushed areas of flesh colour that in the light are worked up with pink and that towards the shadows merge into greys and browns. A little white is used on the ridge of the nose, the eyelid, against the lower border of the eye and, as a few tiny dots, in the eyebrows; it is used in the hands to heighten the modelling, and spots of light are placed on the fingernails in white. On the left the knuckle of the first finger, which projects beyond the edge of the shutter, is painted over the grey of the background. In the skullcap and part of the sleeve a deep red (a kind of red lake) is used, with sheens done with an opaque light red. The Moorish boys are hard to assess — the impression is that of a fairly draughtsmanlike rendering in black and dark brown. Here, and elsewhere in the lower section of the painting, there are so many stoppings and overpaintings that it is better to leave this part of the paint layer out of consideration.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

X-Rays

The image of the stretcher with its cross-battens, showing up light, somewhat impairs the cohesion of the picture, though without seriously hampering legibility. The paint loss in the lower section of the painting and in Samson's cloak, which could in any case be guessed from examination of the paint surface, is very plainly apparent in the radiograph, as is the repair of two holes in the canvas at Samson's knee on the right with the insertion of small pieces of canvas.

In the better-preserved areas the X-ray gives the impression of a rapidly executed painting, in which no substantial changes in composition were made during the work. In the architectural features there is a pattern of broad strokes of radioabsorbent paint, in which reserves were left for the figure of Samson, the Moors, the shutter, the shadow of the latter on the cheek of the window niche, and the cast shadow of Samson's fist on the wall, all more or less matching their present shape. The indication of outlines was still fairly broad at this stage, as may for instance be seen from the angular shape of the reserve for Samson's raised fist. The fluting in the rear pilaster (below the shutter) seems to have been added only later over the light underpainting, since the relevant area shows up uniformly light. In the shutter, below the old man's head, there is a dark reserve evidently intended for a cast shadow from the hand holding the ring-handle of the shutter. It is obvious too that no reserve was left in the wall

Fig. 5. Detail with signature (reduced)



behind for the knuckle of the first finger of this hand, which projects past the edge of the shutter. The dark reserve that appears to the right of the old man's head as a continuation of this may indicate that initially this figure was less hidden by the pilaster to the front. A striking feature is the light image of the paint used for Samson's purple-red cloak; the borders with the tunic (which has a much less light X-ray image) can be readily followed (except at the lower right, where there are too many gaps in the paint layer).

Signature

Close to the righthand edge at mid-height, on a locally restored horizontal ledge in the pilaster, in dark paint <*Rembrandt. ft.* 163(.)> (the last digit is missing because of paint loss at the point where the canvas is folded round the stretcher). The name is written with short, firm brushstrokes, while the *ft* and the remaining numbers of the date are somewhat larger. Apart from the upper part of the *R* and the loop of the *b*, both of them due to restoration, the signature makes a reliable impression.

Varnish

The varnish is somewhat yellowed.

4. Comments

Other than by Burroughs[1] who for unconvincing reasons ascribed the work to Lievens, Rembrandt's authorship of the painting has been and is still generally accepted. The same applies to the dating, which in the recent literature has generally been put at 1635. As already mentioned by Kolloff[2] this is based on an etching made after the painting by Georg Friedrich Schmidt in 1756 (see *6. Graphic reproductions*, 1; fig. 8) where — in reverse compared to the original, like the whole picture, and with the date placed below the signature rather than next to it — the date is given on the horizontal ledge of the front pilaster as 1635; it is repeated in the inscription beneath the etching. One may assume that the final digit, which has now disappeared, was still legible in the 18th century.

Aside from this signature the work exhibits, in the character of the brushwork and in the use of strong partial lighting as the main means of suggesting plasticity and depth, decisive similarities to other Rembrandt paintings from this period. Candidates for comparison are, in the first place, works showing half-length figures in a large format on canvas, such as the Madrid *Sophonisba* (no. A 94) of 1634, the 1635 London *Flora* (no. A 112) and *Minerva* (no. A 114), and the 1636 *Standard-bearer* in a private collection in Paris (no. A 120). From the relatively reticent and carefully painted *Sophonisba* to the relaxed bravura of the *Standard-bearer*, one can see a development in Rembrandt's manner of painting that may be

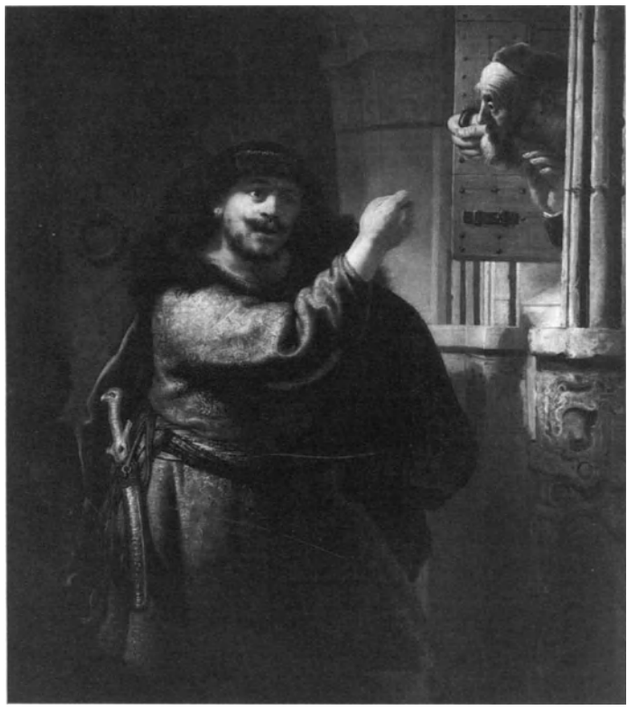
Fig. 6. Copy 1. Rembrandt workshop, canvas 162.2 × 174.8 cm. Whereabouts unknown



termed typical of this kind of painting. The execution of the painting now under discussion — broad in large areas, and finely-detailed though keeping a certain freedom in points of interest such as Samson's clothing — occupies a middle position in this development, and from this point of view indeed resembles the *Flora* and *Minerva*, both dated 1635. In both these female figures and that of Samson the spatial rendering of the figure is based on a similar interplay of lit and shadowed areas. We find the same thing again in the *Standard-bearer*, where the chiaroscuro in the head is virtually the same as in that of Samson, and where stress is placed on the lit hip, the attention being focussed on the rendering of the material of the clothing and a sword seen hanging in the full light; in the *Samson* this piece of 'belle peinture' is indeed one of the most striking features of the painting. A familiar Rembrandtesque element in the depiction of the figure of Samson is the motif of a cloak hanging wide over an outstretched arm on the shadow side of the body; by masking the arm this simplifies the appearance of the figure and lends it weight, at the same time forming a massive repoussoir against the background. An earlier example of this is the *Man in oriental dress* of 1632 in New York (no. A 48), and variants on the motif are repeatedly to be found. In the Berlin painting this part of the body is however now to a large extent determined by overpaintings (see *3. Paint layer*, CONDITION); the original line of the contour, angular and lively and thus giving expression to Samson's agitation, may be deduced from two early copies that were probably both made in Rembrandt's workshop (see *7. Copies*, 1 and 2; figs. 6 and 7), one possibly by Ferdinand Bol, and that on this point are wholly identical.

The first of these copies (whereabouts unknown), which is often attributed to Flinck, is considerably wider than both the Berlin original in its present state and the other copy (in the Chrysler Museum, Norfolk, Va.). It shows the lefthand Moor in his entirety, plus the kid goat mentioned in Judges 15. Hofstede de Groot[3] assumed that this copy showed the composition in its original state. This would mean that a strip more than 40 cm wide was lost from the original, which for a number of reasons seems at first sight quite likely. In the first place the kid seen on the extreme left in the copy has immediate significance for the recognizability of the subject; the 18th- and 19th-century inscriptions on prints made after the original are evidence that for a long time people were wide of the mark in this respect. Secondly, in dimensions, placing and form the scene resembles in detail what can be seen in the original and the second copy. Both copies show at the bottom edge rather more of the figure of Samson than does the original, where at the bottom a painted strip of the canvas is folded over the stretcher and some of the lower edge of the picture

Fig. 7. Copy 2. Rembrandt workshop, canvas 155.7 × 134 cm. Norfolk, Va., The Chrysler Museum



may have been lost. Finally, one can get the impression that the wider format, which provides a broader framework for Samson's action, is in spatial terms a more satisfactory composition. The idea that the canvas of the original might have been substantially larger to the left however comes up against one insuperable objection: along both the left- and righthand edges the canvas shows cusping, which rules out the possibility of as much as 40 cm having been trimmed off. Kelch[4] rightly concluded that the Berlin work cannot have been appreciably reduced on the left. The same author pointed out that the photograph of the copy (which he too did not see in the original) shows vertical lines matching the lefthand edge of the Berlin painting, and wondered whether the strip on the left might not have been a later addition to the copy, provided so as to make clear what episode is depicted. This is not impossible, since copying with alterations was not uncommon, as may be assumed from other examples — the copy in Munich of *Abraham's sacrifice* in Leningrad (no. A 108), and a copy of the *Angel Raphael leaving Tobit* in Paris (no. A 121). As both copies agree in showing a different righthand contour of Samson's dress, they may be taken to reproduce the original appearance of this passage, which had already been altered by restoration when G. F. Schmidt did his etching after the picture in 1756 (see *6. Graphic reproductions*, 1; fig. 8).

Although the painting is almost universally accepted as being an authentic Rembrandt, it has not met with entirely unanimous praise. Neumann[5] spoke of a 'saftige und animalische Derbheit', while for Weisbach[6] it exhibits 'etwas Theatralisches und für uns einen — hier gewiss nicht gewollten — grotesk komischen Anstrich', a view that differs but little from the opinion 'painted in a melodramatic empty manner' and 'weakly anecdotal spirit' advanced by Burroughs[1] as his reasons for rejecting Rembrandt's authorship. What marks the picture is a concentration, unusual in Rembrandt, on a single violent action that is not counterbalanced elsewhere. In general Rembrandt makes use, in his large-scale history paintings in these years, of two types of composition that each in its own way lend the picture a self-contained character. In a case where one figure is shown, or dominates strongly, a dramatic lighting is coupled with a static pose or at most a limited action, as in the Madrid *Sophonisba* and the London *Flora* or its forerunner the underlying picture of Judith with her serving-maid. The other approach, demonstrated for example (again in 1635) with a limited number of figures in the *Abraham's sacrifice* in Leningrad (no. A 108) and a large number in the London *Belshazzar's feast* (no. A 110), has a dynamic balance, one emphatic action finding its counterweight in another. In the *Samson threatening his father-in-law* the old man does not compositionally form a foil to the raging Samson, and nor do the two Moors standing in the half-shadow; this is in essence a composition with a single knee-length figure, to which a certain extra breadth has been given by adding figures on either side. As a picturetype, it falls somewhere between the two categories mentioned earlier — it shares the predominance of a single figure with the first, and the vehemence of the depicted action with the second.

Bauch[7] put forward the possibility of the motif having been taken from a 16th-century engraving, perhaps a secondary motif in a larger whole. The notion is understandable, but until such a source can be identified it remains no more than a possibility. Weisbach (op.cit., p. 182) and Madlyn Kahr[8] thought of influences from the theatre, the first because of Samson's dress and the second because of the two Moors, who are not mentioned in the biblical story. There were indeed plays in the 17th century based on the story of Samson, such as a tragicomedy published in Amsterdam in 1618 by Abraham de Koning, and Joost van den Vondel's tragedy *Samson of de heilige wraeck* (Samson or the sacred revenge) which dates only from 1660; both of these however have to do with later stages of Samson's life, and provide no explanation for Rembrandt's choice and treatment of the subject. Samson's clothing is, for Rembrandt, not exceptional enough to suggest a special borrowing, though it is not improbable that the world of his imagination did have points of contact with that of the theatre. Though it is unfortunately impossible to tell how the work came about, it is

Fig. 8. Etching by G. F. Schmidt, 1756 (reproduced in reverse)



beyond doubt that Rembrandt's special knack for getting inside a situation is decisive for the immediacy achieved in the picture. This applies to major components — the figure of Samson would seem less oppressive without the effective and selective use of chiaroscuro — and to details such as the heavy lock on the door and the bolt on the window-shutter, both full of meaning in showing the impregnability of the house and the fruitlessness of Samson's visit. One senses at work the same imaginative power that is felt in Rembrandt's other history paintings with their perhaps more self-evident subjects.

Though a number of episodes from the story of Samson have of course provided material for pictures over the centuries, Rembrandt is almost alone in choosing — twice over — a subject based on Samson's disastrous first marriage to a Philistine woman from Timnath: besides this painting, there is the Dresden *Wedding of Samson* of 1638 (no. A 123). The only other known (and quite different) depiction of the confrontation between Samson and his father-in-law forms part of a series of twelve prints that Cornelis Massys devoted in 1549 to the story of Samson (Hollst. XI, p. 177 nos. 5–16, in this case no. 10), and which illustrates the story in unusual detail. In the late Middle Ages (and afterwards) the popularity of a number of episodes was connected with the fact that Samson was seen as an Old Testament prefiguration of Christ (Samson's imprisonment after the betrayal by Delilah was, for instance, compared to the taking of Christ after his betrayal by Judas), or as a victim to feminine wiles. In this latter connexion, however, it is the betrayal by Delilah that tends mainly to be used as an example (see comments on no. A 24), and seldom if ever Samson's relationship with his first, Philistine bride. Bearing in mind the increasing freedom enjoyed by the 17th-century producer of history paintings in selecting his material, one can imagine that in choosing his subject he made allowance for the opportunity for the depiction of the 'passions' that was reckoned part of his task. Looked at in this light, it is quite possible that Rembrandt was seeking in the figure of Samson to depict the passion of anger. Measured by the yardsticks of the time it is not really likely that the picture was, as Bauch[7] thought, 'ganz offenbar ohne besondere Bedeutung'.

Later on, the unusual subject of this painting was — just like, remarkably enough, that of the Dresden *Wedding of Samson* — no longer understood. In 1767, when the painting was already in Berlin, it was said to show 'The Prince of Guelder threatening his father' (see *6. Graphic reproductions*, 3). The reference was obviously to the conflict between Duke Aernout of Guelder and his son Adolf, who held his father captive for many years from 1465. One has to assume that this interpretation of the painting came from Holland, where the son's wicked behaviour was a cause célèbre in the writing of the country's history. Kolloff[2] reinstated the proper meaning of the subject in 1854, on the grounds of an accurate interpretation of what the picture shows and without having any knowledge of the title 'Samson threatening his Father in law, by Rembrandt' used in a London sale in 1691 (see *7. Copies*). Though this latter description probably related to a copy, it shows that the theme was still a known one in the late 17th century.

5. Documents and sources

None.

6. Graphic reproductions

1. Etching by Georg Friedrich Schmidt (Berlin 1712–1775), inscribed: *Rembrandt. pinx: 1635 — G. F. Schmidt fec: 1756.* / [below a blank space] *Le Tableau Original est dans la Gallerie de sa Majesté Prussienne* (fig. 8). Reproduces the original in reverse, leaving out the Moors. An important feature is that it shows on the front pilaster the date 1635 (which was evidently then still legible in full) placed under the signature instead of beside it as in the painting. The etching shows the picture with its present framing. It also echoes the presentday situation with regard to the overpaintings at the lower right that give the contour of Samson's cloak its present shape (for the original configuration, see *7. Copies*, 1 and 2).

2. Mezzotint by William Leader (Cambridge 1729 — ?), inscribed: *Rembrandt pinx^{t} — W.^{m} Leader sculp^{t}.* / *Samson in the Prison House at Gaza.* / *Engrav'd from a Drawing after an Original Picture of Rembrandt in the Collect^{n}. of y^{e} King of Prussia.* / *Printed for Carington Bowles in S^{t}. Paul's Church Yard London 1765.* (Charrington 99). Corresponds in virtually every detail to Schmidt's etching (no. 1 above) in reverse.

3. Etching by Daniel Berger (Berlin 1744–1824) inscribed: *Rembrandt pinx: — D. Berger Filius, del. et Fecit, Berolini 1767.*; beneath this, to either side of the crowned and embellished monogram *FR* of King Frederick II of Prussia: *Le Prince de Gueldre Menaçant son Pere / Peint sur toiele par Rembrandt van Rijhn / 5. pieds de hauteur 4. pieds de largeur / Dans la Grande Gallerie Royale à Sans Souci.* Reproduces the scene in the same direction as the painting, and includes the Moors; the framing and indication of date are as for no. 1 above. Probably Berger, who worked for Schmidt for some time, based his etching partly on the latter's. The inscription shows that the subject depicted in the painting was no longer being recognized for what it was, and was seen as an episode from the dynastic conflict that took place in the 15th century between Aernout of Guelder and his son Adolf.
4. Engraving by Joachim Jan Oortman (Weesp 1777 — Paris 1818), inscribed: *Dessiné par S. Le Roy.- Gravé par Oortman./ Le Prisonnier en colere./ Gal. Napoleon.* Filhol, *Galérie du Musée Napoléon* VII, Paris 1810, no. 437. From the accompanying text it may be seen that despite the inscription's differing from that of the preceding print the characters depicted were still being identified as Aernout and Adolf of Guelder, with the surroundings shown in the painting understood as an interior.

7. Copies

Waagen mentions a copy in Hamilton Palace, Scotland and, without having seen it, one entitled 'The enraged prisoner' in Glendon Hall (G. F.Waagen, *Treasures of Art in Great Britain*, London 1854, III, p. 308 and 462 resp.). According to the *Beschreibendes Verzeichnis der Gemälde im Kaiser Friedrich Museum*, Berlin 1906, p. 312, the Hamilton Palace example was later in private ownership in Montreal (perhaps identical with no. 2 below); that at Glendon Hall was earlier in the collection of the Marquess of Buckingham, sale Stowe House 15 August 1848, no. 406.
A mention of 'Samson threatening his Father in Law, by Rembrandt' in a London sale on 11 December 1691 (Lugt 128), no. 279, possibly refers to one of the copies later in England rather than to the original.
1. Canvas 162.2 × 174.8 cm, whereabouts unknown (fig. 6). Around 1923 with Amsterdam dealer Goudstikker; sale Amsterdam (Fred. Muller) 22–29 March 1955, no. 906 (200 guilders, withdrawn). Attributed by Gerson[3] and Von Moltke (Von Moltke *Flinck*, p. 69 no. 22) without discussion to Govaert Flinck; one cannot however accept that Flinck still had such a dependent relationship to Rembrandt in 1635. Probably painted in Rembrandt's workshop by an assistant. In a wider framework, the half-length figure of the Moorish boy on the left is fully visible, with the kid to the left of him. The belief held by Hofstede de Groot, and, later, by Gerson[3] that in this respect the painting shows the original state of the original cannot be correct (see *4. Comments*). The assumption by Kelch[4] that the strip *c.* 40 cm wide on the left is a later addition would have to be verified. At the bottom both of Samson's knees are visible below his tunic; the outline of the figure of the lower right takes an angular path. On both these latter points this copy closely matches the one listed below and, like it, reproduces the original appearance of the Berlin painting.
2. Canvas 155.7 × 134 cm, The Chrysler Museum, Norfolk, Va., inv. no. L 79.177; on loan from the collection of Walter P. Chrysler Jr.; fig. 7. Reproduces the picture in its original state (though in a somewhat narrower frame on the left and especially, at the top), i.e. without the overpainting of the section at the bottom right (see no. 1 above). Probably identical with a picture described as a copy by Ferdinand Bol in the sale The Hague 25–26 May 1772 (Lugt 2038), no. 198: 'Een zeer kapitaal Historieel Stuk van drie Persoonen, zynde een daar van een Moor; Extra fors en schoon geschildert door Ferdinand Bol naa Rembrand van Rhyn; op doek, hoog 69 en een half, breet 53 duim [= 181.4 × 138.3 cm]'. (A very capital history painting of three figures, one of them being a Moor; painted extra vigorously and beautifully by Ferdinand Bol after Rembrand van Rhyn; on canvas.) (21 guilders to Delfos for Loquet). The same picture appeared in the Pieter Locquet sale Amsterdam 22ff. September 1783 (Lugt 3611), no. 42: 'Bol (Ferdinand). Hoog 70, breed 54 duim [= 179.9 × 138.8 cm]. Doek. In dit Capitaal stuk ziet men Adolph Graaf van Gelder, in blaakende gramschap zyn ouden Vader dreigen; gevolgd van twee Mooren, hy is vertoond in een ryke Kleeding, en zyn Hoofd verzierd met eenige Edele Gesteentens; de hartstogten zyn in dit stuk zeer wel waargenoomen; alles is ongemeen krachtig en breed gepenseelt en van eene sterke uitdrukking.' (One sees in this capital piece Adolph Count of Guelder threaten his old father in a fury; attended by two Moors, he is shown in rich attire and his head is adorned with some precious stones. The passions are well observed in this piece. Everything is brushed uncommonly vigorously and broadly and has a strong expression.) (14 guilders to Nyman)

8. Provenance

– From at least the middle of the 18th century in coll. King Frederick the Great of Prussia at Potsdam, as may be seen from an etching dated 1756 by Georg Friedrich Schmidt (see *6. Graphic reproductions*, 1). After some time in Paris in 1815 it returned to Prussian royal ownership, and from 1830 was in the Königliche Gemäldegalerie in Berlin.

9. Summary

In its style of painting this is a typical work from 1635, an impression supported by the fact that this date appears on an etching reproducing it and made in the mid-18th century; on the painting itself the final digit of this date has disappeared. A somewhat broader studio copy does not, as has been thought, show the picture in its original state. The painting is in poor condition along the bottom edge, where it has been extensively repaired and overpainted. This must have happened prior to 1756, as appears from G. F. Schmidt's etching which shows the picture in its present state.

As a type the picture is comparable with the monumental halflength-figure history paintings from this period, such as the Madrid *Sophonisba* (no. A 94) and the London *Flora* (no. A 112). However, the violent action that gives the figure of Samson its character of a pathos-formula for 'wrath', lends this picture a different nature.

REFERENCES

1 A. Burroughs, *Art criticism from a laboratory*, Boston 1938, pp. 160–162.
2 E. Kolloff, 'Rembrandt's Leben und Werke, nach neuen Actenstücken und Gesichtspunkten geschildert', *Historisches Taschenbuch herausgeg. von Friedrich von Raumer* 5 (1854), pp. 403–582, esp. 443–446; reprint edited by C. Tümpel, Hamburg 1971.
3 C. Hofstede de Groot, 'Rembrandts bijbelsche en historische voorstellingen (II)', *O.H.* 41 (1923/4), pp. 97–114, esp. 99. Cf. H. Gerson in: *Kunstchronik* 10 (1957), p. 122; Gerson 78; Br.-Gerson 499.
4 *Gemäldegalerie Staatliche Museen Preussischer Kulturbesitz Berlin*, Berlin-Dahlem 1975, p. 337.
5 C. Neumann, *Rembrandt* I, Munich 1922, p. 149.
6 W. Weisbach, *Rembrandt*, Berlin and Leipzig 1926, p. 187.
7 K. Bauch, *Studien zur Kunstgeschichte*, Berlin 1967, p. 128.
8 M. Kahr, 'Rembrandt and Delilah', *Art Bull.* 55 (1973), pp. 240–259, esp. 245.

A 110 Belshazzar's feast

[*c.*1635]

LONDON, THE NATIONAL GALLERY, CAT. NO. 6350

HDG 52; BR. 497; BAUCH 21; GERSON 77

Fig. 1. Canvas 167 × 209 cm



1. Summarized opinion

An authentic painting, well preserved though slightly reduced at an oblique angle, reliably signed and probably datable in 1635 or thereabouts.

2. Description of subject

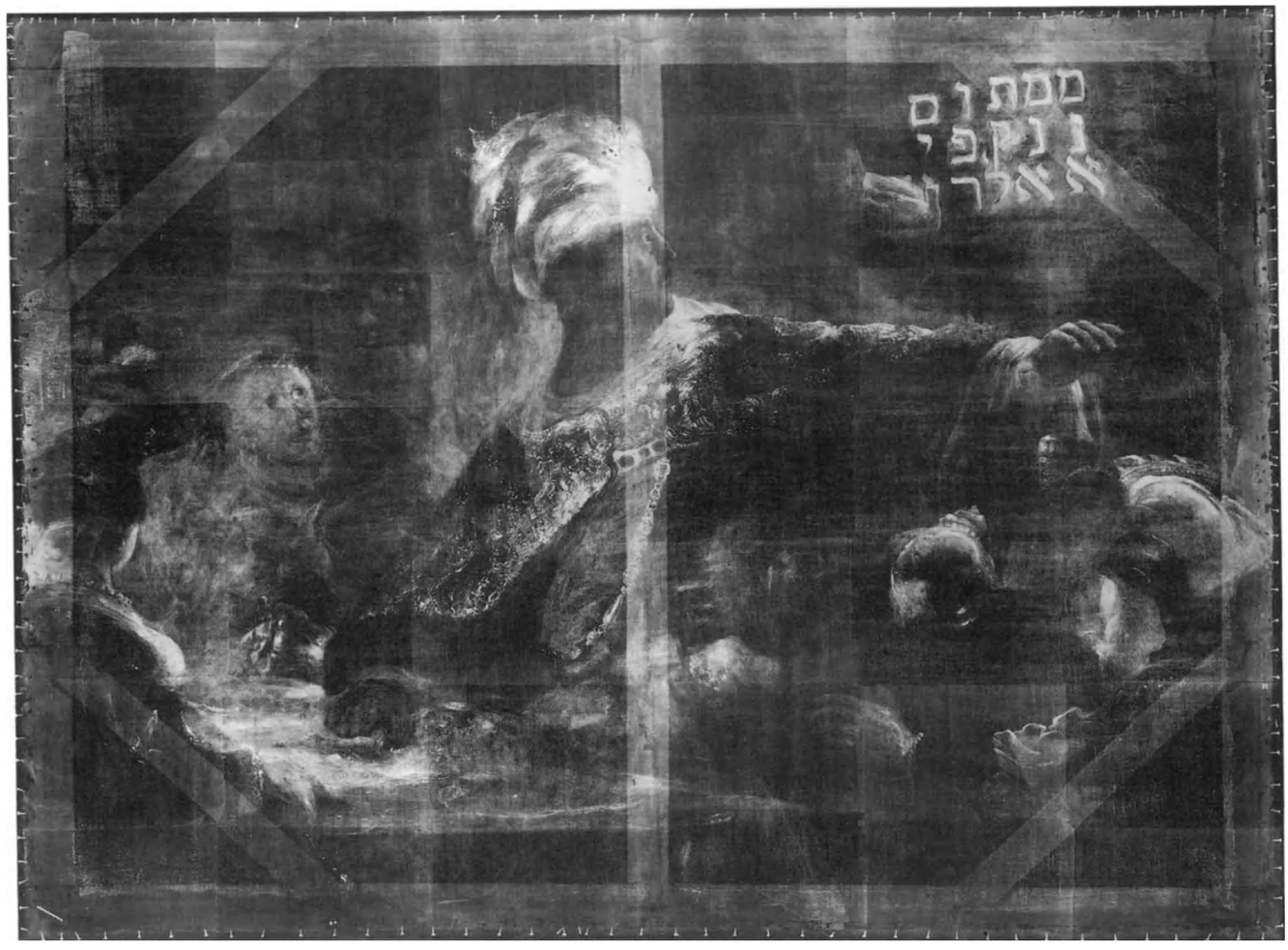
The scene is based on Daniel 5, which tells how Belshazzar, King of Babylon, gave a feast for his nobles, wives and concubines, and had them drink from the gold and silver vessels his father Nebuchadnezzar had plundered from the Temple in Jerusalem. During the meal a hand appeared and wrote on the wall a text that Daniel alone could decipher: 'Mene mene tekel ufarsin' (thou hast been weighed in the balance and found wanting) — and that same night Belshazzar was slain.

The feast is taking place in a barely-indicated room, where on the left a curtain can be seen; light falls from the left, and the letters appearing on the wall on the right also give off light. The company, seen down to the knees, are grouped round a table covered with a green-grey, patterned cloth. On the table are a gold dish, a bowl of fruit and eating utensils.

King Belshazzar has jumped to his feet and stares in fright towards the right where glowing Hebrew letters are being written by a hand on the wall. His left arm is raised, while his right knocks over a gold winejug. He wears a turban with a tail of cloth at the back, topped by a crown. A jewel with a horse-tail tassel is fixed to the turban. He wears a richly-decorated gold brocade cloak trimmed with fur, held together at the front by a very large, jewelled clasp. Under this is a grey tunic with braiding, and a sash round his waist. A heavy chain loops across his body.

In front of him to the right a woman in a low-cut red gown starts back and wine spills from a goblet held in her right hand; her upper body is tilted back towards the viewer. At the extreme left a woman dressed in black, with ostrich-plumes on her head, sits in a chair; she is seen from the side, with her face in lost profile turned to the right. On the further side of the table, to Belshazzar's right, sits a woman with loose hanging hair, her hands clasped in front of her; she looks towards the right, at Belshazzar and the writing on the wall. Next to her on the left is the head of a bearded man, wearing a black cap; his expression is one of alarm, and he too stares towards the right. Behind him, in the shadow, is the head of a young girl, playing a flute. The dark background is formed by a curtain.

Fig. 2. X-Ray



3. Observations and technical information

Working conditions

Examined in May 1968 (B. H., E. v. d. W.) and again in March 1979 (B. H.). A print of the complete X-ray mosaic was received later.

Support

DESCRIPTION: Canvas, lined, 167 × 209 cm. Two strips of canvas, with a vertical seam roughly up the middle, to the left of Belshazzar's eye and to the right of the bowl of fruit; this runs markedly oblique towards the upper left, at right angles to the table edge. The line followed by the deeper parts of the cusping suggests that the canvas was at some time mounted askew to the left on its stretcher. Wedge-shaped strips must have been trimmed from the original canvas on all four sides, in such a way that the format stayed rectangular but the picture tilts down to the left (see fig. 6). This assumption is in line with the path taken by the seam, with the weave structure and with certain features of the picture such as the table-edge and the way the wine runs from the goblet of the woman on the right.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: Since the X-ray material available for the edges shows only the left edge in its entirety and the rest in incomplete or lacking, evidence of cusping is only partial. At the top the pitch of the cusping ranges between 11 and 12 cm and the depth varies widely. No measurements are possible on the right. At the lower left the cusping pitch is between 7 and 10 cm, and so far as can be seen it extends about 10 cm into the surface. Along the left side the cusping pitch ranges from 9 to 10.5 cm; at the bottom it extends 20 cm into the canvas, gradually decreasing upwards to about 10 cm, thus matching the upwards and leftwards slant of the warp threads. Threadcount: In the righthand strip: 11.1 vertical threads/cm (10.5–12.5), 14.4 horizontal threads/cm (13–16); in the lefthand strip: 10.8 vertical threads/cm (10–12), 14.4 horizontal threads/cm (13–15.5). From the vertical path of a weaving fault in both strips (at a maximum of *c.* 18 cm from the left edge in the lefthand strip, and of *c.* 16 cm from the right edge in the righthand strip), and from the fact that the two strips have a vertical seam, it may be concluded that the warp is vertical. Because of the comparable density of the weave and the presence of the weaving fault already mentioned it can safely be assumed that the canvas of no. A 110 is from the same bolt as those of the *Minerva* (no. A 114) and the Munich copy of *Abraham's sacrifice* (no. A 108, copy 2).

Ground

DESCRIPTION: A reddish colour shows through at a number of places, e.g. by the righthand contours of the tablecloth, above

Fig. 3. Detail (1 : 2.5)



these below the hand of the woman on the right, and in the curtain at the lower left. This must be the bottom layer mentioned below under SCIENTIFIC DATA. The places where the top layer of ground lies exposed cannot, because of the grey appearance of much of the painting, be clearly distinguished from the paint layer.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: According to information kindly supplied by Mrs Joyce Plesters, the ground has two layers. The lower, which is an orange-red, contains red ochre in an oil medium; the top, thinner and granular layer is grey and contains coarsely-ground white lead and carbon black.

Paint layer

CONDITION: Outstandingly good apart from a little paint loss at the righthand edge. Craquelure: the entire surface has cracking, of irregular pattern, which varies somewhat with the nature and thickness of the paint.

DESCRIPTION: The curtain in the left background is painted in dark grey with some translucency in the folds on the left; towards the right the paint is darker and covers more fully. To the left of Belshazzar, level with the tassel on his turban, one can vaguely see the shape of a head that seems to have been painted out by the artist himself. On the right the cloud from which the hand emerges is done in grey over a darker grey, in strokes that follow the shape of the cloud. The dark grey underlying layer is also present beneath the patch of light, which is executed with long radiating strokes of a thick light grey paint. The Hebrew characters are painted in a uniformly light pale yellow, with crisp contours, on top of a lay-in of them that shows through vaguely and here and there differs slightly (see also *X-Rays*). To the right, along Belshazzar's left hand and the hanging part of his sleeve there is dark brown, opaque paint placed over the grey of the background. By the fingers this zone takes on cloudy shapes, while downwards it has a ragged edge but contrasts strongly with the grey. The writing hand is painted in a brownish flesh colour, with thick white-pink for the edges of light and brown for the shadows; it scarcely suggests living flesh.

Belshazzar's head exhibits, in the shadow areas, a ruddy underlying layer. The lighter parts of the face are done with fluid strokes in a yellow-brown that contrasts quite sharply with the grey of the background. The strongest accents of light on the tip of the nose and lower lip are in yellow-white paint, and the longish catchlight in the eye is done in the same colour. The white of the eye is a yellow-brown, and the iris brown. The chin has a dark grey-brown outline and similar lines are used at the scarf to give the border between the throat and the scarf and between the scarf and the cloak. The beard has a few fairly broad scratchmarks to reinforce the suggestion of hairs. The turban is done with long strokes in a yellowish white, grey and ochre yellow. The dangling part of the turban is done mainly in greys by the shoulder on the left, and in a very thick yellowish white on the other side. The jewels show considerable impasto, mainly in yellows, ochre yellows and white. The jewel with the tassel, in particular, is as it were modelled in the paint.

Belshazzar's cloak has a brown base tone that tends towards a yellow, on top of which the patterns are laid thickly in ochrish yellow followed by light yellow, white and black. The clasp is, again, modelled in very thick paint. The fur trimming is painted with short brushstrokes in browns and greys, and a strong suggestion of the material is achieved. The chain is done in the same way as the other jewellery, mainly in yellow with streaks of white for the catchlights and with black and red for the stones. The tunic is laid down in light greys, and the braiding in dark grey and a brownish ochre colour. The shadow cast by the chain is dark grey, and produces a strong three-dimensional effect. On the right in the area of shadow the grey has a carmine-like red worked into it, and the sash, too, tends to a reddish sheen on the side towards the woman on the right, suggesting a reflexion of light from her red dress.

His right hand is painted in a brown-grey flesh colour, with no great subtlety of tone, and the modelling is poor. The sparsely-applied highlights, shadows and reflexions of light from the bowl do however give some suggestion of plasticity. Brushstrokes that are visible in relief do not entirely match the present shapes, and are probably the vestiges of a first lay-in. The raised left hand is more ruddy in tone, and more strongly modelled; its anatomical structure is followed more clearly, and strong lights and dark accents produce a striking effect of depth. The nails are clearly marked by lines of shadow and light patches, and the thumb shows a black line for the dirty nail.

The gown of the woman on the right is executed in the lit parts mostly in a vermilion-coloured paint. The folds of the wide sleeve on the forearm are, where they catch the light, done with firm strokes that create clear modelling. Here red and yellow are used, often together in a single stroke and sometimes unmixed, and the effect is an orangish haze. At her back there are patterns done in boldly-brushed ochrish yellow and yellow with glancing touches of white giving the highlights. The edge of the gown is formed by a rapidly-drawn stroke in white and rather coarse paint. The border with her naked back is shown by a line of brown, which thickens by the spine. The adornments on the further shoulder are done in a very thick pink-white; these, and the salmon-red dabs of paint in between them, are placed over the background. The rows of pearls at the woman's wrists and in her hair are painted carefully, all with a white catchlight, dark centre and reflected light on the underside. The dark hair has internal detail that, though sparse, is quite effective. The left hand, in its colour and manner of painting, much resembles Belshazzar's hand on the table, though it has stronger accents in red and grey on the back that suggest dimples in the plump flesh. The right hand, just visible grasping the goblet, is done in an impasto light yellowish flesh tint; a black line forms the border between hand and goblet. Her bosom, catching the full light, is thickly painted, with crisp outlines. The pale flesh tint runs gradually over into the shadows of her back and shoulders, which are in a brownish grey. These shadows become darker by the throat, and then merge into the area of her back in subtly applied interchanges of light and dark that create an effective suggestion of convexities and hollows.

The neck and cheek of the woman in the extreme left foreground are painted in a yellowish flesh colour with a strong pink at the ear and grey shadows at the nape of the neck. Here, again, there are lights and reflected light applied along both sides of the figure and contrasting sharply with the surrounding areas. The cuffs and shirt are in yellowish white with firm brushstrokes, and the jewels, in white and light yellow, stand out crisply against the deep black gown, which is marked at the front with impasto lights in white. The row of pearls round her throat has very strong lights and shadows; tiny spots of yellow separate each pearl from the next. The headdress is executed in very dark paint with little difference in tone, and the ostrich plumes are drawn with quite thick, parallel strokes in variants of greys and browns and a single accent in blue. In one of the feathers that catches the light there is light yellow and white. Her hand, resting on the armrest of the chair, has remarkably little anatomical clarity, and is in an almost uniform pale flesh tint.

The face and hands of the woman to the left of Belshazzar differ greatly, in colour and manner of painting, from all the other heads and hands; they are painted thinly in a pale flesh tint, with a minimum of accents of light and shade. One wonders if there has been some loss of thinly-applied nuances, but this does not seem to be the case. The teeth in a slightly open mouth are shown in light paint. In the eyes the greyish irises have brilliant white and quite large catchlights, running into the yellowish white of the eye. The hair is rendered with strokes of grey-brown and an ochrish colour; the strokes run out over the background. On the righthand shoulder, in particular, the fluffy character of the hair has been effectively suggested.

The head of the bearded man has a far darker tint than that of the woman alongside him, and shows strong accents in yellowish

white for the highest lights by the wing of the nose and on the ridge. The reddish grey shadows are placed over a brownish-yellow halftone. The eye areas are drawn quite precisely, with distinct edges of moisture and with shadow lines in ruddy grey. The wrinkles in his forehead are drawn in a similar reddish grey. The slightly open mouth, with the teeth visible, is modelled carefully and effectively.

The girl playing the flute in the background is sketched lightly over the grey top layer of the ground, through which the reddish bottom layer can be glimpsed.

The grapes on the table are painted in a purplish grey, and outlined in black. The pewter plates have accents of light in a quite thickly applied white and a little yellow. The tablecloth's grey base tone tends towards green, and on this a pattern is indicated in a lighter grey with rapid brushstrokes. The gold vessels are done with firm strokes that almost invariably follow the curves of the metal, and have impasto accents of light in bright yellow and a yellowish white. The wine pouring out is suggested effectively on the right with deft and powerful brushstrokes.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: Thirteen samples were taken in the Scientific Department of the National Gallery, and a number of her observations from the cross-sections prepared from these have been kindly communicated by Mrs Joyce Plesters. The red gown of the woman on the extreme right is painted in the light passages with a mixture of vermilion and a little lead-tin yellow. In the darker parts of the gown there is a glaze of crimson-coloured lake pigment over a black underlayer. Lead-tin yellow has also been used in the yellow impasto on Belshazzar's cloak. In the lettering on the wall there is lead-tin yellow mixed with white lead. The blue pigment encountered in the grey cloudy area around the lettering has been identified as azurite. Further details, including evidence for the presence of 'a fully realised "dead-colouring" stage, created before the composition was worked up into its finished form, and involving what seems to be a painted sketch executed mainly in translucent browns', are described in the catalogue of the exhibition *Art in the making. Rembrandt*, London 1988–'89, pp. 76–79.

X-Rays

The radiographic image yields only a very partial insight into the total image of the painting and the changes that took place during the work.

To the right of the body contours of the woman sitting on the extreme left there is an unexplained light area with heavily apparent craquelure. The head of the woman immediately to the left of Belshazzar appears with vaguely-defined forms; this vagueness is explicable by changes or shifts that have been introduced. An earlobe that appears twice in close proximity is evidence of this. Firm strokes that show up light in the neck and shoulder, perhaps an underpainting, bear no relation to the image seen today. Most probably the shoulder on the left projected further; this area cuts through the relatively vague image of the old man alongside her on the left, who seems to have been painted in this position only at a late stage.

In line with observations made at the presentday paint surface, the X-ray has to the left of Belshazzar's head the shadowy image of a head facing right. The dangling part of Belshazzar's turban seems to have been laid-in differently. His figure otherwise matches the visible paint-surface image. The Hebrew letters present an image standing out clearly in white with a looser and stronger brushstroke; some differ a little from their present form.

The shoulder of the woman on the extreme right is intersected by an irregular shape that appears dark in the X-ray. To the far lower right the craquelure pattern shows up white, probably due to the filling and inpainting of heavy cracking.

Signature

On the far right, above the shoulder of the woman furthest to the right, there is an inscription in lightish letter that is hard to read. According to information kindly communicated by Mr Christopher Brown it has been read <*Rembrand (.)*/ 163(?)>. The signature and date are so worn that they are clear only in ultraviolet light; there is a damage after the *d*, and much of the penultimate digit of the date is damaged such that only the top of the *3* seems to remain; the last digit is lost. In view of the peculiar placing and the loss of strips of the original canvas along the edges, one may wonder whether the present inscription could be a later substitute for a lost original one.

Varnish

No special remarks.

4. Comments

The manner of painting and use of colour in no. A 110 are remarkably varied. The figure of Belshazzar exhibits throughout an approach and execution that is in direct line with a group of paintings of lifesize figures in fanciful costume such as the Madrid *Sophonisba* of 1634 (no. A 94) and the 1635 *Minerva* (no. A 114). The treatment of the gold brocade and the way the jewels have been painted are virtually identical, while the manner of painting in, for instance, the tablecloth is wholly the same; that of the turban has a close similarity with the *Man in oriental costume* at Chatsworth, probably from 1639 (no. A 128). Parallels can also be found for other features of the clothing such as the tunic and fur. Resemblances to the Munich *Oriental* of 1633 (no. A 73) have even led to that painting being seen as a preparatory study for the figure of Belshazzar[1]. The incisive cast shadows of the dangling chain on Belshazzar's body form a familiar motif that can be seen in, inter alia, the *Sophonisba* and *Minerva*.

The seated female figure on the exteme left closely resembles, both as a motif and in the broad manner of painting, the figure of the serving-maid in the 1634 *Sophonisba*. Since a repoussoir figure like this seen in lost profile occurs only in these two paintings, this feature is important evidence for the dating of no. A 110. Finally, the similarity — compositionally as well — between Belshazzar's gesturing arms and those (seen in reverse) of Abraham in the Leningrad *Abraham's sacrifice* of 1635 (no. A 108) suggests a date around the same time. According to Keith Roberts[2], Rembrandt used for this gesture of the arms the figure of Ahasuerus in Pieter Lastman's painting *The anger of Ahasuerus* in the National Museum in Warsaw, but its linking function in a knee-length composition is at all events his own device, and he had already made use of it as a compositional feature in the figure of the woman in the 1633 *Portrait of the Shipbuilder Jan Rijcksen and his wife* in Buckingham Palace, London (no. A 77).

There is no analogous prototype to be found in Rembrandt's work for the woman's figure on the right. The woman's pose has been chosen in such a way that extreme foreshortenings occur, while the

Fig. 4. Detail (1 : 4)



lighting too produces unusual effects. Weisbach[3] mentioned in this connexion the figure seen from behind in Rubens' *Allegory of Abundance* in the coll. Edmond de Rothschild, Paris. Van Rijckevorsel[4] and Clark[5] however offered as a prototype a figure in Paolo Veronese's *Rape of Europa* in the Ducal Palace in Venice, and it does seem more natural, on the grounds of the style of painting and use of colour, to assume that Rembrandt was using a motif from North Italian art. As Tümpel acutely observed, he may even have known a picture described as 'Europa van Veronese' in the inventory of Joan Huydecoper in Amsterdam in 1622 (Schwartz 1984, p. 138)[6].

In other respects, too, no. A 110 makes the impression of having been designed to produce a strong effect (and was perhaps meant to be viewed from a certain distance): the very forceful brushwork and the use of unmixed red and ochre yellow alongside each other, the use of glancing strokes of coarse paint and powerful accents of light are, it is true, not entirely lacking in Rembrandt's earlier work; but they have never been used before to such an extent. Remarkable in this context is the use of dark lines to show or strengthen contours, as at Belshazzar's chin and by his scarf and in the back of the woman on the right; they form an element that cannot be seen so emphatically in other Rembrandt works. This seems in this painting to have to do with a strong urge to give every part of the composition a distinct boundary. He achieves this here quite consistently, either by a sharp contrast effect or by this outlining. The contrast effect, and consequent delimiting of forms, is exceptionally obvious in this painting — almost invariably, for instance, a light hand stands out starkly against a dark area behind it. The light zone (remarkable in itself) around Belshazzar's raised hand seems to have been applied at a late stage, in order to tone down the contrast in this passage. Only the shadowy flute-playing girl in the background is uninvolved in this contrast effect, and she seems (on the X-ray evidence too) to be the remains of a differently-planned group of figures, done more in halftones.

It may be that use of light edges for the various figures and objects has to do with the complex composition and, especially, with the complicated lighting with two conflicting light sources of roughly equal intensity. This unusual lighting hinders a clear indication of plasticity of each individual volume. While these two light sources have given rise to solutions to problems that cannot be regarded as typical of Rembrandt, they do on the other hand invite an extreme use of his penchant for reflexions of light. And finally, the use of two light sources is the reason for several concentrations of light being distributed over the picture area in a way that may be called untypical of Rembrandt in the mid-1630s.

No. A 110 exhibits a number of singular features that cannot be wholly explained by either an assumed intention on the part of the artist or the history of the painting's production (which though not entirely clear was certainly not straightforward). The treatment of flesh areas varies substantially from one passage to another, with both the sex of the person and the lighting playing a role. Broadly, it may be said that as usual a brown flesh colour is reserved for the men, and a paler tone for the women, but this common rule does not hold entirely — the lower hand of the woman on the right comes close, in manner of painting and colour, to the hands of Belshazzar. One is struck by differences in the way the hands have been painted, and in the extent to which a suggestion of plasticity has been achieved. Examples of both the broader manner of painting (as seen here in Belshazzar's resting hand) and the thorough manner producing a threedimensional effect (as in his raised hand) are to be found in Rembrandt's work; they do not, however, occur elsewhere combined in one and the same work with the extreme degree of difference seen here. The aberrant treatment of flesh tones and the handling of plastic form are most striking in the face and hands of the woman to the left of Belshazzar. The almost total absence of accents in the face and neck produce an effect that is quite exceptional in Rembrandt and that is in glaring contrast to the head of the man to the left of her where, in a way characteristic of Rembrandt, plasticity is suggested with skilfully and effectively placed dark and light brushstrokes.

The composition, finally, has remarkably little homogeneity. The righthand female figure with foreshortening that creates a strong three-dimensional effect convincingly counterbalances the figure of Belshazzar (roughly as the figure of Isaac does that of Abraham in the Leningrad painting of 1635, no. A 108), but the whole lefthand half of the picture makes, against this, a spatially rather flat and even confusing impression. The changes that, according to the X-ray, took place in this area did not produce a balanced result. Allowance has however to be made for the fact that the composition is today seen tilted slightly to the left and is incomplete around the edges (see under Support). If a copy formerly at Potsdam (see *7. Copies*, 1; fig. 7) is to be believed, not insignificant areas are missing especially along the top and righthand side. Moreover, the hint of a head can be seen on the extreme left, next to the girl playing a flute.

As a type the composition, with its large knee-length figures seen close to in a narrow framing may be called Caravaggesque in character[7]. It is not possible to point to an exact prototype, but one may safely assume that Rembrandt had Jan Lievens' depiction of *Esther's feast* of *c.* 1625 (no. C 2) in mind when arranging his scene.

Fig. 5. Detail (1 : 3)



All things taken together, it may be concluded that no. A 110 is, on the grounds of the manner of painting, to be seen as an authentic Rembrandt, though one that differs on a number of points of composition and execution from comparable works done in the same period. The differences may perhaps be in part explained by Rembrandt's ambitious plan and by an attempt to show a great amount of movement and expression of emotion. The painting is exceptional in that it is so to say a sampler of problems that Rembrandt was struggling with at the time. In the contemporaneous or slightly later large-size works he takes certain motifs further; in, for example, the 1635 *Abraham's sacrifice* in Leningrad (no. A 108) one meets a similar arrangement of the main figures with intersecting diagonals, while the lighting on the head of the angel and the falling knife are other features that remind one of the *Belshazzar*; in *Abraham's sacrifice*, however, a more convincing unity is achieved in a tighter framing. The move towards motifs of fleeting movement and a virtuoso manner of painting is continued more happily in the Frankfurt *Blinding of Samson* of 1636 (no. A 116).

The lack of homogeneity in no. A 110 might prompt the thought that Rembrandt had the help of pupils in painting this canvas. There is however no convincing evidence of this being so, and the aberrant elements are found almost always, individually, to have such a reasonable link with various authentic works from the same period that the idea must, for the moment, be discounted.

There are varying opinions in the literature as to dating, ranging from the early to the late 1630s. Kenneth Clark[5] gives, without stating his reasons, a date of production before the *Anatomy lesson of Dr Tulp* of 1632 in The Hague. Hausherr[8] has pointed out that the calligraphy of the 'Mene tekel' inscription, and especially the vertical sequence of the characters first recognized as such by Dyserinck[9] in 1904, first appeared in this exact form book by Menasseh ben-Israel published in 1639 (*De terminis vitae libri tres*, Amsterdam 1639, p. 160). According to this Jewish scholar the inscription was, because of the unusual vertical arrangement ('linea longa'), illegible to the guests at the table because they were reading it horizontally ('linea recta'). Hausherr regards this as a cogent argument for a dating in 1639 and thus comes, though on different grounds, to the same conclusion as Müller Hofstede[10] and Sumowski[11] who both look on *Belshazzar's feast* as the end-point of Rembrandt's

baroque period, and therefore put it at the end of the 1630s. In the *Annual Report of the National Art-Collections Fund* 1964[12] the standpoint is adopted that Menasseh ben-Israel could well have given Rembrandt information about the way of writing the 'Mene tekel' inscription at an earlier date; on the evidence of the portrait of Menasseh etched by Rembrandt in 1636 (B. 269), they must at all events have known each other by that year. Van Gelder[13], Gerson[14] and Kauffmann[15], Schwartz[16] and Tümpel[6] endorse this view, and put the date around the mid-1630s. This is a convincing conclusion. From what has been argued previously it has become clear that no. A 110 shows on a number of points a very strong resemblance to works from the mid 1630s, such as the *Sophonisba* of 1634, the *Minerva* and *Abraham's sacrifice* of 1635 and the 1636 *Blinding of Samson*. A date about 1635 thus seems, for these reasons, the most likely. It is supported by the fact that canvases with the same weave (and thus from the same bolt) are used for the 1635 *Minerva* and the 1636 Munich workshop copy of *Abraham's sacrifice* (no. A 108, *7. Copies*, 2). Of the copies listed below (see *7. Copies*) none has been examined by us, and it is therefore impossible to tell whether one or more of them was done in Rembrandt's studio, as was not unusual in the 1630s.

The theme of Belshazzar's feast often gave rise to sizeable paintings in the 16th and 17th centuries; one can, for example, mention a large anonymous canvas dated 1568 in Haarlem (cat. no. 156, as M. van Heemskerck) and the painting by Pieter de Grebber of 1625 in Kassel (cat. no. 221; illustrated in Bauch 1960, fig. 80). This makes one suspect that the scene had an exemplary significance in connexion with the decoration of a room. Indeed, contrary to what Schwartz[16] and Tümpel[6] thought, a tradition existed on this point. In the early decades of the 16th century, Hieronymus van Busleyden had wallpaintings done in a room in his palatial dwelling in Malines (evidently used as a dining room), showing scenes of mythological and biblical meals with a moralizing meaning; Belshazzar's feast is one of these, and, according to Busleyden's own comment in the form of two epigrams (H. de Vocht, *Jerome de Busleyden*, Turnhout 1950, pp. 244ff), embodied a warning of God's anger with those who desecrate holy objects to serve their craving for pleasure (as Belshazzar had done with the vessels from the Temple). Around 1600 Crispijn de Passe the Elder published an engraving of the subject after Marten de Vos (Hollst. XV, p. 208 no. 616) with the title 'Impii convivii tristis exitus' (the unhappy end to an ungodly meal). In the 17th century a similar notion still prevailed, as may be deduced from Philippus Picinellus, *Mundus symbolicus in emblemata universitate* . . . (Book III, no. 373; Cologne edn 1695, p. 215); here, this episode is given the motto 'extrema gaudii luctus', a phrase taken from Proverbs 14: 13 ('risus dolore miscebitur, & extrema gaudii luctus occupat' or, 'Even in laughter the heart is sorrowful, and the end of the mirth is heaviness'). Paintings of the subject are described in several 17th-century inventories.

Fig. 6. Reconstruction of the painting in its original position and format



One can assume that Rembrandt's painting had such a function and meaning. At all events, the moment depicted was a traditional subject and not, as for instance Weisbach[3] thought, a personal choice by Rembrandt. It is of course plain that the alarm being caused by the event offered him a welcome opportunity of displaying emotions through facial expressions and gestures.

5. Documents and sources

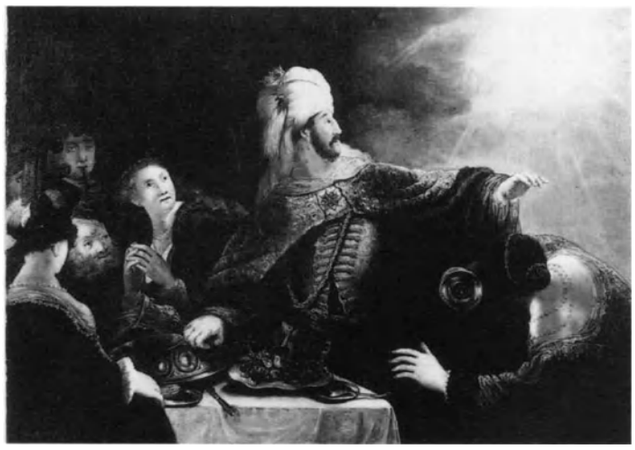
None.

6. Graphic reproductions

1. Etching by Andreas Ludwig Krüger (Potsdam 1743–*c.* 1805), inscribed *Ferdinand Bol.pinx: — dess: et grav: par A:L : Kruger / Festin de Beltasar / peint sur toile, 3 pieds 2 pouces de hauteur, 4 pieds 1 pouce de largeur.* Reproduces the picture in the same direction as the original. The framing is somewhat broader especially at the top, left and right. At the extreme left there is the hint of a head that is not seen in the original. This rather clumsy etching can be dated around 1770, as in later years Krüger was active only as an architect. It was done after a painted copy that was still in Sanssouci in 1945 (see *7. Copies*, 1).

2. Mezzotint by Henry Hudson (active in London 1782–1800), inscribed *Painted by Rembrandt — Engraved by Hudson / King Belshazzar beholding the Handwriting on the wall / Henry Hudson / From the original Picture in the collection of Thomas Fullwood Esquire — To whom this Print is most respectfully inscribed By his obliged & obedt. Servt. Henry Hudson / Published as the Act directs, 14 February1785, by Judson, No. 28 Newman Street, Oxford Street, London* (Charrington 92). A rather free reproduction in the same direction as the original: the writing hand comes from the other side, the inscription is altered, Belshazzar's clothing and gesture are different and he is Moorish in type, to the left of him there are only two figures and a more orderly still-life, and to the right there is an empty armchair. It must be assumed that this academic version is either a free rendering of Rembrandt's composition or was based on a painted paraphrase of it (see *7. Copies*, 5). Hofstede de Groot[1] wrongly read the date of 1785 as 1725.

Fig. 7. Copy 1. Canvas 101 × 131 cm. Formerly Potsdam-Sanssouci, Bildergalerie



7. Copies

1. Canvas 101 × 131 cm (fig. 7), earlier owned by the Prussian royal family in the Palace of Sanssouci, Potsdam, where it was described by M. Oesterreich, *Beschreibung der königlichen Bildergallerie . . .*, 2nd edn 1770, no. 121 as being by Ferdinand Bol, and reproduced at about the same time in an etching by Krüger (see *6. Graphic reproductions*, 1). Still described in the catalogue of 1930 (as by Samuel van Hoogstraten); cf. also cat. 1975, p. 90 (as destroyed in 1945). The old attribution to Bol is not borne out by a photograph. The picture was nevertheless an important document, as it gave a reasonably reliable idea of the originally larger format of no. A 110.
2. Hofstede de Groot[1] mentions a copy by Peter Tillemans (Antwerp 1684–Norton by Bury S. Edmunds, Suffolk) in coll. Charles Jennens, London, described in 1761; cf. *London and its environs described*, Printed for R. and J. Dodsley at Pall Mall, V, p. 90.
3. What was probably a copy was, according to C. White (in: *Rembrandt in eighteenth-century England*, Yale Center for British Art 1983, p. 111 no. 84), sold with coll. Dr Bragge in London in 1753, first day no. 39 (9 guineas to Fortescue).
4. Probably a copy (identical with 3 ?) was sold with coll. Verhulst and Bertels, London (Clayton & Parys) 26–27 April 1780 (Lugt 3129), 2nd day no. 56: 'Rembrandt, Belshazzar's feast; the expression and force of colouring predominant throughout this picture, justly rank it among the first of this master's works'. Again (the same painting?) in the sale of the property of 'A Gentleman', London (Clayton & Parys) 5–6 May 1780 (Lugt 3137), 1st day no. 65: 'Rembrandt. Belshazzar's Feast'.
5. A copy or variant (identical with 2, 3, 4 ?) was in 1785 in coll. Thomas Fullwood, as may be seen from the mezzotint by Henry Hudson (see *6. Graphic reproductions*, 2), and later in sale of this collection in London (Christie's) 12 April 1791, no. 86: 'Rembrandt. Belshazzar's feast, a very noble and capital picture' (£42.0s.0d. to Drew). If the mezzotint is a true rendering, this must have been a very free copy.

8. Provenance

– Coll. Earl of Derby, Knowsley House near Liverpool. According to Scharf[17] first recorded here in 1736 and bought for £125 by Hamlet Winstanley for James Stanlay, 10th Earl of Derby, from Thomas Fulwood who had owned it since 1725. This last statement is certainly incorrect and probably stems from a misreading of the date of 1785 on a mezzotint by Hudson (see *6. Graphic reproductions*, 2), which was done after another version (see *7. Copies*, 5). Hamlet Winstanley (Warrington 1698–1756) was a protégé of the Earl of Derby, and in the years 1721–30 he made twenty etchings after paintings in the Earl's collection ('The Knowsley Gallery'); these do not include an etching after no. A 110).
– Bought from the Earl of Derby in 1964[18].

9. Summary

The painting shows a singular lack of homogeneity, but aberrant though the execution may be the various elements almost invariably do show a clear relationship to other works by Rembrandt from the period around 1635. There need therefore be no doubt as to authenticity. The dating in the mid-1630s, the most likely on the grounds of style, is confirmed by the weave of the canvas used, which recurs in other canvases from 1635–36.

The two conflicting light sources result in a complicated lighting scheme, which evidently brought Rembrandt to find solutions that in certain respects differ from his usual way of working. For example, he continually aims at a contrasting effect of figures, or parts of them, against the surrounding areas, and if this cannot be achieved he has used dark outlining of the forms. The outcome is a composition that has similarities with various works from the years around 1635, but that stands out among these through its low level of homogeneity. Its present appearance is somewhat affected by a slight reduction at an oblique angle.

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A 111 The prodigal son in the tavern [*c.* 1635]

DRESDEN, STAATLICHE KUNSTSAMMLUNGEN DRESDEN, GEMÄLDEGALERIE ALTE MEISTER, CAT. NO. 1559

HDG 334; BR. 30; BAUCH 535; GERSON 79

Fig. 1. Canvas 161 × 131 cm



Fig. 2. X-Ray



1. Summarized opinion

A poorly preserved painting that has undergone changes in format and whose composition has been altered. The areas belonging to the original composition must be regarded as authentic work by Rembrandt from *c.* 1635; the autograph nature of subsequent appreciable changes, probably made at the time of a reduction on the left, is much less certain. At some time a good deal later a strip of canvas was added along the bottom edge, once again altering the dimensions.

2. Description of subject

A man is seated to the right of a table, on the edge of a chair of which one sees the upholstered and fringed back. His left arm is loosely round the waist of a woman sitting in his lap. Raised high in his right hand he holds a tall graduated drinking-glass. The woman has her back towards the viewer, at whom she looks with her head turned sharply over the shoulder. Half visible, a tally-board hangs high on the left on the rear wall, while to the right a curtain hangs open and looped up. The light falls from the left.

The man (in whose features it is usual to recognize those of Rembrandt) looks laughingly out of the picture. He wears a black cap with two white ostrich feathers over long, curling hair. A red coat ornamented with gold thread reveals a white pleated shirt at the neck; the white sleeves of the shirt, project from the wide sleeves of the coat. A bandolier supports a long sword with a gold-coloured hilt.

The woman (in whose features one may perhaps recognize Saskia) wears a gold-brown skirt and a greenish velvet slashed bodice, under which can be seen a pleated white shirt with wide sleeves. A gold chain set with jewels hangs over the bodice. A cap decorated with gold embroidery and a string of pearls is worn over brown, curly hair, and her eardrop has a pear-shaped pearl.

To the left of the woman, on a table covered with a heavy oriental cloth, a plate, a knife, a dish with a peacock pie, a rummer and a napkin are partly visible. The tail-feathers of the peacock can be glimpsed between the woman's right arm and the man's raised right arm, and to the right of the latter.

3. Observations and technical information

Working conditions

Examined on 14 May 1970 (B. H., E. v. d. W.) in good daylight and in the frame, with the aid of UV fluorescence. Examined again in November 1986 (B. H., E. v. d. W.) in moderate artificial light, again in the frame but this time with the aid of X-ray films covering the whole of the painting; these were not however available subsequently.

Support

DESCRIPTION: Canvas 161 × 131 cm, comprising an original part and a strip about 16.5–17 cm wide added at the bottom; the strip is made up of two sections sewn together in a vertical seam at *c.* 33 cm from the lefthand edge. The original section has a horizontal seam at *c.* 41 cm from the top edge. The whole painting was transferred to a new canvas in 1838, and was striplined in 1964[1]. The present dimensions are only a few centimetres smaller than those quoted in an inventory of the Dresden gallery from 1754 (see *8. Provenance*). On the original format, which was probably larger — perhaps even much larger — see *4. Comments.*

SCIENTIFIC DATA: At some places in the X-ray the weave is difficult to make out, possibly because of the adhesive used for the 1838 transfer. Along the bottom edge of the original canvas there is clearly visible cusping with a pitch varying from 8 to 10 cm and extending some 10 cm into the canvas. Along the lefthand side there are a few local distortions of the weave, though not enough to be described as recognizable cusping. The right has cusping, though it cannot be measured because of the poor legibility of the radiographic image. The weave cannot be made out at the top, and no observations of cusping were possible there. Threadcount: in the original canvas, both above and below the seam, 14.4 vertical threads/cm (14–15) and 12.6 horizontal threads/cm (11–13.5). Assuming the warp to run parallel to the horizontal seam, the width of the widest piece of canvas — *c.* 98 cm — makes one suspect that the original strip-width was one-and-a-half ells (*c.* 107 cm); this would mean that there is almost 10 cm missing at the bottom. The canvas thus belongs to the rare category in which the weft threads are more numerous than the warp threads; of the canvases we have examined, this feature is found only in the group taken from a single bolt on which the *Belshazzar's feast* (no. A 110), the *Minerva* (no. A 114) and the Munich version of *Abraham's sacrifice* (no. A 108, *Copies* 2) are painted. The weave of this bolt has 11 warp threads (10–12.5) and 14.6 weft threads (12–17.5). The difference in the number of warp threads found is rather too large for it to be blandly assumed that the canvas of the *Prodigal son* too came from the same bolt; given the difficulty of measuring the weave of this canvas it must be left at a possibility — the hypothetical width of the canvas at least does not argue against it.

Threadcount of the lower strip added later : *c.* 12 vertical and horizontal threads/cm.

Ground

DESCRIPTION: Not observed.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: Kühn[2], on the basis of a sample taken from the righthand edge of the painting, described the ground as a brownish yellow consisting of chalk and white lead with some yellow and red ochre. The ground of the two added pieces has at least two layers; the bottom layer is a reddish yellow and comprises yellow and red ochre with an admixture of quartz and calcspar. The second layer is red and consists of red ochre with an admixture of quartz and calcspar. There is a third layer, grey in colour, but it is impossible to tell whether this belongs to the ground or to an underpainting; it has white lead with vegetable black and a small amount of bone black.

Paint layer

CONDITION: Poor. Apart from numerous though generally minor retouches that, to judge by their visibility under UV fluorescence, must be fairly recent, there are old retouches seen especially along the whole lefthand edge of the painting (except the added strip), in the scabbard above the added strip, in the man's face (particularly along the shadow of the nose, in and around the eyes, below the nose and in the jaw), in the shadowed tip of the upper ostrich-feather, in and beside the raised glass, in the shadow edges and right eye-socket in the woman's face and to the right of this, in parts of her bodice, in the pie and at some points in the background. Account also has to be taken of practically innumerable tiny retouches that have been needed because of the loss — apparent in the X-rays — of very small particles of paint. A transmitted-light photograph (in the files of the restorer's studio) taken of the canvas with a strong light-source behind it shows this paint loss as being very heavy in the sleeve of the man's red coat.

The older retouches can be linked to the substantial restoration already mentioned, a report on which was made in 1838: 'war nicht allein sehr erblindet, sondern durch viele Sprünge in der Farbe, Abblätterungen derselben und alter Retuschen in einem kläglichen und ungeniessbaren Zustand. Es wurde daher im Sommer 1838 der gefährlichen Operation ungeachtet beschlossen, das Gemälde auf eine neue Leinwand zu übertragen, wodurch eine gleiche und reinere Oberfläche gewonnen wurde. Die alten Restorationen, die bei dieser

Fig. 3. Detail (1 : 1)



Operation allemal verloren gehen, mussten wieder ersetzt werden. Sie befinden sich hauptsächlich im Hintergrunde, in den Köpfen weniger, mehr am Ärmel des ... besonders war ein unten angesetztes Stück wieder in Einklang zu bringen'[1]. Restorers' reports from 1860 and 1897 show that then, too, there were retouches to the paint layer. A report of 1964 mentioned local damages that were restored at that time[1]; these were evidently the retouches mentioned earlier as now apparent under UV fluorescence. In addition to the demonstrable retouches, serious account also has to be taken of wearing resulting from the repeated restorations. Craquelure: the whole surface has a mainly irregular pattern of quite coarse cracking, with in the background especially a somewhat wrinkled shrinkage craquelure that may have occurred during or as an outcome of the transfer.

DESCRIPTION: A canvas weave pattern can be seen over the entire surface, possibly as a result of the transfer in 1838. The paint layer itself gives the impression of being slightly flattened; there is a distinct relief only in the ostrich plumes, the woman's chain and the sword-hilt.

The background, which is patchy and 'busy' because of the numerous darkened retouches, appears a greenish grey that darkens towards the top. Along the contour of the woman, from her cap down to the left sleeve, there is a zone of yellow-brown. Traces of white paint, some apparent in relief, are visible beneath this and suggest (as the X-ray bears out) that there was a veil at this point, hanging down from the cap. A similar yellow-brown is used in the area between the woman's head — at about eyelevel — and the man's raised arm where, as we shall see, a third figure has been painted out (see *X-Rays*). This brown continues some way into the part of the peacock's tail seen to the right of the man's raised arm. The greenish-grey of the background seems to have been painted over the yellow-brown at the points of transition. So far as there is any brushstroke to be seen in the background, it is unrelated to the present paint surface, and appears to belong to an earlier lay-in. On and below the tally-board on the left there is a grey-brown patch that suggests the cast shadow of an object in the painting that is no longer visible.

The woman's head is painted fluently and rather broadly. Because of the reflected light there is but little difference in tonal value between the shadow and lit sides of the face, and the paint is even in thickness and structure. Blotchiness in the shadow areas is due to darkened retouches. The borders of the eye on the left are done with grey and pink paint; the iris is brownish with a touch of light brown at the bottom right and a tiny catchlight at the upper left. The shape of the other eye is vague, probably because of wearing. Strong accents in the face are formed by the edge of the ridge of the nose in red, by the dark shadow below the nose and by the deftly placed broad, dark mouth-line with in it a line of ochre yellow that gives a hint of the teeth. The shadows in the ear are done with brownish and reddish strokes; the eardrop with its pearl, hanging slightly diagonally from her ear (and thus suggesting something of the movement as she turns her head) is in ochre-yellow and grey with white on top of pinkish grey for the pearl. The shadow cast by the eardrop on the neck contributes to the suggestion of depth. The hair is in grey, brown and a little red, applied with curling strokes; the transition between hair and background is kept vague. The cap is reddish with brown-grey stripes, while the band at the front is green-blue with some rather thicker, fine strokes and stripes of ochrish yellow and white for the gold embroidery. The edging of pearls is suggested effectively with very small catchlights. Two reddish brown lines round the neck looks as if she is wearing a two-row necklace, but the line they follow lacks suggestive power. The edges of the shirt are drawn with thin lines of brown; the back panel of the bodice, with light grey-green tints and brown lines for the decoration, is bordered by black lines of shadow at the bottom. The bands and chain are similarly given black shadow lines that produce a three-dimensional effect. The shirtsleeves, at the shoulder, are done in quite thin, opaque paint; on the edges of light thicker and visually-effective strokes of occasionally coarse paint are placed over it, and appear to be a greenish grey. At some points the shadows of the folds are strengthened with dark lines. The shadowing of the back panel and cloth straps linking it to the bodice is shown mainly with lines of black, creating a three-dimensional effect. These black lines are difficult to assess — they seem partly to belong to the original paint layer, and partly give the impression of being later additions; the same may be said for similar black lines elsewhere in the painting.

Everywhere in the shoulders and back the paint is applied with a degree of confidence that contrasts favourably with the passage below, which at the bottom is bordered by the man's left arm and hand. The upper boundary is, as it were, set by the lower edge of the bodice set off with figures in red and by the sleeves. By the left arm and the lefthand part of the bodice this edge is painted convincingly — and in terms of quality belongs with the shoulder and back area — while to the right and on the righthand sleeve the brushwork is rather awkward and the colour muddy. Furthermore it looks, because of the lack of any suggestion of depth, as if the figured edge of the bodice runs into that of the sleeve. The sleeve projecting below this is painted in a green-grey mid-tone with over it a thinly-brushed grubby yellow and orangish strokes, with occasional heavy accents for the shadows in the folds. The fall of the folds is rendered meanly and with scant suggestion; the same is true of the part of the skirt above the man's arm, and in its manner of painting, rendering of form and use of colour it is quite unlike the part below his arm. It is plain that the passage described was executed by a different — later — hand from the surroundings, and a hand typified by a feeble suggestion of form and unsatisfactory use of colour. The lit part of the skirt below the arm is done in yellowish tints, with brushstrokes that are difficult to separate one from the other. The paint has a rough surface, with virtually no strong shadows in the billowing fabric. There have probably been some overpaintings in the whole of the dark area of shadow lower down, done when the added strip of canvas at the bottom was painted on.

The man's head has suffered badly and is partly retouched — the brown lines showing the eyelids, for instance, are probably by a later hand. The brown brushstrokes by the nostrils and moustache serve no function, and are presumably due to later additions. In general the face, like that of the woman, is painted as thickly in the light areas as in the shadows. The open mouth consists of a broad stroke of black with on top of it individual touches of yellowish white to show the teeth. The lips are red, and vague towards the edges; a long catchlight has been placed on the lower one. The curling hair is painted in brownish tints on the left, and stands out hardly at all against the man's raised arm; to the right the contours of the much darker hair are lost in the darkness of the background. The cap is a uniform black, with its crisp contour set down with verve and confidence. A few strokes of white in the ostrich feather are placed over this contour, just as the animated strokes of a coarse white paint are at the top over the brown of the peacock's tail. The curve in the lower plume is suggested crisply with imaginative lighting effects. The red coat, the slits on the back of which are shown with lines of black, is painted in various shades of orange, red and a carmine-like red — the last used especially in the edge of the sleeve and at the shoulder seam. The bands of gold thread decorating the coat are represented convincingly with fine white and yellow dots and streaks, while the edge and collar of the shirt are done with a few strokes of quite dry orangish, yellow and white paint. The upper edge runs in a straight line, which in view of the figure's rather complicated pose is not all that logical. This makes the whole neck area flat, an impression heightened by the unsuggestive modelling of the neck itself, done in a muddy grey.

The rendering of the bandolier is disappointing — its curve

Fig. 4. Detail (1 : 1)



adds little to that of the man's hip — and the execution with a plethora of small lights and small dark accents does not result in any convincing suggestion of materials. The sword hilt suffers from the same defect: small, cramped brushstrokes that lose themselves among the details and lack any broader impact; the suggestion of depth is however far more persuasive. The scabbard — or the part of it on the original canvas — has been almost entirely overpainted. The lefthand cuff is executed with fluent strokes of yellow-white and some yellow-brown, and given a few scratchmarks that expose a darker underlayer. The plumpish hand has a fair amount of detail, with well-placed light highlights in a rather thick paint; the nails are shown with quite some emphasis. The raised hand has suffered a good deal in the shadows; the light areas, which have fared better, are done with coarse brushstrokes; the shape of the individual fingers and the indication of the joints and fingernails is rather awkward. The quality of the contours may perhaps have been affected by the present background which was butted up against them at a later stage.

In the sleeve of the raised right arm one can sense a lobed cuff that, as on the left arm, was once present (see also *X-Rays*). As a consequence the paint relief does not match the present shapes at some places. Where it is not concealed by overpaintings — as it is in the lit bands of the lefthand part of the sleeve — the execution is rather clumsy, and the paint is typically applied as very small strokes and clumps of yellow ochre and light yellow. The red bands are done hesitantly, and very thin; lower down, by the elbow, overpaintings predominate. The glass the man is holding is in a fairly poor condition, and much overpainted. The passage to the left of the head seems to be in a rather better state; there, the pattern of the sleeve is continued over a reddish brown-grey with small lines of yellowish grey, in the same hesitant and unsuggestive manner.

The yellow-grey back of the chair is ornamented with black lines, and the shadows in the fringe are also done with black (the same colour is used in the tablecloth to outline the figures done in a bluish grey and brown).

The lower part of the peacock pie is a faded brick red, with small, scratched-in figures. The bird's breast has very little structure, while the head is painted sketchily though with a sure touch. The ends of the tail-feathers seen on either side of the man's raised hand, done in greyish and brownish tints, are vague, confused and lack suggestion. The curtain on the right is in brownish tints and, especially in the highlights, done with bold fluent strokes using some red and painted over the background.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: Kühn[2] described eight paint samples as containing white lead, lead-tin yellow I, yellow and red ochre, yellow lake, green earth, madder lake, smalt, natural ultramarine, vegetable black, bone black and Kassel brown.

X-Rays

The two large-format radiographs we consulted, covering the whole of the painting, were made after publication of the article by Mayer-Meintschel[1], and give so much clearer a picture than the mosaic she had at the time that a number of her observations have been overtaken.

The differences in structure and ground between the original and added parts of the canvas are quite evident in the X-ray image. In the righthand half of the original canvas there are diagonal, broad white strokes that are unconnected with the paint layer and probably have to do with the ground. A grey cloudiness is seen here and there in the areas of paint loss, showing up as dark patches and spreading over the whole surface; this may be connected with the adhesive used during the transfer.

It is hard to explain two light vertical bands seen at the top, running through and alongside the raised glass to the right, and at the bottom on the left close to the bandolier; they could not for instance be blamed on the X-ray film, since they show patches of paint loss. Equally puzzling are dark vertical bands along the lefthand edge with, at right angles, a horizontal band level with and reaching to the woman's hip. Brushstrokes are plainly evident in these reserves. To the right of the vertical band and both below and above the horizontal one there is strongly radioabsorbent material. At first sight the shapes seem to be connected with a stretcher, but the black traces of paint loss also found here would appear to argue against that — they make it likely that the radioabsorbent material is on the image side of the original canvas. The fact that the phenomenon is also to be found at the top right (though there somewhat less pronounced) also shows that it has nothing to do with a stretcher. One interpretation might be architectural features that have been subsequently painted out, though there is no trace of this to be found at the paint surface. A vertical band, showing up light and with its upper righthand border curving to the right, seen to the left of the woman's head could be understood with rather more certainty as an architectural feature (a niche or small archway?), or as an earlier version of the tally-board.

High in the picture area, between the man and woman, there are the head and upper body of a third figure — a woman facing square-on to the viewer; she is playing a lute the neck of which points towards the upper right, with the frets clearly apparent as small white lines on the neck. The throat and upper body of this figure contain more radioabsorbent material than the head, and one gets the impression that the upper body is bare. The hand by the sound-hole is distinct, though only a couple of strokes are seen of the hand holding the neck of the lute. Below the former and to the left of the man's raised arm there is a large half-moon shape in very radioabsorbent material that is unconnected with the present picture. This light zone takes up more space than is now available between the woman's sleeve and the man's arm; her presentday sleeve lies partly over it. At the top of the light shape there is a small reserve and a straight, diagonal dark line divides it in two. It may have formed part of the lower body of the third, standing figure.

The pleated sleeve at the woman's elbow appears much lighter than one would have expected from the present paint surface. It is not impossible that these shapes belong to an earlier version of her right sleeve.

Broad forms show up light by the man's right wrist, and are also partially visible at the surface; these belong to a lobed cuff — like that at the left wrist — that has been painted out. The combination of one of the lobes with the sheen of light on the foot of the presentday glass prompted Mayer-Meintschel (op. cit., p. 50) to suppose that there was previously a different design of glass here. It is possible that there may have been a change in the shape of the glass, though in a different way — the dark reserve at this point does not match its present shape. In the man's face one finds the radiographic image of a mainly dark patch by the mouth and chin; it is not clear what this reserve was intended to accommodate. Rather haphazard brushstrokes showing up very light on the man's shoulder should probably be seen as an underpainting. The outline of the reserve for the raised arm runs a little further to the right.

The distribution of light and shade in the woman's head varies from what one sees today, suggesting a much higher forehead and a different cap. Her head was, to judge from a strongly radioabsorbent zone to the left of the head and upper body, coiffed with a veil that hung down her back to the waist; this matches the observations at the surface. The woman's upper body was perhaps originally seen much more from the side; dark reserves between the light of the veil and her shoulder and back could roughly coincide with an earlier contour to the back. The bodice was different in shape, and appears to have been cut very low at the back. The white strokes in the skirt below the man's arm are more nervous and narrow than their present appearance would make one expect.

At various places in the background there are white patches

Fig. 5. Detail (1 : 2)



that cannot be interpreted. There are no reserves for the tally-board or the still-life on the left, nor for the curtain on the right.

Signature

In the left background level with the peacock's crown, in brown paint <*Rembrant f*> (with the *f* partly on top of old retouches). The letters stand on a slight curve; they are hesitantly written and make a rather unconvincing impression. The inscription was perhaps appended to replace an original signature on a trimmed-off piece of the canvas.

Varnish

A yellowed layer of varnish affects the picture's appearance.

4. Comments

As it stands today, the painting shows us neither its original format nor the original appearance of the paint layer. At the time of very extensive restoration in 1838 it was already in a very sorry state, and there have been various other restorations since. Considerable allowance therefore has to be made for the effect of age and these restorations on the appearance of the paint surface. Nonetheless, the painting as a whole still exerts a remarkable persuasive power, and the reasonably well-preserved passages — where they belong to the painting in its original state — resemble those in Rembrandt's large-sized works from the middle 1630s. The treatment of the man's left sleeve, in a rich diversity of red tints and with an effective suggestion of the gold-thread decoration, and the lace cuff done with tellingly placed strokes and scratchmarks, recurs — even if not literally — in some areas of the London *Belshazzar's feast* (no. A 110), while the application of paint and to some extent also the characteristic feature of the folds show some resemblance to those in the Leningrad *Abraham's sacrifice* (no. A 108), the latter dated 1635. In the case of the man's rather plump hand, there are similarities in form and style of painting in, for instance, the Leningrad *Flora* (no. A 93), the 1635 *Minerva* (no. A 114) and the *Belshazzar's feast*. Details, such as the slightly off-vertical angle of the eardrop — suggesting movement — and the way its cast shadow helps give an impression of depth, fit perfectly into the picture of Rembrandt's work from these years. Though on a smaller scale, the Dresden *Wedding of Samson* of 1638 (no. A 123) exhibits similar motifs in the movement of the figures. It has consequently never been doubted that the present painting is an autograph Rembrandt, and his hand can indeed be recognized in parts that belong to the original work (due allowance made for its condition). In the case of parts that result from a second phase this is far less certain, while passages that are much later still — certainly those connected with the addition of the strip along the bottom — must have been executed using other means and in another environment.

To get an idea of how the work came into being it is important to know what its subject-matter is, and how it relates to other versions of it in Rembrandt's work. In 1749 the picture was described as a portrait of Rembrandt with his wife (see *8. Provenance*), but was otherwise seen during the 18th century as a scene of merriment with the title of *La double jouissance* (see *6. Graphic reproductions*, 1). Vosmaer[3] again saw the picture as that of Rembrandt and Saskia, expressing their carefree married life in the 1630s; this view was maintained by many authors until well into the present century. Valentiner[4] was the first to link it with a number of drawings showing episodes from the parable of the Prodigal Son, and partly because of the presence of the tally-board first recognized it as depicting the Prodigal Son in the tavern; Weisbach[5] supported this view. Bergström[6], giving a useful survey of the various opinions on the subject, confirmed this interpretation convincingly on the grounds of numerous iconographic precedents, as later did Tümpel[7]. Whatever shades of opinion there may be among the various authors on whether Rembrandt had any special purpose in mind in portraying himself and Saskia (on which see more below), the conclusion they all arrive at seems wholly persuasive. The exuberant clothing, the luxurious food and drink (including the peacock pie), the caresses and, especially, the tally-board on which the reckoning is being kept are all traditional motifs in the depiction of this episode from the parable. In view of this, one can assume Rembrandt meant in fact to show the Prodigal Son in the tavern and was intending the picture as a history painting.

The surprising discovery of a third figure — a girl playing a lute — in the radiograph, published by Mayer-Meintschel (op. cit., p. 44), backs up the iconographic interpretation, particularly when the composition including this third figure is compared with two drawings cited by the same author in this connexion. In one drawing by Rembrandt himself (fig. 6; Ben. 529), since 1977 in the Städelsches Kunstinstitut in Frankfurt-on-Main (see M. Stuffmann in: *Städel-Jahrbuch*, new series 7, 1979, p. 306) and dated by Benesch (undoubtedly too late) as 1642/43, one sees in the centre of the picture the Prodigal Son wearing a cap, with a wench on his lap holding a rummer in her hand. Behind him to the right stands an almost naked woman playing a stringed instrument; to the right of her sits another girl, and in the left background stands a woman seen from behind who may perhaps be keeping the account (on a tally-board?). On the extreme right the Prodigal Son's long sword leans against a table, and there are curtains on the right and possibly also on the left. In a second drawing (Ben. 528a) in Orleans, regarded by Mayer-Meintschel as a copy after Rembrandt and otherwise to be a workshop variant, the Prodigal Son sits on the far right wearing a cap, a sword at his side (or lying behind him) and a woman

Fig. 6. Rembrandt, *The Prodigal Son in the tavern*, pen and wash, 17.7 × 21 cm (Ben. 529). Frankfurt am Main, Städelsches Kunstinstitut



on his lap holding a goblet in her hand. To the left a second woman sits behind a table, while in the background is a woman who is this time unmistakeably marking up the bill on a tally-board. A third drawing (fig. 7; Ben. 100 verso) in Berlin, mentioned by Tümpel too in this connexion, also seems to be linked to Rembrandt's ideas on the subject. It comprises three sketches — the uppermost incomplete because of the sheet being trimmed off — of one and the same group: a man with cap and sword standing with his knees bent and his right arm round a scantily-clad woman, groping beneath her skirt with the left hand. Benesch already assumed these sketches to be connected with a picture of the Prodigal Son, and there can be no doubt that they are (even if distantly) linked with the composition of the Dresden painting. This is clear especially from the head of the man in the sketch furthest to the right, who in pose, headgear and lighting already depicts fully the type seen in the final execution of the painting. In compositional terms the Frankfurt drawing comes closer to the painting, since it has the two protagonists not — as in the Berlin sketches — standing, but the man in a chair with the woman on his knees. The figures however present roughly the mirror image of those in the painting, and the woman faces to the front instead of, as now, away from the viewer. This makes it probable that the Frankfurt drawing preceded the painting and does not, as is often found to be the case (cf. nos. A 15 and A 131), represent an interim stage in which changes to a painting already begun were being essayed. It is practically impossible, in view of the cusping visible along the bottom edge of the original canvas (see under *Support*), that the painting in its original state had a composition with full-length figures like those seen in the Frankfurt drawing; there is however a distinct possibility that the composition was wider than it was high, and included more figures.

A number of observations made at the paint surface and from the X-rays point to the painting having had a complicated genesis. First, there have evidently been substantial changes in format. A strip has been added along the bottom of the canvas (with some 10 cm of the original canvas probably first being lost, see *Support*), and the way the lefthand edge cuts through some of the objects on the table and the tally-board makes it more than likely that the painting used to be larger to the left; this is borne out by the absence of cusping along that edge. Along the bottom, however, the cusping present suggests that, as we have just said, there cannot have been any appreciable trimming. Not all the alterations that the X-rays show to have been made to the composition can be interpreted with certainty. At all events they include the painting-out of a third figure, the girl playing a lute, and in connexion with this a change to the man's right arm and the pose of the woman sitting on his lap, the painting-out of her veil, and — probably at the same stage — the addition of the still-life. At the same time the background must also have been revised to a large extent, possibly in order to cover over architectural features that did not fit in with the new format and composition. These facts and assumptions of various kinds can, taken in different combinations, lead to differing reconstructions of the history of the painting's production. Mayer-Meintschel, who was the first to arrive at conclusions on this point (op. cit., p. 48), noted — besides the phenomena just mentioned — appreciable differences in quality between various passages. She judged virtually the whole of the man's figure to be superior in quality, including the sword-hilt and bandolier and the drinking-glass. The tablecloth and parts of the pie she also ranked as of equal quality, whereas she considered almost the whole of the woman's figure, the curtain and the chairback to be less strong. Far poorer in quality, according to her, are the left background and the other objects on the table. The lowest part of the skirt and the man's knee, together with the scabbard, she thought very poor, and detected in them the same hand as painted the added strip. The painting's production she divided into three stages: a first lay-in would have shown several figures, along the lines of the compositional sketches mentioned earlier, on a canvas wider than it was high; at this stage, which she placed around 1634, only the two main figures plus the girl with the lute were more or less worked up. In the latter half of the 1630s, probably after 1638, Rembrandt returned to the painting, cutting off a piece on the left and working the righthand section up further as a two-person group; in doing so he painted out the lute-player and strengthened the portrait-like character of the work.

Fig. 7. Rembrandt, Studies in pen and bistre, 17.1 × 15.4 cm (Ben. 100 verso). Berlin (West), Staatliche Museen Preussischer Kulturbesitz, Kupferstichkabinett (KdZ 2312)



He probably again, according to Mayer-Meintschel, did not complete the painting. Finally, another hand enlarged the canvas at the bottom and painted in the other passages — those poorest in quality — though without altering the nature of the composition.

Mayer-Meintschel's supposition of an originally wider format for the composition has much in its favour. The cut-off objects on the table and the absence of cusping along the left side of the canvas do, at all events, point to its having been trimmed, though by how much one cannot tell. If the amount removed was small, and the painting originally had an upright or practically square format, then one would have to assume that the original composition showed three closely-packed figures with a relatively large amount of space around them — an unusual format and configuration for the 17th century. It would also mean that Rembrandt from the outset broke drastically with the iconographic tradition of depicting the tavern scene from the Prodigal Son parable with a larger company (see K. Renger, *Lockere Gesellschaft*, Berlin 1970, and Bergström, op. cit.). It thus seems natural to follow Mayer-Meintschel's assumption of an originally oblong format; the horizontal seam in the original canvas provides some support for the idea. As has already been said, a composition with full-length figures must however be ruled out; yet there is little difficulty in imagining a composition with figures seen knee-length and in which on the left, providing a counterweight to the group of three, there were other figures including perhaps the landlady keeping the reckoning on a tally-board. It is tempting to see the cast shadow now visible on and below the tally-board as that of her arm. Such a composition can be imagined both with and without the table (it is by no means sure that the table seen today was already part of the composition before the canvas was first trimmed on that side). Following this line of reasoning, the canvas of no. A 111 would have originally measured something like 150 × 200 cm. The fact that the figures in such a composition would have to be pictured knee-length means that the drawings mentioned earlier can not be looked on as an immediate preparation. They do however document Rembrandt's preoccupation with the subject, and as such (especially in the case of the Berlin and Frankfurt drawings, the authenticity of which is not in doubt) they are far from negligible evidence, all the more so since — in the costume of the Prodigal Son and the presence of a partly-naked young woman — they share major motifs with the painting in its original state.

Especially if the composition had a table with the company gathered round it, it would in that respect be very comparable with that of the *Belshazzar's feast* (no. A 110), a painting that now measures 167 × 209 cm and has already been cited above because of its stylistic resemblances with the present work. In a more general sense, such a composition with sitting and standing figures — whether or not round a table — was common currency among the Utrecht Caravaggists in particular. The theme of the Prodigal Son in the tavern was rendered in this way, with a table, by for example Honthorst in 1622 (Munich, Alte Pinakothek, no. 1312; J. R. Judson, *Gerrit van Honthorst*, The Hague 1959, no. 195). The notion that Rembrandt here took inspiration from prototypes from that circle is reinforced by the similarity that can be found in individual motifs; Nissen[8] as early as 1914, for instance, pointed out the resemblance in the man's pose and gaze between the present painting and a *Violinist and girl with a glass* of 1624 by Terbrugghen in Krefeld, which when Nissen wrote was still regarded as a Honthorst (B. Nicolson, *Hendrik Terbrugghen*, The Hague 1958, no. A 20). This similarity has, as Tümpel[7] has already noted, become even greater since restoration of that work revealed a semiclad woman playing a lute.

Irrespective of the original dimensions of the canvas, it must be assumed that the painting-out of the lute-player was one of a number of associated changes. There is every indication that the yellow-brown paint used for covering her over is the same as was used for overpainting the seated woman's veil. This points to a connexion between the changes in the pose of the seated woman and the painting-out of the lute-player. The present position of the man's raised arm, which was once rather more to the right, together with the shape of the glass seems to be an outcome of the need to fill in a gap that

occurred at this point; this alteration too would thus have taken place at this stage. The peacock feathers are painted on top of the yellow-brown background paint, so the same applies to them. Since, according to the X-rays, no reserves were left in the original background for the table and objects on it, they likewise probably do not belong to the first composition. Where they are bounded by the presentday background — there done in green-grey — they appear to have been painted at the same time. This background could, as we have already said, be connected with the removal of architectural features that no longer made sense (see also *X-Rays* above). This green-grey background overlaps the yellow-brown paint around the woman's head and must thus probably, like the still-life, have been a final step in the change we are describing. Inasmuch as the white brushstrokes of the man's ostrich plume lie over the background, they too must have been painted only then.

The tally-board presents a problem of its own. It is unfortunately impossible to say for sure whether this was painted before or after the new background; at all events a strip was cut off after the still-life and tally-board had been executed, so that the objects were severed in a way the artist who painted them can never have intended.

The enlargement of the canvas at the bottom, finally, cannot be regarded as other than even later tampering, aimed probably at giving the canvas a more usual format. It is very probable that, as Mayer-Meintschel believed, the woman's skirt and the man's knee were overpainted at this time; this is in any case true for the sword-scabbard.

The question now arises of who was responsible for what we have just described as a first series of alterations probably made in connexion with a drastic reduction at the lefthand side. When describing the paint layer we noted the relatively weak execution of the man's raised right arm and hand, as altered when the lute-player was painted out. The associated change in the woman's pose has certainly not helped its naturalness; the present back area — shown by the X-ray to have been totally redone — is admittedly similar to Rembrandt's work in the characteristics of form and material, but seems clearly inferior in quality. Mayer-Meintschel explained this, too, by the variation in quality over an interval of time in the work's production that she had noted, but believed that Rembrandt himself was in fact responsible for it. We are inclined also to allow the possibility of the changes linked with the cuttingdown of the canvas having been made in Rembrandt's workshop but not by Rembrandt himself. The part of the woman's sleeve above the man's arm, which may be termed frankly unsatisfactory, could have been overpainted for some reason or other by a weaker hand at an even later stage (and not necessarily in Rembrandt's studio) — perhaps after some time the light form seen in the X-ray showed through the righthand part of the sleeve so obtrusively that it was decided to overpaint the whole of the sleeve.

The bandolier and sword-hilt, the execution of which does not measure up to Rembrandt's level of quality, must also probably be looked on as shopwork. One may wonder whether in the original composition, as in the Frankfurt drawing, the bandolier and sword lay on a chair, and after the canvas had been cut down in size had to be incorporated in the righthand half as an essential attribute of the Prodigal Son. All things taken together, the attribution of the painting to Rembrandt himself depends on what it still reveals of the original design, and on an assessment of a relatively small proportion of the paint surface — mainly the lit parts of the woman's skirt, the man's left hand and sleeve, and their two heads (which are not well preserved).

All these complications do not make dating the work any simpler. The similarities in manner of painting already mentioned with various large canvases by Rembrandt from the mid–1630s are unmistakeable, but for the most part rather inconclusive; perhaps the firmest aid comes from the comparison already made with the *Belshazzar's feast* from *c.* 1635 (no. A 110). Though the woman on the right in that picture has a more pronounced repoussoir function, the red sleeve of the man in the present work is very similar in both function and manner of painting; the manner of painting and form of the hands, too, are very alike, and the broad treatment of the woman's face in the Dresden *Prodigal Son* can be reasonably well compared with the almost frontally-lit woman's face on the left beside Belshazzar. If one moreover imagines the Dresden painting as an oblong composition, then in that respect too it may have resembled the *Belshazzar's feast*. A date around 1635 for the original execution thus seems the most likely. This would chime perfectly with the possibility (see above under *Support*) of the canvas of no. A 111 coming from the same bolt as those of the *Belshazzar's feast*, the 1635 *Minerva* (no. A 114) and the 1636 workshop version of the *Abraham's sacrifice* (no. A 108, copy 2), though the odds on this must not be put too high.

Where the further history of the painting is concerned, the number of possibilities and uncertainties is too great to permit any definite conclusions as to the successive changes made in format and composition, and especially as to what hands might have been involved. With regard to the last point, assessing the quality — and thus deciding on the authenticity — of various passages is made very difficult by the degree to which one has to depend on successive restorers for the present

appearance of the paint layer. What we do know is that when in 1764 (13 years after it had come to Dresden) the painting was reproduced broadly in an etching by Johann Anton Riedel, it did in its main features look just as it does today, i.e. including the strip added to the bottom of the canvas (see *6. Graphic reproductions*, 1).

As to the subject matter — and as explained above we too see it as the Prodigal Son in the tavern — there is still the question of whether, as is quite generally believed, the man and woman in fact have the features of Rembrandt himself and of Saskia van Uylenburgh. An answer to this remains somewhat arbitrary; the woman does show some likeness to Rembrandt's small silverpoint portrait of Saskia done in 1633 and now in Berlin (Ben. 427), but the resemblance of the man to Rembrandt's self-portraits must be judged superficial at best. The interpretation of the painting as a double portrait of Rembrandt and Saskia, and accompanying comparisons with, for example, Rubens' portrait of himself and his wife[9], have to be looked on as now superseded. That Rembrandt used himself and his wife as models must certainly not be discounted, and is accepted by most authors; but opinions differ on whether in doing so he was seeking to have his own person and that of his wife play a role in his iconographic programme. Such an intention would be in line with other examples from the 17th century in which the painter cast himself — or a customer — in the part of the sinner. Bergström[6] and Białostocki[10] in particular have raised this point. Kahr[11] spoke in this connexion of 'self-revelation', and went so far as to see the work not so much as a history painting as a non-realistic portrait ('though it is a portrait, it is also something more'); on the basis of an iconographic tradition broader than the episode of 'the Prodigal Son in the tavern' alone, she ascribed to the painting 'the traditional message that the pleasures of the senses are sinful and should be avoided'. Schwartz[12] too rejected the idea that the Prodigal Son was being depicted, and thought one must not ignore the realistic intent behind the autobiographical elements in the picture. A quite different intention — that of provoking bourgeois society — was seen in it by B. Hinz[13], who concluded there was an 'Absage an alle Überlieferungen feudaler und bürgerlicher Ehebestimmungen und aller Weisen ihrer Darstellung'. One is inclined to think that the last three authors were in reaching their interpretation making insufficient allowance for the girl playing a lute, who is admittedly no longer to be seen but who makes any idea of this being a portrait quite unacceptable.

The simplest answer would be to assume, with Valentiner and Tümpel, that the Dresden work should be seen as a history painting — probably a fragment, but intended as such by the artist — in which Rembrandt used himself and his wife as models without any special intent. It remains noticeable that the figures appear — in contrast to the associated drawings — to relate not so much to each other as to the viewer, towards whom both are looking. This is probably one reason why various authors have tended to see the painting as a double portrait. Yet it seems out of the question that it was meant as a portrait, or even a *portrait historié*; Kahr, who rejected this idea, called it 'indecorous in the extreme', very rightly so even if only in respect of the open-mouthed, laughing man. If one nevertheless looks for some meaning for the Prodigal Son being recognizable as Rembrandt and the whore on his knees as Saskia, this can hardly lie in an allusion to their actual lifestyle. It can, seen in the context of the reigning views on sin and redemption, be sought only in an allusion to the humble admission of sinfulness of the sitters as representatives of erring humanity. The drawn-up curtain (which cannot be seen with any certainty as belonging to a bed, as Tümpel believed) might then be a symbol for the deeper truth being revealed to the viewer.

5. Documents and sources

The possessions of the widow of Louys Crayers (Titus's former guardian) at the time of her re-marriage to Gerrit Hagen on 4 August 1677 included: 'Een conterfeytsel van Rembrandt van Rijn en sijn huysvrouw' (HdG *Urk.*, no. 336). It is extremely doubtful that this mention can be linked with no. A 111; this composition would probably not have been called a 'conterfeytsel' (likeness), even if one takes it that — as is by no means certain — the text has to be taken literally and does not mean one portrait of Rembrandt and another of his wife.

6. Graphic reproductions

1. Etching by Johann Anton Riedel (Falkenau-bei-Eger 1736–Dresden 1816), inscribed: *Rembrant. Pinx: -Anton Riedel: 1764: / Sculp. A:f:*. Reproduces the painting in reverse (except for the clearly reproduced signature). The author was from 1755 *Unterinspektor* and from 1757 *Inspektor* of the Elector's collection of paintings. According to Smith[14] the etching bears (evidently in a later state) the caption *La double Jouissance*.

2. Engraving by Georg Leopold Hertel (late 18th century), inscribed: *Rembrandt del. — Georg Leop. Hertel exc AV.* Obviously copied from the preceding print, and in the same direction.

Smith[14] mentions an etching by Étienne Fessard (Paris 1714–1777) with the inscription: *Les Oeuvres de la Vigne*. It must however probably be assumed that this is due to a confusion with a print Fessard made of the Leningrad *Parable of the labourers in the vineyard* (no. C 88), which bears the inscription: *Les ouvriers de la vigne*.

7. Copies

None.

8. Provenance

— Coll. Araignon, Paris; not in the sale on 26ff March 1749 (Lugt 698).
— Bought with other paintings by the Elector of Saxony's agent

Le Leu from the Araignon collection for 2500 livres, and came to Dresden in August 1751; described in a letter of June 1749 as: 'Un autre grand tableau peint par Reimbrant repr. son Portrait assis tenant sa femme [sur] ses genoux'[1]. The inventory of the Elector's collection of 1754 describes it as: 'Ein Officier sitzend, welcher ein Frauenzimmer caressiret, in der einen Hand ein Glasz mit Bier haltend, Kniestück auf Leinewand; Höhe 5 Fusz 9 Zoll, Breite 4 Fusz 8 Zoll [= 167 × 135.9 cm]'.

9. Summary

The state of the painting, already described as poor in 1838, makes a judgment very difficult. Apart from the fact that the paint surface has suffered badly, the format has also undergone changes through reduction on the left and the addition of a strip along the bottom. The extent of the reduction on the left is uncertain, but allowance has to be made for the possibility of the work having been considerably larger on that side and having had an oblong format. Evidence for this can be found in a number of drawings showing the Prodigal Son in the tavern. It was already being assumed by various authors that this was the subject of the Dresden painting when X-rays published in 1970/71 made it clear that between the two figures there had once been a third, a girl playing a lute. This figure has been painted out, presumably in connexion with the compositional repercussions of reducing the size of the canvas; the woman's pose was altered at the same time. There appears to have been a further reduction on the left since then, and a strip was added along the bottom.

It can certainly be assumed on the grounds of comparison with, especially, the *Belshazzar's feast* of *c.* 1635 (no. A 110) that Rembrandt is the author of the passages that belong to the original composition; a dating of around 1635 is thus also probable for these parts of the painting. It is hardly likely, however, that he himself carried out the changes in composition that accompanied the first reduction, though they do at all events seem to have been done in his workshop. Yet later changes, such as the painting of the added strip at the bottom and accompanying adjustments, are by a later hand.

If Rembrandt was in fact intending to portray himself and Saskia van Uylenburgh as recognizable models, this should not be seen as an allusion to their own actual lifestyle, but rather as a moral example.

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A 112 Flora

[1635]

LONDON, THE NATIONAL GALLERY, NO. 4930

HDG 205; BR. 103; BAUCH 261; GERSON 96

Fig. 1. Canvas 123.5 × 97.5 cm



Fig. 2. X-Ray



1. Summarized opinion

A reasonably well preserved, authentic and characteristic work from 1635. An earlier picture, of *Judith*, was altered by Rembrandt into the present one, and the canvas then probably somewhat reduced. At a later date, probably after 1756, the canvas must have been further reduced a little at the right, top and bottom.

2. Description of subject

A young woman, standing in dark surroundings in which vegetation can be made out, is seen down to just below knee-height. Her body is turned slightly to the left while the head and gaze are a little to the right. The right hand rests on a staff round which are twined ivy tendrils and blue-white flowers; in her other hand she holds a wreath of flowers that can be identified, from right to left, as a yellowish-orange marigold with dark red touches, a dullish red tulip, a forget-me-not (?), a yellow-green tulip, a green-white cuckoo-flower, an orange-pink carnation tinged with yellow and white, a blue-yellow chrysanthemum, a dull pinkish-red and white-yellow African marigold, a yellow marigold, a buttercup, a small yellow tulip and a blue-white (?!) chrysanthemum (botanical information kindly supplied by Dr S. Segal, Amsterdam). She has a small ring of flowers round her neck, and a garland — of forget-me-nots and scarlet pimpernels — around her head; a twig of rosemary is tucked into the garland. On her hair at the back a small chain can just be seen, holding up a veil that hangs down behind her back to right and left and has goldish stripes on a dark ground. She wears a close-fitting, lowcut bodice and a yellow-white, gold-embroidered overskirt that spreads out wide and is open at the front to reveal a white underskirt (one gets the impression that at the front this overskirt is joined to the bodice, but hangs wide to the right behind her sleeve). Draped around her waist, just below where the skirts join the bodice, is a gold chain. The short sleeves of the bodice, which has a square-cut neckline, show small green- and gold-striped padded coverings. From beneath these come wide sleeves, gathered at the wrists. Above the bodice an open, pleated shirt with a smocked edging leaves the bosom partly bare.

In the background, in addition to the plants, an indistinctly shaped object can be made out at half-height on the right (originally an indication of foliage — see under 7. *Copies*).

Strong light falls from the left onto the figure; the flowers she is holding in her left hand cast a shadow on the skirt that links up with the shadows to the bottom and right of the figure.

3. Observations and technical information

Working conditions

Examined in May 1968 (B.H., E. v.d. W.) in good daylight. X-Ray prints covering the whole surface of the painting, plus one of the head alone, were received later.

Support

DESCRIPTION: Originally canvas, transferred to another, 123.5 × 97.5 cm. During restoration that must have been done before the transfer a wedge-shaped patch about 15 cm high was inserted in the area of the cheek, neck and breast; the threads of this were removed during the transfer, but traces are still apparent in the X-ray. Brown[1] wrongly thought that this had been done only in 1938.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: The image of a remarkably fine and very regular weave that shows up in the X-ray does not come from the canvas on which the picture was originally painted. This is evident firstly from the fact that the fine-weave canvas continues, surprisingly intact and with no paint or even remains of paint covering it, round the stretcher, and secondly and especially from the fact that in the X-ray one can see along the edges irregular islands of a considerably coarser canvas weave. There has obviously been a transfer, during which the layer of ground was sanded down after the removal of the original canvas, and in the course of this process small parts of the exposed ground with the canvas imprint remained untouched along the edges. These islands are so small that it is impossible to say anything definite about the presence of cusping, though in the small island at the lower left corner there does seem to be, along the lower edge, a hint of this. Where the wedge-shaped piece of canvas has been inserted the weave of the transfer canvas continues through, but it is interfered with by sinuous black lines running obliquely which are obviously vestiges of the imprint of the old canvas used for the inlay.

A horizontal dark line seen in the X-ray 52 cm from the lower edge might indicate that the old canvas had a seam at this point; this is however by no means certain, since the craquelure continues in the paint layer without a break, and there is no trace at all of an imprint of a thread sewing the two pieces together.

The original canvas has a thread count of 13 vertical threads/cm (12—14) and 13.5 horizontal threads/cm (13—14), while that of the transfer canvas is 16.4 vertical threads/cm (16—16.5) and 17.7 horizontal threads/cm (17—18.5). The warp direction is difficult to make out.

Ground

DESCRIPTION: Not seen. At the top left one can see a light brown, exposed at that point and also showing through in the foliage. It may be assumed that this is not the colour of the ground, but of an underpainting on it.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: According to a report by Joyce Plesters, of the National Gallery, dated 29 June 1969 and based on her investigation of a number of cross-sections of paint samples, there is a two-layer ground on the canvas: 'The lower and thicker one, directly on the canvas, being of an orange to red colour (red ochre), the upper and thinner being greyish or fawnish and of a very granular, "pebbly" texture. In the upper layer a mixture of coarse-grained lead white and charcoal black was found'.

Paint layer

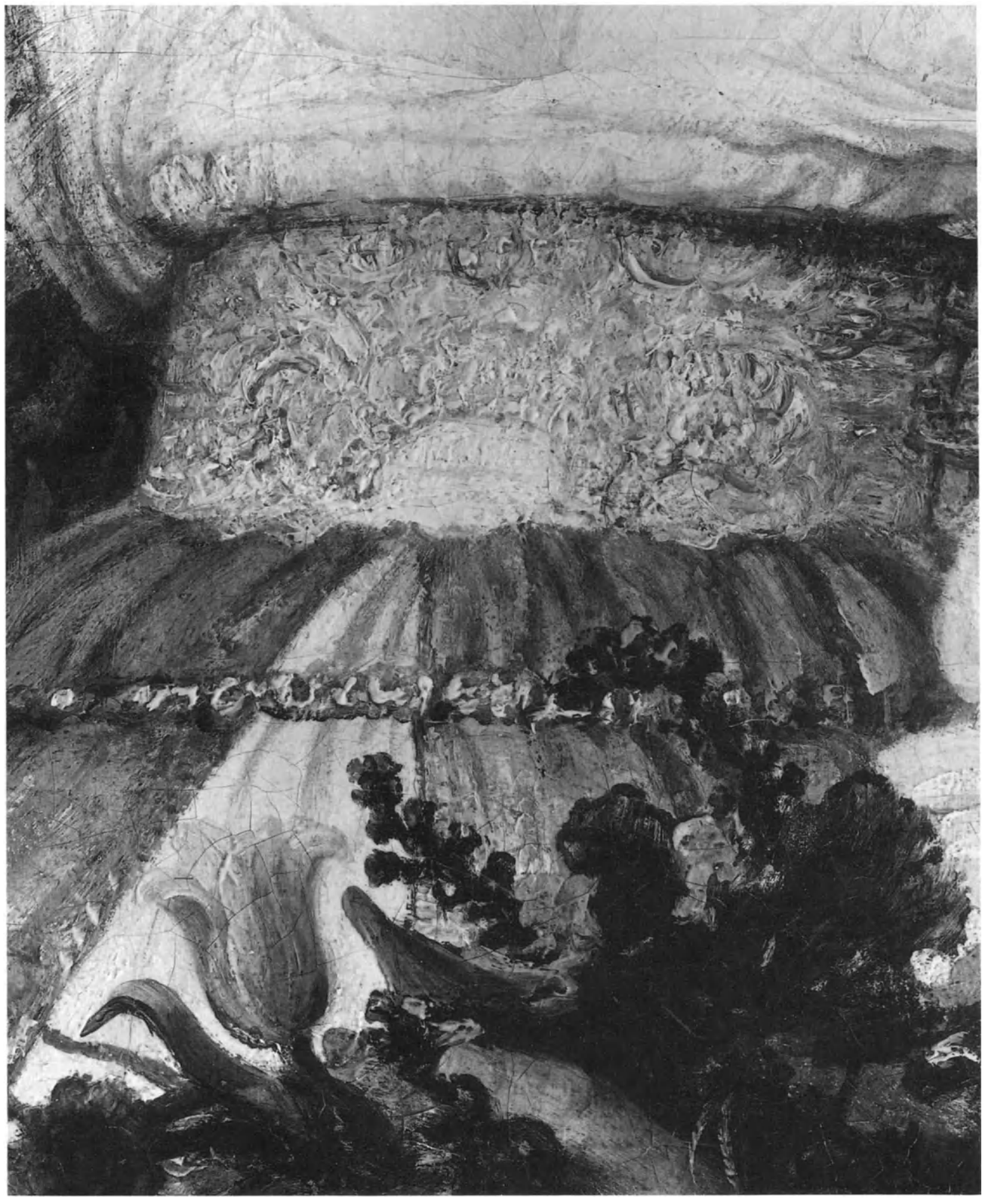
CONDITION: Generally good; according to the National Gallery catalogue[2] the shadows are 'a little worn in places'. The inserted piece of canvas 'was formerly covered in part by a false curl which was removed when the picture was cleaned in 1938; the missing part was then restored to agree with the corresponding area in the old copies'. According to the radiograph there is some paint-loss at some places in a horizontal band at about 50 cm from the lower edge of the canvas. Along the righthand side the paint has for the most part a dead and strangely opaque appearance (see also Craquelure). This may have to do with the changes in the composition (see *X-Rays*), but also with the restorations intended, for instance, to cover over underlying paint layers showing through. Craquelure: over the greater part of the painting there is an evenly distributed pattern of irregular cracks. In the right background the craquelure has a different structure, with a widely varying pattern.

DESCRIPTION: The foliage in the left background is painted vividly with dark brown and black of varying thickness. At the upper left a light brown under-layer lies exposed; the same colour also shows through in the foliage. In the right background, at the top, the almost black paint is applied far more evenly, producing a dead effect. From the shoulder obliquely up to the right upper corner, and from there straight downwards, there are brushstrokes visible in relief that have been covered over by the black paint of the present background. By the shape running diagonally upwards the underlying paint is apparent through the

Fig. 3. Detail (1 : 1)



Fig. 4. Detail (1 : 1)



craquelure, and is fairly light in colour. Downwards from the shoulder the scarcely distinguishable black veil forms a band that widens out towards the bottom. At half-height to the right of this and in brown paint there is a form that is hard to make out; probably this is a clumsy restoration of what was originally an indication of foliage (see *7. Copies*, 1 and 2). At the extreme lower right, below the veil, a plant has been painted with broad strokes in a greenish grey; to judge from old copies (ibid.) this was not originally present at this point. In the background at the bottom left there are pentimenti visible in the paint relief that can also be seen partly in colour in the exposed cracks and on the edges of the underlying brushstrokes; quite bold strokes describe irregular and partly curved shapes. They penetrate into the adjoining area of the woman's skirt, and here and there follow a zigzag course.

The flesh areas of the head, neck and bosom are, even in the shadow parts, painted quite thickly and opaquely, and the generally vigorous brushwork contributes to a strong effect of plasticity. The paint is thickest in the lefthand part of the forehead, which catches the strongest light. The brushstrokes are partly visible, following the convexities of the face — for instance by the contours on the right where quite strong reflexions of light have been applied, by the neck and in the area round the righthand eye.

The area by the eye on the left is marked by strong shadow accents. The upper limit of the top eyelid consists of a collation of shadow lines that widen out towards the corner of the eye and merge into the shadow there, and from that point are joined with the shadow beneath the eye-pouch. The shadow cast by the eyelid on the eye is also executed in dark paint, contrasting strongly with the light paint of the eyelid itself. Strokes in light flesh tints starting from the nose area are partly placed over the shadow in the corner of the eye. The lower edge of the eye is defined only cursorily. The brown iris, darkly edged but with a rather broken outline, stands out sharply against the white of the eye. To the left, alongside the black pupil, there is a small, clear catchlight; opposite this there is a somewhat lighter brown in the iris. The area round the eye on the right is done in much the same way. The light above the eye is applied with a very firm brushstroke; the shadow area (which has here probably suffered somewhat) forms a whole with the cast shadow of the nose, and this, because of its shape, contributes a great deal to the suggestion of plasticity in the righthand side of the face. The strongest black is below the nose. The shape of the top lip, too, is partly determined by the form of this shadow. Reflected light on the underside of the nose and on the just visible wing of the nose enhance the three-dimensional effect. The red of the lips merges into the flesh tones; the broad, dark mouth-line, placed on top of the red, suggests that the mouth is not entirely closed. The strongly contrasting reflexions of light present in the area round the chin and throat do much to define the convexities.

The hair is suggested with fluid strokes and touches that show the shape of the curls. The garland of flowers has strong shadow accents, set down with dabs and small curved brushstrokes; a light colour can be glimpsed through cracks in the surface, giving the impression that the garland was painted on top of the flesh colour (as is in fact confirmed by the X-ray). The sprig worn on the head is defined crisply with bright edgings of light in pale green that lie over the dark background and stand out sharply against it. The veil on the left has a pattern done in yellowish paint, while on the right a similar pattern is vaguely seen, strengthened with scratchmarks. The fall of the folds in the clothing is invariably defined clearly with firm brushstrokes, in a great wealth and variety of colour. Yellow, an ochre colour, green-blue, brown-red and white are used in the bodice; the decorated edge of the overskirt is painted in yellow-white, an ochrish yellow, pink and salmon pink, with thick strokes. In the shadow areas there are mostly greys and browns, and on the side of the lefthand sleeve that catches the light the dry and coarse paint is placed partly over the background.

The hand resting on the staff is shown with quite large fields of colour, but is both anatomically and three-dimensionally quite convincing. The fingernails are indicated summarily, and the index and middle finger are separated by a single line of shadow. The hand holding the flowers is entirely in shadow, and has sufferend from wear. In its presentday form the anatomy is hardly satisfactory. The cursorily placed lights and shadow lines take an uncertain path. The stems and leaves of the flowers are painted with firm strokes and dabs of an olive-brown, and have pale, opaque green edges of light. The flowers are done mostly with thick paint in blue-green, a muted pink, yellow, red and pink over grey. They stand out quite dark against the yellow-white of the skirt, also applied thickly at this point and occasionally extending over the paint of the flowers and leaves. The leaves and blooms wound around the staff are executed in similar fashion.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: Thirteen paint samples were taken in 1969, and cross-sections of nine of these were made by Joyce Plesters and subjected to a provisional examination the results of which she has kindly communicated to us. At the time this investigation was carried out the complicated genesis of the painting that must be assumed from the radiographs was still not known (see *X-Rays*), so that the remarkably complex structure of layers found by her now appears in a different light, and can certainly not be looked on as representative of Rembrandt's working method.

The following pigments could be distinguished with varying degrees of confidence: white lead, carbon black, red, yellow and brown ochres in various areas; vermilion (red mercuric sulphide) in the flesh and flowers; crimson coloured lake pigment on the red rose; azurite (blue basic copper carbonate) in the blue-green of the shirt, bright blue of flowers, also scattered in final glaze in cool shadows of the flesh; a brilliant yellow and intense orange yellow in the embroidery of the overdress which, from its crystalline appearance under the microscope and particle characteristics, appears to be orpiment (yellow arsenic sulphide). In the green areas there was no green pigment to be found. The pale green of Flora's overgarment has been obtained with a mixture of large crystals of azurite blue with a little yellow pigment, plus some white lead. On top of this layer has been placed a translucent layer of an as yet unidentified yellow.

Besides the two glazings just mentioned, there are two more layers of paint applied as a glaze — a translucent layer using a crimson-coloured lake pigment has been placed over the white impasto of the red rose, and in the background there is a translucent brown glaze over a white underlayer.

For a description of more recent examinations, see the catalogue of the exhibition *Art in the making. Rembrandt*, London 1988–'89, pp. 63–65.

X-Rays

As already mentioned under *Support*, one sees in large areas of the picture the weave not of the original but of the transfer canvas. Some parts of the present picture show up distinctly — the head, without a reserve for the garland of flowers; the neck area where, in view of the in some parts quite dark reserve, there was always a necklace at the place where there is now a circlet of flowers; and the bodice and a few thickly painted flowers of the bouquet the woman is holding in her left hand. The lit parts of both sleeves can also be readily made out, as can those of the skirt hem, the staff on the left and (very vaguely) the hand resting on it. The wedge-shaped insert by the neck — see *Support* — gives a dark shadow. As has been mentioned, there is a horizontal band of patches appearing black, at about 50 cm from the lower edge, that indicate paint loss. The dark horizontal line in the same area suggests that there was a seam here.

There is however also clear evidence of an earlier picture in a more or less completed state. On the extreme right one can see another version of the woman's bare left arm, with the forearm intersected by the frame. Less clear, on the left, one can make

Fig. 5. Detail (1 : 1)



out a perhaps also partly bare forearm seen foreshortened, to the right of and a little lower down than the present right hand. It is plain that the painting was quite appreciably larger to the right, from a woman's head seen in profile on the extreme right, level with the present figure's shoulder and bent a little forward; she must have been leaning over the outstretched arm of the main figure, and her right hand passes beneath it. This hand is intersected by vertical brushstrokes that probably have to do with the present dangling sleeve of the main figure. There are however also similar brushstrokes, appearing light in the X-ray, that give the impression that the second woman was holding something in her right hand. At the same height there are further light traces of bold brushstrokes that do not match the present picture. The area of the present hand seen in shadow, holding the flowers, does show up as a reserve in the light image of the paint of the present lit skirt; but inside this reserve there is, appearing quite light, a pattern of broad strokes that do not coincide with the present picture; further down these become vague. Somewhat similar broad and rather random strokes appear low down at the extreme left, bordered at the top by what appears to be the edge of a shape curving to the right. These latter brushstrokes have already been described as visible in relief at the paint surface; they penetrate a little into the light image of the skirt. This area is intersected, towards the lower right, by a slightly curved band that gives a weak, light image. To the right above the main figure's shoulder there is a white band made up of repeated strokes; once again, the relief of this was seen at the paint surface.

A large part of these observations become understandable if, like Brown[1], one assumes that they relate to vestiges of an originally larger painting of Judith dropping the head of Holophernes into a sack held by her maidservant. The upper outline of the sack is vaguely apparent to the right below the older woman's right hand, while Judith's hand that must have held the head has been lost through the right edge of the canvas having been trimmed off. Possibly the light patch on the extreme right must be seen as a remainder of Holophernes' head. The main figure has at all events been altered in respect of the pose of both arms, the garland of flowers and part of her costume; how far this also applies to the pose of the rest of the body is hard to tell, partly because the significance of the brushstrokes visible to the lower left beside the present figure remains unclear. These ought perhaps to be seen as traces of a radioabsorbent layer that the artist placed over an area that had already been painted, before he painted the outstretched hand with the staff on top of it. The meaning of the light band at the top right is also unclear (possibly the edge of a tent opening?).

Signature

At the lower left, to the right of the staff at about 15 cm from the bottom edge, worn and only partly legible, *<Rem(b).a . . ./1635>*. The shape of the *R*, which is open on the left and has stiff curves, differs from that in all signatures known to us. The writing is weak, and the inscription cannot be regarded as original.

Varnish

No special remarks.

4. Comments

In theme, approach and manner of painting no. A 112 fits wholly into Rembrandt's work from around 1635. The painting is close, especially, to the almost lifesize mythological and historical female figures from the years 1633–35. In its three-dimensional effect it represents a high point in this series, and also ushers in a new phase. There is not the slightest doubt about the attribution to Rembrandt, though the present signature and date cannot be seen as authentic.

MacLaren[2] already considered the possibility of the present composition having been somewhat larger, and of the original signature and date having been removed during the reduction and copied in their present position. This supposition is based on matching drawn and painted copies in which the figure has been placed in a larger framing at the top and bottom and especially the righthand side (see *6. Graphic reproductions* and *7. Copies*, 1 and 2; figs. 6, 7 and 8); moreover, the canvas was still described in a sale of 1756 as measuring '45 pouces de haut sur 54 pouces de large [121.5 × 145.8 cm], presumably with the height and width transposed (see *8. Provenance*). This would mean that it was then about 20 cm bigger than today in both height and width. This later reduction of the canvas must of course be seen quite separately from an earlier trimming down (probably only in width) that took place when Rembrandt altered the painting of Judith — of which the radiograph shows indisputable traces — into one of Flora (see below). The copies mentioned further make one suspect that the indication of foliage in the background was originally more distinct, that the shapes on the right at half-height that are today hard to read (because of restoration?) formed part of it, and that the hint of a plant at the lower right is not original and was added even after the second reduction in size (cf. in particular *Copies, 5*).

In the rendering of plastic form, with the powerful yet invariably smooth and never incisive shadow accents, and especially in the head, the characteristic use of reflexions of light, no. A 112 closely resembles the manner of painting found in, for example, the Madrid *Sophonisba* and the *Cupid* of 1634 (nos. A 94 and A 91) and the *Minerva* of 1635 (no. A 114). In the figure's suggestion of depth, however, the London *Flora* marks a new step. This is evident most of all when one compares it with the 1634 *Flora* in Leningrad (no. A 93). Quite apart from a number of resemblances such as the manner of painting in the background, one is struck by the fact that a generally firmer brushstroke and a more subdued use of colour (with brown and greys predominating particularly in the shadows) lend the painting a greater unity, and that the lighting has led to a stronger three-dimensional effect. A high point in this respect is the centre of the composition, where the hand and bouquet of flowers, mostly hidden in shadow, make a strong contrast with the very light parts of the skirt at that point. The manner of painting here, with thick paint (applied after the flowers had been completed!) gives a contrast producing a suggestion of depth that is enhanced even further by the shadows cast from the flowers onto the light skirt. This effect — already present to

a limited degree in the *Sophonisba* and *Minerva* — is seen to recur in various forms, e.g. in the Berlin *Samson threatening his father-in-law of* 1635 (no. A 109), where the clenched fist throws a shadow onto the light wall. Such strong contrasts of light within a single figure, as an adjunct to foreshortening, occur in a similar way in the 1636 *Standard-bearer* a private collection, Paris (no. A 120). This painting shows a great many features from the London *Flora*, taken even further.

For the costume and iconography of no. A 112 one can turn to the comments on the 1634 *Flora* in Leningrad (no. A 93). It may be added that some connexion with Titian's *Flora*, now in Florence and around 1640 in Amsterdam in the Alfonso López collection, is rather less unlikely than it is for the Leningrad *Flora*. The partially bared bosom and the outstretched hand with flowers might be interpreted as evidence for this (though it is true that the figure's left hand, and the quite different flowers, differ from the classic text that forms the basis for the Titian).

The London *Flora* in its present form shows for the most part a homogeneous paint surface; an exception to this is the zone to the right of the figure, where the application of paint is dead and there is a different craquelure pattern. This is no doubt connected with the underlying picture, part of which is still visible in relief at the surface, and plainly apparent in the X-ray. It is possible that the underlying layer of paint in this area became more apparent at a later date, and led to overpaintings. Apart from this, the presentday image does not suffer any great disadvantage from the drastic alterations the change of subject entailed.

The underlying picture, which was partly overpainted by Rembrandt himself, prompts the following comments. The radiograph reveals that this differed quite substantially from the present painting, and most probably depicted the episode where Judith drops the head of Holophernes, after severing it, into a sack held by her maid (as related in the apocryphal Book of Judith, 13:1–15). A drawing in the Louvre, generally attributed to Rembrandt and dated in the later 1630s (Ben. 176) deals with the same subject; its composition however shows scarcely any resemblance to the original composition of no. A 112. It may be assumed that the earlier picture underneath the present painting was painted when the canvas was considerably wider and somewhat taller than it is today; it would no doubt have provided more room for the maid than can be seen in the X-ray; at that stage too the figures were probably seen to just below the knees. The original format might have been close to that of the Madrid *Sophonisba* (142 × 153 cm). The composition will have been of the type we know from, for example, two paintings by Rubens — an earlier version in Braunschweig and a later one in the Palazzo Vecchio in Florence (R. Oldenbourg, *P.P. Rubens*, Berlin—Leipzig, n.d., pp. 136 and 236). In both these paintings the maid leans over Judith's outstretched hand holding the head of Holophernes so as to hold the sack open, and in the latter work especially the configuration of hands and sack is very close to what Rembrandt's picture must have shown. In both Rubens paintings Judith has both arms half-bare, as she must have done in the Rembrandt; she holds a sword in her right hand. Whether the latter feature was also present in the Rembrandt it is impossible to say for certain from the radiograph. The interpretation of the band of light brushstrokes running towards the upper righthand corner as the edge of a tent-opening finds some support in the corresponding passage in the later Rubens painting.

For the unlikely suggestion that Saskia acted as a model, see the comments under nos. A 70, A 75, A 93 and A 94.

5. Documents and sources

None.

6. Graphic reproductions

1. Mezzotint by William Pether (Carlisle 1731 — London *c.* 1795) (Charrington no. 126). In the third state this is inscribed: *Rembrandt's Wife in the Character of a Jew Bride./ From the Original picture Painted by Rembrandt,/ In the Collection of the Right Hon.*[ble] *William Henry Fortescue./ Published according to Act of Parliament by J. Boydell Engraver, in Cheapside London. 1763.* Reproduces the picture in reverse, with framing wider at the right, top and bottom. Since no. A 112 was almost certainly not in the coll. Fortescue in 1763 (see *8. Provenance*), this mezzotint must have been made after a copy which, because of the matching position of the staff the woman is holding, will have been the painting described under *7. Copies*, 2.

7. Copies

A note in Rembrandt's hand on the back of a drawing in Berlin (Ben. 448) shows that he sold, for prices varying from 5 to 15 guilders, works (probably copied from his own work) by a pupil whose name has become illegible or was not named, by Ferdinand Bol and by Leendert van Beyeren; these included a *Standard-bearer* and a *Flora* by the first, an *Abraham* and a *Flora* by the second, and a *Flora* by the third. It seems possible that this note related either to paintings or to detailed drawings like that mentioned here as no. 1.; there is a similar drawing of Rembrandt's 1635 *Standard-bearer* (no. A 120) by the same hand, also in the British Museum, London. For similar drawings by others, see no. A 114 and no. A 116, and also A 90 fig. 6.

A painting that, to judge from the pedigree of the original, must have been a copy was in the Jan Joost Marcus sale, Amsterdam 20–21 November 1780 (Lugt 3187), no. 35: 'Rembrant. Op Doek, hoog 49, breed 38 duim [= 125.4 × 104.5 cm]. In dit Schildery beschouwd men een staande Vrouw, de Jooden-Bruid of Rembrants Vrouw genaamd, hebbende op de linkerhand eenige Bloemen, en in de rechterhand een Stok, wyders heeft ze om haar hoofd een krans van Bloemen; dit Stuk is bevallig, krachtig en fraai geschildert.' (Rembrant, On canvas . . . In this painting one beholds a standing woman, called the Jewish Bride or Rembrant's wife, with some flowers in her left hand and a staff in the right; she further has a garland of flowers around her head; this piece is gracefully, skilfully and finely painted). This painting can perhaps be identified with copy 2 or 5 below.

Fig. 6. Copy 1. Rembrandt workshop, brush in greys and black over pen and ink, 21.9 × 17.3 cm. London, The British Museum



1. Drawing, pen and brown ink and Indian wash, 21.9 × 17.3 cm, London, The British Museum (fig. 6; Sumowski *Drawings* I, no. 127). At the bottom of the back there is a partly trimmed-off inscription: 'Rembrant'. An attribution of this thoroughly competent drawing to Bol (see also Sumowski op. cit.) must remain a supposition; at all events it is far superior to the Amsterdam drawing after Rembrandt's *Minerva* that carries a Bol signature (no. A 114, copy 1). Rembrandt's note mentioned above makes one suspect that it is this drawing and that of the *Standard-bearer* that are from the hand of the pupil whose name is illegible or is not named. Reproduces the picture in a framing that is wider at the right, top and bottom, and in the background has a clearer indication of vegetation which surrounds the dark hint of a grotto (?). The shapes on the right at half-height that are now incomprehensible in the painting are here clearly understandable as leaves. At the lower left a lighter area seems to indicate a patch of ground. On the right the hanging veil ends in floating folds. The details in the background of the drawing seem to give a good impression of the painting before the latter's appearance was altered by the darkening of brown paint, later cutting-down (especially on the right) and overpaintings along the righthand side. The only clear deviation from the painting in its present state is the absence of a plant in the bottom righthand corner.

2. Canvas 130 × 104 cm, present whereabouts unknown (figs. 7 and 8). Earlier coll. Mrs Ellice, Invergarry (W. Bode and C. Hofstede de Groot, *Rembrandt* III, Paris 1899, no. 187); coll. Russell Ellice, sale London 19 June 1942; sale London 17 October 1951 (part of the property of Mrs W. Hannah), no. 20 (£1400 to Mr Rozendaal); dealer D. Cevat, London. According to the photographs available to us, a very faithful copy painted in a Rembrandtesque manner and apparently in the workshop. It shows the picture framed wider at the right, top and bottom. The tonal values appear to be those of the original in its present condition. The shapes on the right at half-height however look more like leaves (cf. copy 1). The veil does not have the floating end on the right, and the indication of a plant at the lower right is absent. The ivy-entwined staff, which in the original is tilted a little to the left, is here almost vertical, and this last feature in particular makes it likely that the mezzotint by Pether (see *6. Graphic reproductions*) was made after this painting, which would then have been in the coll. Fortescue in 1763.

3. Canvas 193.5 × 132.2 cm, Kreuzlingen, coll. Heinz Kisters. Earlier dealer D. Katz, Dieren (1938); sale Berlin (Lange) 3/4 December 1940, no. 156. Reproduces the original in a framing considerably wider on all sides, with the figure full-length (as is the case in copy 4 below; there may easily be some confusion in the respective pedigrees). Examined on 3 September 1972 (J.B., P. v. Th.). The canvas comprises two parts, with a horizontal seam at about half height. A beige-grey ground is visible in worn patches at the lower left. The manner of painting is in general rather flat and less Rembrandt-like than that of copy 2; it does however, like the craquelure, make a 17th-century impression. It is inconceivable that this copy shows the original composition of no. A 112; it obviously came about through lengthening of the figure and staff, without a satisfactory solution being found for both of these resting on the ground — added vegetation has been used to hide the critical parts of the garment and feet from sight. In the upper half of the background the motifs that are seen most clearly in copy 1 have been spread over a wider area. This copy is the least interesting for forming an opinion of the original, though it is noteworthy that it shares with copy 1 the motif of the floating end to the veil on the right.

4. Canvas 154 × 127 cm (??), formerly coll. Sir Edmund Lechmere, The Rhydd (*c.* 1882); dealer Thomas Agnew & Sons, London. Reproduced in: W. Bode and C. Hofstede de Groot, *Rembrandt* III, Paris 1899, no. 188 and: W.R. Valentiner, *Rembrandt*, Stuttgart-Berlin 1908 (Kl. d. K.), p. 535. Not seen by us. Shows the figure full-length as in copy 3 (but in a narrower framing). It is conceivable that this was copied from copy 3.

5. Canvas 122 ×103 cm. Coll. Baron Exel J. Bonde, Ericsberg Castle near Katrineholm, Sweden. Known to us only from a mediocre photograph for which we are indebted to Mr R. Gummesson, Stockholm; this gives the impression that this copy was made from the original *after* this had been trimmed down somewhat at the top, bottom and — especially — right, but *before* there had been overpainting along the righthand side; the indication of a plant at the lower right seems to be missing. Besides hints of foliage the background shows, at the lower left, a patch of ground, such as is also visible in the drawing mentioned under 1 above. The head is tilted a little more definitely to the left than in the original or any of the other copies.

6. Canvas 70 ×54 cm. Coll. Dr G.H.N., sale Paris (Drouot) 29 May 1908, no. 17 (as by G. Flinck). To judge from the reproduction in the catalogue an old copy, apparently a fragment, of the figure from the waist up. What was probably a similar fragment was a painting in the coll. P.A.J. Knijff, sale Antwerp 18ff July 1785 (Lugt 3923), no. 417: 'Rembrant. Le buste d'une femme à la fleur de son âge, vue en face; elle a de longs cheveux, dont les touffes lui tombent sur les épaules; elle porte une faille attachée avec une petite guirlande de fleurs, dont elle a aussi un collier; elle a une partie du sein découverte; son habillement est brodé en or & en argent: ses manches sont jaunes garnies d'or rayé de verd. L'on remarque dans ce portrait un suave étonnant, un grand relief, une touche fiere, pâteuse & expressive, & un coloris vigoureux. Haut 19½ po. large 15½ [..prises sur le pied de France = 52.6 × 41.8 cm] T[oile]'. (15.— to Rombouts).

7. Drawing in red and black chalk, 25 × 19.4 cm (photo RKD L58757). Anonymous sale London (Sotheby's) 25 November 1970, no. 68. Reproduces the original after the overpaintings on the right had taken place, including the plant in the lower righthand corner.

Summarizing, one can say that copies 1 and 2 offer the most reliable information about the original in its completed state, i.e.

Fig. 7. Copy 2. Rembrandt workshop, canvas 130 × 104 cm. Whereabouts unknown



Fig. 8. Copy 2, detail (1 : 1)



after the alteration by Rembrandt of the picture and its format, and before the later reduction in size. The only strange feature is that the London drawing shows the flapping end of the veil on the right which also appears in the painting described under 3 above, while this is missing in copy 2. If one assumes that copies 1 and 3 were made independently of each other and after the original, then it is probable that they are more reliable on this point than copy 2, which otherwise makes an extremely reliable impression. Copy 5 is important because it shows the original — admittedly in a reduced format — without the overpaintings present today; it would be interesting to be able to date this copy more precisely.

8. Provenance

— Coll Duc de Tallard, sale Paris 22 March — 13 May 1756 (Lugt 910), no. 156: 'Rembrandt. Une Mariée Juive les cheveux épars, et une couronne de fleurs sur la tête, elle pose la main droite sur une canne qui est pareillement entourée de fleurs, et de la gauche elle tient un gros bouquet. La Figure est de grandeur naturelle, et peinte dans ce ton de couleur vigoureux qu'on admire dans tous les ouvrages de Rembrandt. La tête est d'un beau caractère et d'un grand effet. La grandeur de ce Tableau est de 45 pouces de haut sur 54 pouces de large [= 121.5 × 145.8 cm — presumably height and width have been transposed; less likely is the assumption by MacLaren[2] that 54 is a printer's error for 34 pouces = 91.9 cm, i.e. a good 5.5 cm less than the present width]' (bought for 602 francs by Remy, one of the auctioneers, 'pour l'Angleterre'; one finds an identical note to no. 141, Rubens' *Watering-place*, which was later in the coll. Duke of Montague, and this makes it probable that the Rembrandt too was bought for this collector[2]).
— Coll. Duke of Montague; manuscript list of pictures at Montague House made about 1780, no. 114: 'Rembrandt A Jew Bride, ½ Length'[2]. Inherited in 1790 by the Duke's daughter who was married to the 3rd Duke of Buccleugh.
— Coll. Duke of Buccleuch, Dalkeith Palace near Edinburgh, later Montague House, London. Bought for the National Gallery from the 8th Duke in 1938.

9. Summary

No. 112 fits, in its approach and manner of painting, into Rembrandt's work from around 1634—1636; in terms of its subject it resembles closely the almost lifesize mythological and historical female figures from the years 1633—35, and forms a high point in this series. The head, in which the effect of plasticity is achieved to a major extent by means of strong reflexions of light, shows striking similarities to, especially, that of the 1634 *Sophonisba* in Madrid (no. A 94). Strong contrasts of light and shadow have produced within the figure an effective impression of depth that, particularly when compared to the Leningrad *Flora* of 1634 (no. A 93), already represents a clear development and in somewhat later work such as the 1636 *Standard-bearer* in a private collection in Paris (no. A 120) is taken even further. The signature and date cannot in their present form be seen as autograph, but no. A 112 can in every respect be looked on as an indubitably authentic and very characteristic work from 1635.

From observations at the paint surface and, especially, from the radiographs one sees that the picture originally showed a different and larger composition, which can be interpreted as Judith dropping the head of Holophernes into a sack held by her maid standing on her left. This composition must, at least to a large degree, have been in an advanced stage of completion. As the picture was altered into that of Flora, the canvas was probably trimmed down on the righthand side. The maid was painted out, and the pose of Judith's arms was changed. The upper body of Judith was however (with the addition of the garlands of flowers) used almost unchanged for that of Flora. Old copies, matching each other, indicate that at a later date (probably after 1756) the canvas was further reduced slightly at the right, top and bottom, and that (probably later still) there were overpaintings of minor importance.

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1 C. Brown, 'Rembrandt's "Saskia as Flora" X-rayed', *Essays in Northern European Art presented to Egbert Haverkamp-Begemann on his sixtieth birthday*, Doornspijk 1983, pp. 48–51.
2 N. MacLaren, *The Dutch School*, London 1960 (National Gallery Catalogues), pp. 332–336.

A 113 The rape of Ganymede

1635

DRESDEN, STAATLICHE KUNSTSAMMLUNGEN DRESDEN, GEMÄLDEGALERIE ALTE MEISTER, CAT. NO. 1558

HDG 207; BR. 471; BAUCH 102; GERSON 73

Fig. 1. Canvas 177 × 129 cm



1. Summarized opinion

An authentic work, for the most part poorly preserved and much overpainted, reliably signed and dated 1635.

2. Description of subject

The myth of Ganymede, son of King Tros who gave his name to Troy, can be found inter alia in Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, book X, verse 155ff. As the most beautiful of young boys, he was chosen by the gods to be Jupiter's cup-bearer. Jupiter, who also lusted after the boy as a bedmate, disguised himself as an eagle and abducted him from the Trojan plain.

Jupiter, in the form of an eagle with wings outspread, is seen carrying his prey up into a sky partly covered with dark clouds and partly filled with a pale light, in which the god's lightning flashes at the top left. He holds Ganymede fast by his clothing in his beak and one claw, while the other claw grasps his left arm. Ganymede, a small, plump child, dangles in the folds of his blue-grey overgarment and white shirt, both of which are pulled up baring part of his back and the lower half of his body. At the left a belt hangs down from the folds, ending in a swaying tassel with small metal beads. He is putting up a futile resistance, pushing against his captor with his right arm and hand, screaming, kicking out with his legs and urinating in his terror. His left hand grips a small twig with cherries. Strong light falls from the left onto the figure of the boy, making a strong contrast with the dark background of trees silhouetted against the sky. On the righthand side the horizon is visible, while the curved wall of a building is seen, vaguely, far down at the bottom left.

3. Observations and technical information

Working conditions

Examined in May 1970 (B.H., E.v.d.W.) in good light and out of the frame.

Support

DESCRIPTION: Canvas, relined, 177 × 129 cm. The old canvas has been removed; a layer of gauze (visible from the front through inpainted gaps) was then applied, followed by a new canvas. An extra layer of canvas may have been added to the back of this. The front shows two vertical ridges — perhaps due to seams in one of the new canvases — at 38 cm from the lefthand side and 51 cm from the right.
SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

Ground

DESCRIPTION: Not seen.
SCIENTIFIC DATA: In a cross-section prepared from a sample taken from the lefthand edge, Kühn[1] found the usual two-layer structure. The bottom layer is red, consisting of a mixture of red ochre, quartz and fieldspar, while the top layer is grey and comprises white lead, chalk (calcium carbonate) and an unidentified black pigment.

Paint layer

CONDITION: The paint surface appears to have been flattened during the relining. There are numerous overpaintings, covering paint loss and wearing. In the figure of Ganymede they can be seen in the shadow in the righthand side of the face, in the dark parts of the hair, in the arm and hand above his head and in the shadow area in the upper half of the back; horizontal bands of overpainting run across the lit part of the abdomen, and in the blue-grey overgarment the shadowed folds have been strengthened. In the eagle the original paint layer appears, in the painting's present state, to be visible only in the edges that catch the light, in the beak and in the claw on the left. The area of sky to the left of the bird is still to a large extent original, while to the right there are further overpaintings. Large areas of the dark landscape of trees and the vaguely-seen stretch of wall have been overpainted, and are moreover in such a poor state that it is no longer possible to assess this area, even from the viewpoint of what it shows. A print from around 1770 (see *6. Graphic reproductions*, 1) has a hilly vista to the right, differing from the almost straight horizon seen today.

The overpaintings can be seen as having been done in two phases — a first, probably immediately after the transfer, in which large areas of sky and landscape and (to a lesser degree) shadow areas of the eagle and Ganymede's body were overpainted, and a second in which numerous patches of paint that had by then darkened were retouched, in part over earlier overpaintings. Craquelure: in the well-preserved parts one can see an evenly-distributed, irregular craquelure, while in the earlier overpaintings the craquelure has a shrinkage pattern.
DESCRIPTION: Only the figure of Ganymede in fact provides a coherent picture of the original treatment. The head is painted broadly and fairly thickly in yellowish and reddish flesh tints, the shadows in browns and greys that are opaque above the eyes, above and around the nose and at the mouth, and rather thinner (though no longer wholly intact) in the shadow of the cheek. The modelling is accentuated with touches of light paint: a few broad strokes of light flesh colour have been placed above the mouth, white highlights on the forehead, nose, cheeks, lower eyelids, tongue, teeth and lower lip, and a reflexion of light in an orange-brown on the underside of the nose. The screwed-up eyes are depicted with a few strokes of dark paint, and there is a similar strong, dark accent in the open mouth. The treatment of the lit arm and hand and of the chubby body is (where it has not been overpainted) entirely similar to that of the face — fairly thick in the lit parts and, especially in the body, done with long strokes that form and follow the convexities. On the right, just outside the contour of the buttock and thigh, a slightly lighter paint shows through the darker paint of the trees forming the background at that point, and perhaps indicates that in the first lay-in the contour of this part of the body ran more to the right. The possibility of this light paint being part of a local light underpainting cannot be discounted. A similar phenomenon is seen on the left, along and outside the edge of the knee and thigh.

Ganymede's clothing is painted with long strokes that follow the folds, impasto where the white shirt and blue-grey overgarment catch the light. There is a noticeable use of fairly dry, lumpy paint in the sleeve of the shirt and on the folds of the overgarment; in the latter there is an occasional sheen of light, done in a thin light yellow. This use of dry paint is found again in light curls in the lefthand side of the hair. Colourful accents are formed by the deftly painted ochre-yellow and orange-brown edging above the sleeve, enlivened with dabs of thick light yellow and white, and by the tassel painted with long, narrow strokes of red, ochre-coloured, grey-blue and yellow paint. Red occurs again in the cherries on the small twig, executed with curling impasto strokes, that Ganymede holds in his left hand.

Among the best-preserved parts of the bird, the edges are painted in a fairly light tint that tends to an ochre colour. The claw that grasps Ganymede's left arm is in greys and browns; the shadow below it, where a translucent dark brown can be seen, is the only place in the whole painting where one detects a hint of a dark underpainting. The sky to the left of and above the bird seems to have survived well, and is done in a dull blue with a definite brushstroke. The flash of lightning at the top left is painted in a yellow-brown. The sky on the right, with varying degrees of overpainting, is in a leaden grey among which there are tints tending to a yellow-brown.
SCIENTIFIC DATA: Kühn[1] describes the results of examination of five samples. Brown paint at the lefthand edge contains bone black, white lead, yellow and red ochre; on top of this is a layer

Fig. 2. Detail (1 : 4)



Fig. 3. Detail (1 : 1)



of varnish, over which there is the white, black and brown paint of later, non-autograph overpaintings. The white of Ganymede's teeth consists of white lead containing a little copper and silver, and the red of the cherries of vermilion with partly coarse grains of pigment mixed with some white lead and bone black. The decorative yellow border above Ganymede's sleeve contains lead-tin yellow, and the yellow pigment in the tassel has been identified as yellow ochre.

X-Rays

None.

Signature

In black on the topmost fold of Ganymede's overgarment: <*Rembrandt. ft/1635*>. There is no reason to doubt its authenticity.

Varnish

There is a layer of old and partly disintegrated varnish.

4. Comments

The figure of Ganymede, the only element in the painting that still gives a reliable picture of how paint was handled, confirms the authenticity of the work in a wholly convincing way. The head, the lit arm and hand and the body are marked by the feeling for volume and mass that is peculiar to Rembrandt in the mid–1630s and that forms the foundation for the homogeneous treatment of these passages. The handling of paint fits into one's image of his largescale figures from that period. The brushwork is more generally broad than in the preceding years, and provides a concise indication of the modelling in which details and accents are skilfully incorporated. In the figure the paint is everywhere opaque, and especially in the clothing is sometimes used dry and lumpy; alongside and occasionally on top of this there is often a final application of thin paint with short, broad strokes. In this treatment the *Ganymede* shows similarities with, for instance, the London *Flora* (no. A 112). The two works also have much in common in the alternation of cool and warm tints in the centre, where flesh tints are set off against honey-coloured hair and where in the clothing blue-grey-green, red-brown and ochre dominate alongside the white; they show that in this period Rembrandt tried to give a certain amount of variegation to his large-scale figure works. Finally, the two works are linked by their general design — in both the picture is dominated by a lit figure placed against a dark background, its plasticity emphasized by strong light glancing across the body and creating deep shadows, half-shadows and reflexions of light. These similarities with the 1635 *Flora* suggest a roughly simultaneous production that is confirmed by the signature and date, also 1635, appearing on the *Ganymede*; the form and writing of the signature make a convincing impression of authenticity.

Beyond the figure of Ganymede, overpaintings play a major part in the painting in its present state. They do not, it is true, affect the shape of the eagle as a whole, and the sky to the left of and above the bird seems to have remained well preserved; but the same cannot be said of the remainder of the surroundings, which consist for the most part of dark areas. One may assume that, as will once have been the case with the *Flora*, these passages showed greater variation and more details than they do today. One might wonder whether the painting was larger, because of the way the tips of the eagle's wings are cut off by the sides of the painting. This feature can however already be seen in a drawing in Dresden done after this painting (see *7. Copies*, 1) and probably dating from the end of the 17th century; and in a sale in 1716 (see *8. Provenance*) the painting was described with its present dimensions (and indeed even sligthly smaller), so that any change in format must have occurred before then. It is even unlikely that one ever took place; in the case of *Abraham's sacrifice* in Leningrad (no. A 108) such suspicions based on similar considerations proved to be unfounded.

Fig. 4. Detail with signature (1 : 1)



A pen-and-wash drawing, also in Dresden (Kupferstichkabinett; 18.5 × 16.1 cm; Ben. 92; our fig. 5) seems to be a preparatory sketch for the composition. As such it is a very rare example — only a few drawings can be linked with Rembrandt's paintings in such a direct way. The drawing has not kept its original size, since the pen-lines and strokes of bistre run past the framing lines along which it has been trimmed. What remains is close to a square in format; but though one does not get the impression of a great deal of the drawing having been lost, it can no longer provide any arguments as to what the format of the painting may have been. At the bottom left there are two gesticulating figures done with rough penstrokes, of whom no trace can now be seen in the painting; one has to wonder whether they ever were there. One might interpret these figures as being Ganymede's parents; the one to the front, possibly male (and thus perhaps his father Tros, king of Troy) is holding a rod-like object (a telescope?).

The classical theme depicted in the painting, that of a king's son borne away by an eagle to become cupbearer to the gods, can be found in Ovid and other authors. In Ovid (*Metamorphoses*, book X, verse 155ff) the eagle is Jupiter himself in disguise, while Virgil (*Æneid*, book V, verse 252ff) has the bird sent

by Jupiter. Until recently, in discussions of Rembrandt's painting, the stress has been placed on the erotically-tinged interpretation of the myth, according to which Ganymede was not only cupbearer to Jupiter but also coveted by him as a bedmate because of his physical beauty. It was concluded from this, very early on by Smith[2] and later by Clark[3], that in depicting the figure of a screaming baby wetting itself Rembrandt was offering a parody of the theme; for Clark, he was prompted to do so not only by the revulsion for homosexuality felt in the protestant culture, but also by an anti-classical spirit — 'It was a protest not only against antique art, but against antique morality, and against the combination of the two in sixteenth-century Rome'. Years before this, Neumann[4] had been more reserved about the possibility of a parody. In discussing the *Ganymede* and other Rembrandt works with subjects taken from classical mythology, he made the point that the readiness with which such subjects are treated is in fact an indication of how far the mental world of 17th-century man was bound up with antiquity, whose centuries-old tradition was constantly adapted to contemporary forms and experience, and indeed 'mit einer gewissen unreflektierten Selbstverständlichkeit'. The gist of Neumann's argument is taken further in a study of Rembrandt's *Ganymede* by Margarita Russell[5]. This is mainly based on the neo-platonic interpretation of the theme, which has Ganymede as a symbol of the soul that God loves for its purity. According to Russell it was primarily this spiritual concept that was adopted by the Renaissance. It was introduced into the imagery of Dutch artists by Alciati's *Emblematum Liber* and Karel van Mander's *Schilder-boeck* (1ste edn Haarlem 1604, 2nd edn Amsterdam 1618; the myth of Ganymede in the 10th book of the *Wtlegginge op den Metamorphosis Pub.Ovidij Nasonis*). In Alciati Ganymede (emblem 4, in some editions emblem 32) is no longer a youth or young man, but a child, seated happily on the eagle's back with the motto 'In Deo laetandum' (rejoice in God). The interpretation of Ganymede as the blameless soul taken by God to Himself made the motif suitable for commemorative portraits of children who had died young, a use that has been mentioned by Knipping[6] and that Russel illustrates with a series of works by Nicolaes Maes.

Unlike Maes, who has the children accepting their fate with elegance and equanimity, Rembrandt has the situation filled with fear and futile protest. The rendering of the theme seems to be determined mainly by an approach to the dramatic situation that has made him reject an idealized interpretation. His 'realism' does not however stretch so far as has been assumed, especially not on the points that have given rise to the idea of a parody. Russell points out, as did Schatborn[7] earlier, that the puckered, tearful face of Ganymede seems to have been dictated by a conventional model; it is tempting to recognize this model — used by Rembrandt in a number of drawings (such as Ben. 218 and 401, both in Berlin) and in particular for the weeping Cupid in the Leningrad *Danaë* (no. A 119) — in '1 hout kintgen' (one wooden child) that was bought by Rembrandt on 22 February 1635 at the sale of the effects of the painter Barent van Someren (Antwerp *c.* 1572/73 — Amsterdam 1611; see Strauss *Doc.*, 1635/1)[8]. For the urinating there is even an explanation of cosmic significance — as related later in the myth, Ganymede is taken up by Jupiter to join the Immortals, and transformed into the constellation of Aquarius; in Van Mander (op. cit., p. 87 recto) one reads 'want Ganymedes wiert verandert in 't Hemelteecken, stort water, 't welc van der Sonne inghenomen wesende, ons niet al *Nectar*, maer waters ghenoech schenckt, en afstort' (for Ganymede was turned into the sign [of Aquarius], pours down water and, this having been taken in by the Sun pours and sends down to us not Nectar but water in sufficiency). Russell's thesis that Rembrandt had the Christian, spiritual interpretation of the myth in mind cannot, in the light of this, be regarded as a wholly satisfactory explanation of the painting. In a discussion of a work by Pieter de Hooch in which a *Rape of Ganymede* (by Karel van Mander III, probably inspired by Rembrandt's work; cf. Russell, op. cit. p. 17) is seen serving as a chimneybreast piece, the authors of the catalogue of the 1976 exhibition *Tot lering en vermaak*[9] make the point that the erotic connotation of the story had not been forgotten in 17th-century Holland. This can be seen inter alia from the classicist theory of art which, to take the words of Samuel van Hoogstraten, looked on any depicting of the Ganymede myth as contrary to decency and good taste[6]. Rembrandt's picture in fact contains no element that would justify a definite choice of either the neo-platonic or the erotic interpretation (see also Schwartz[10]). The same applies to a detail like the cherries held in Ganymede's hand. Russell (op. cit., p. 11) sees them as a symbol of purity, and points to pictures of the Madonna and Child in which cherries occur. One can however also find them used as a token of lust (E. Snoep-Reitsma in: *N.K.J.* 24, 1973, pp. 213–215). The expression on the howling child's face appears to be dictated by the dramatic action, and can therefore throw no light on the underlying meaning of the picture. The astrological element of Ganymede/Aquarius does at all events seem to be quite explicit, and it could even be thought that the presence of what appears to be a telescope in the drawing mentioned earlier has to do with this.

Fig. 5. Rembrandt, pen and wash drawing, 18.5 × 16.1 cm (Ben. 92). Dresden, Staatliche Kunstsammlungen Dresden, Kupferstichkabinett



5. Documents and sources

An inventory, made on 17 February 1671, of the estate of Catharina van der Pluym, widow of Willem Schilperoort and aunt of Rembrandt's great-nephew and pupil Karel van der Pluym, mentions 'een stuck van Ganimedes – *f* 7.–' (A. Bredius in: *O.H.* 48, 1931, p. 262); Bredius suggests that this might be connected with the Rembrandt work in Dresden. This identification is not all that likely — this collection of paintings was of modest quality and value, as may be seen not only from the low valuations but also from a description of the pieces which with only one exception (bearing a quite mediocre name) are anonymous; Rembrandt's name would be sure to have been mentioned in this inventory drawn up in Leiden.

6. Graphic reproductions

1. Engraving by Christian Gottfried Schulze (Dresden 1749 – 1819), inscribed: *Rembrand pinx. Seydelmann del. – C.G.Schulze sculp. Dresdae.* Below this, on either side of the arms of the Elector of Saxony, there is, in Italian on the left and in French on the right: *Quadro di Rembrand, / dalla Galleria Elettorale di Dresda. / Alto piedi 6 onc.2½ largo piedi 4 onc.6½. — Tableau de Rembrandt, / de la Gallerie Electorale de Dresde. / large de 6 pieds 2½ pouc. haut 4 pie.6½ pouc.* This was intended for the third volume of *Receuil d'Estampes d'après les plus célèbres tableaux de la Galerie Royale de Dresde*, which appeared only in 1870. The print however probably dates from about 1770, as Schulze made a further four prints of Rembrandt works in Dresden in the years 1769/70. The print reproduces the picture in the same direction as the painting, and with the same framing. The landscape shows a somewhat mountainous or hilly vista on the right, while that in the painting in its present state is almost flat.
2. Stipple engraving by Antoine Cardon (Brussels 1772 – London 1813), 1795, in the same direction as the painting.
3. Line engraving by A. Réveil in: Duchesne Ainé, *Musée de peinture et de sculpture, ou Recueil des principaux . . . de l'Europe*, Paris 1828–1834, vol. XI part II, plate 308.

7. Copies

1. Drawing, probably pen in brown with a grey wash; Dresden, Kupferstichkabinett. Illustrated by Michel[11].

8. Provenance

– Sale Amsterdam 26 April 1716 (Hoet I, p. 191), no. 33: 'Den Arend, opnemende Ganimedes, levens groote, kragtig en sterk geschildert, door Rembrand, van Ryn, h. 6v. br. 4 en een half v. [= 169.9 × 127.4 cm]'. (The eagle carrying off Ganymede, life-size, skilfully and powerfully painted, by Rembrand van Ryn) (175 guilders).
– Coll. W. van Velthuyzen, sale Rotterdam 15 April 1751 (Lugt 756), no. 46: 'Ganimedes, door Rembrant, extra captael'.
– Bought in Hamburg in 1751 by Carl Heinrich von Heinecken for the collection of Augustus III, Elector of Saxony.

9. Summary

Although only partly well-preserved (mostly in large parts of the main figure), the execution of the painting leaves no doubt as to its autograph nature. In approach, too, the work fits in extremely well among Rembrandt's paintings from around 1635, and the reliable signature and date confirm this attribution and dating. The interpretation (earlier seen as burlesque) of the theme taken from classical mythology could fit into a neo-platonic tradition, though it also contains astrological elements and erotic connotations cannot be excluded. The facial expression of a crying child occupied Rembrandt a number of times during the years 1635/36, and he perhaps based himself on a carved model.

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2. J. Smith, *A catalogue raisonné of the works of the most eminent Dutch, Flemish and French painters . . .* VII, London 1836, no. 197.
3. K. Clark, *Rembrandt and the Italian Renaissance*, London 1966, p. 12.
4. C. Neumann, *Rembrandt* I, Munich 1922, p. 140ff.
5. M. Russell, 'The iconography of Rembrandt's Rape of Ganymede', *Simiolus* 9 (1977), pp. 5–18.
6. J.B. Knipping, *Iconography of the Counter-Reformation in the Netherlands*, Nieuwkoop 1974, I, p. 45.
7. P. Schatborn, 'Over Rembrandt en kinderen', *De kroniek van het Rembrandthuis* 27 (1975), pp. 9–19.
8. J. Bruyn, 'On Rembrandt's use of studio-props and model drawings during the 1630s', *Essays in Northern European Art, presented to Egbert Haverkamp-Begemann on his sixtieth birthday*, Doornspijk 1983, pp. 52–60.
9. Exhibition catalogue *Tot lering en vermaak*, Amsterdam 1976, pp. 130–133.
10. Schwartz 1984, pp. 127–129.
11. E. Michel, *Rembrandt. His life, his work and his time* I, London 1895, opposite p. 222.

A 114 Minerva

1635

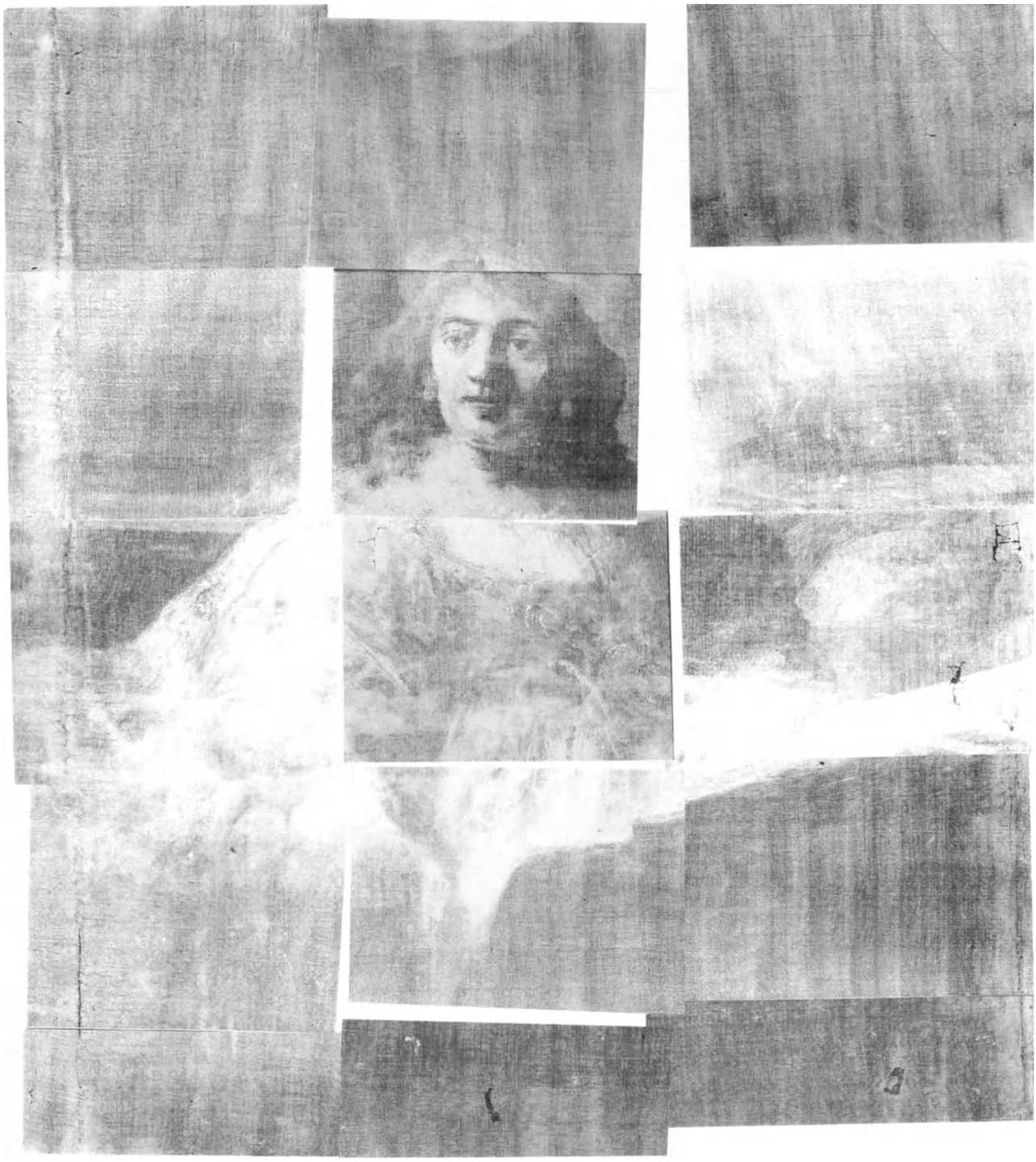
TOKYO, JAPAN PRIVATE COLLECTION
(DEPOSIT BRIDGESTONE MUSEUM OF ART, TOKYO)

HDG –; BR. 469; BAUCH 259; GERSON 94

Fig. 1. Canvas 137 × 116 cm



Fig. 2. X-Ray



1. Summarized opinion

A well preserved, authentic painting, reliably signed and dated 1635.

2. Description of subject

A young woman sits obliquely at a table, in a chair of which one can see only a velvet-upholstered and fringed armrest. Her body is turned a little to the right and her head somewhat to the left, and she looks past the viewer. Her right hand is placed on the armrest, while the left hand rests on a folio book that lies open on the table in front of her. The table is covered with a decorated cloth. The woman wears a wide-sleeved greyish garment that reveals a white shirt at the breast and by her right wrist. A variegated sash encircles her waist. A gold-brocade cloak lies over her shoulders, held together at the breast by a gold chain with clasp; on the right this cloak is draped over her arm, while on the left it hangs down over the back of the chair. Her long hair falls wide over her shoulders and she has a laurel-wreath around her head. Large, pear-shaped pearl eardrops are worn together with a chain of pearls around the neck. Further folio books are seen lying and standing on the right, together with a globe, a helmet on a folded cloth, a spear and a shield decorated with a Medusa-head hanging on a column that can be vaguely made out against an otherwise neutral rear wall. To judge from the attributes — the Medusa shield, helmet, laurel wreath and signs of scholarship (the globe and folio books) — Minerva is being depicted here.

3. Observations and technical information

Working conditions

Examined on 30 May 1975 (B. H., E. v. d. W.) in good light and in the frame. It was unfortunately impossible to measure the painting. Twelve X-ray prints, together covering almost all the painting, were received later from the National Museum, Stockholm.

Support

DESCRIPTION: Canvas, lined, 137 × 116 cm[1]. A seam runs vertically at *c.* 9 cm from the left side.
SCIENTIFIC DATA: Cusping can be seen along the top edge at a pitch of about 7–7.5 cm, on the right at *c.* 7–8 cm and along the bottom at *c.* 7–8.5 cm; there is no cusping on the left (by the vertical seam). Threadcount of main canvas: 11.2 vertical threads/cm (10.5–11.7), 15.9 horizontal threads/cm (14.5–17.2). The strip on the left yields roughly the same threadcount. The warp is vertical, parallel to the seam. A weaving fault, where the warp threads are pressed tight together, runs vertically at about 20 cm from the right edge.

The canvases of *Belshazzar's feast* of *c.* 1635 (no. A 110) and the Munich version, dated 1636, of *Abraham's sacrifice* (no. A 108 *Copies*, 2) have the same structure and the same fault in the weave; it may thus be assumed that the three canvases came from a single bolt. While the other two have a complete or almost complete strip (about 110 cm wide) on both sides of the join, this is so in the *Minerva* on only one side. This canvas, too, must have been of similar double-strip width, but will have been reduced after the ground was applied (evident from the absence of cusping along the left side), but before it was painted on (as one may assume from the composition). What the reason for doing this may have been is unclear; the piece about 1 metre wide that was removed may have been used for another painting, but if so this has not been identified (see also Vol. II, Chapter II, fig. 8).

Ground

DESCRIPTION: The ground, which seems to be yellowish, shows through in the left background and in the tablecloth.
SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

Paint layer

CONDITION: Generally good. A restored damage can be seen on the woman's right shoulder, where the sleeve and cloak meet. Small local retouches are seen here and there. Craquelure: a regular craquelure of irregular pattern extends over the whole surface, with on top of this a much finer network of tiny cracks, possibly the varnish craquelure.
DESCRIPTION: In the head the paint is opaque, somewhat thicker in the lights than in the shadows. The chiaroscuro is geared closely to the suggestion of plasticity, with the cast shadow of the nose, in variants of brownish red, producing a very dark patch on the cheek; both the shape of this shadow and the differences in tone within it emphasize the convexities of the face. The shadow stretches from below the eyebrows (shown in dark paint) to the shadow part of the mouth. In the area of shadow on the neck there are rather cursorily applied reflexions of light done in a yellowish brown.

The structure of the eyes is indicated with curved lines for the lids and eyepouch, using variations of grey, a near-black, reddish brown and some red. The lower border of the woman's right eye is not defined distinctly, though there are touches of white to give the rim of moisture. The white of the eye is a little lighter on the left than on the right. The iris is brown, with light brown at the lower right and a rectangular white catchlight opposite this. The black pupil runs into the shadow at the edge of the eyelid. In the righthand corner of the eye there is a strikingly red stroke, with a little white. The other eye is slightly less clearly defined still, though its structure is convincing. The lit areas round the eyes and nose are painted more or less fluently, though here and there one finds clear traces of the brushstrokes, which follow the forms. The nose is strongly three-dimensional, due to light strokes on the tip and subtly-brushed reddish strokes around the black nostrils. The mouth area too has a lively interplay of light and shade. The mouth-line consists of a broad black line that runs on a little at the corners. The chain of pearls is done fairly rapidly, with strong highlights and browns for the shadows; the matt sheen of the pear-shaped pearls in the eardrops is achieved by placing catchlights of off-white on grey.

The lit part of the hair is done with fine lines that invariably follow the waves, with scant difference of colour or tone; along the outline these run out over the background and clothing. In the shadow part the structure is hardly indicated. The laurel leaves are set down in bold strokes, with strong lights and shadows.

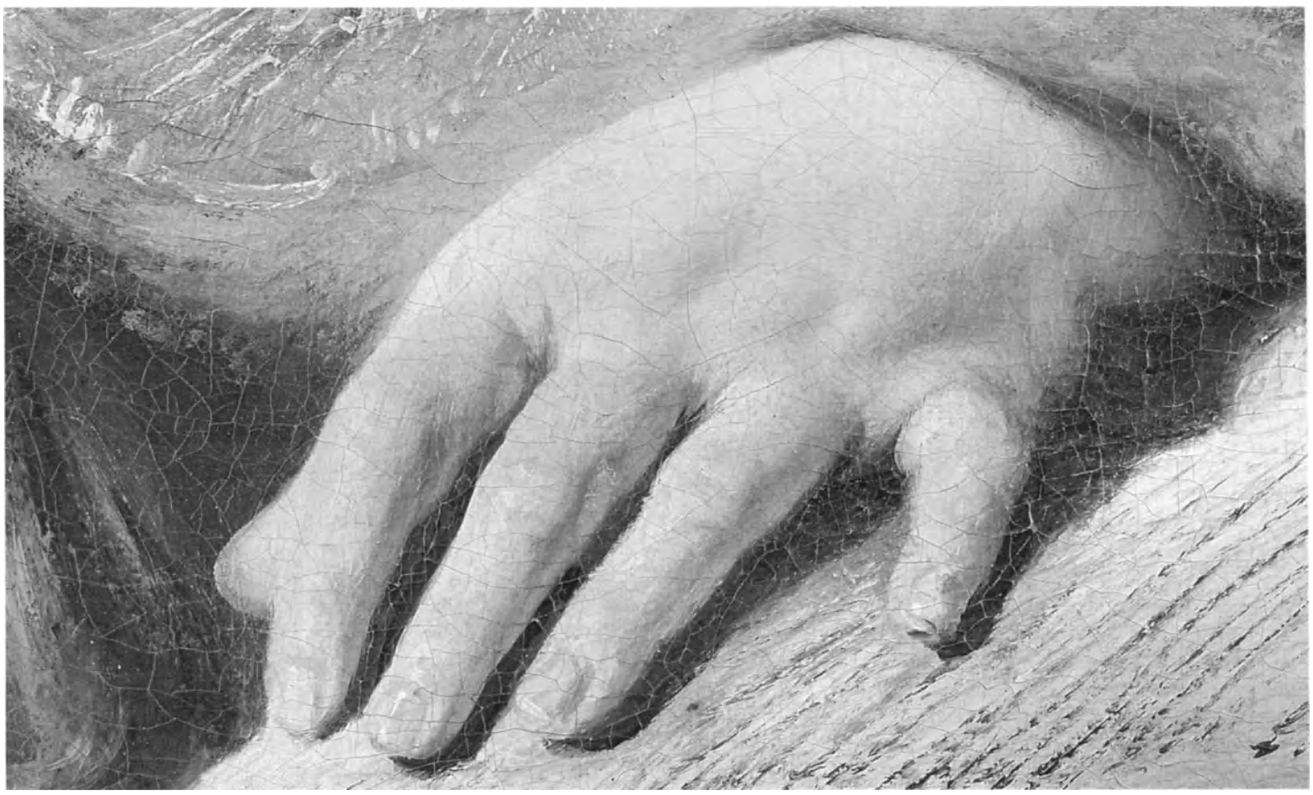
The brocade cloak is painted with firm, invariably curving strokes in a fairly coarse paint, with the light passages placed on top of the darker base tone. The pattern is rendered rather indistinctly. Grazing strokes at the lefthand outline run out over the background. Yellow and ochre tints predominate in the light, and brown in the shadow. Here and there the paint is applied quite thickly, most so by the clasp. The clasp itself consists of links outlined with brown and carmine red, in which the lights are indicated forcefully with thick paint. In the grey sleeve the brushstrokes follow the supple fall of the cloth, except at the lower left where randomly-placed strokes do not correspond to the direction of the folds. The sleeve terminates in a band of gold embroidery, rendered with deft strokes. The shape and folds of the dress are shown in the light with quite cursory strokes of grey; the dark cast shadow of the arm is in a reserve left in this grey. The sash consists of numerous adjoining and overlapped tints of brown, yellowish white, grey and ochre yellow, for the most part in crumbly paint. The shirt is decorated at the throat with tiny figures done in light yellow and brown.

The wrist and back of the hand on the left have been given little tonal variation, since they receive subdued light from the

Fig. 3. Detail (1 : 1)



Fig. 4. Detail (1 : 1)



left and a strong reflexion of light from the right. The fingers, however, have a marked suggestion of depth, obtained by using strong shadows and placing a quite strong reflexion of light on the thumb, index and tip of the middle finger. The woman's left hand receives more light, and is rather more clearly defined: on the fingers the shadows and lights have been placed with evident care, and the nails are distinctly drawn, each with its catchlight. The shadows between the fingers and on the book are virtually black. A few differences in tone in the white of the page of the book give this a rippled surface; the lines of writing are shown summarily. The straight lines on the further, folded-over page do nothing to suggest the curve. The page edges have long and slightly sinuous, thickly painted lines, mainly black and brown. The binding of the book behind the open folio volume is done in thick brown and ochre yellow strokes that make little contribution to suggesting shape. The globe behind it has similarly been painted with little attention to form and rendering of material, just like the green cloth further back still. The helmet, in a brown base tone, has clear highlights in yellow. The shield has very rapid, bold brushwork, probably with a number of scratchmarks. The tablecloth, likewise, shows a forceful and almost random use of the brush, with the decorative pattern applied in dark brown and some red over a more yellowish undertone. The column and rear wall are painted quite thinly in a wide variety of greyish and brownish tints.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

X-Rays

In the main the radiographic image matches what one might expect from the surface. Random strokes on the inside of the sleeve and along the neckline suggest that the image is determined partly by traces of a light underpainting. It may be that, for instance, the light oblique strokes above the helmet in the right background have to be explained in this way. Other light areas are plainly connected with the top paint layer. Dark reserves with pronounced shapes that differ somewhat from those seen today are apparent along the righthand side of the hair, upper arm and elbow; in the first lay-in the cloak extended a little less far to the right over the book.

The significance of a light shape that runs diagonally up to the left, cutting through the hand resting on the book and continuing into the body, is unclear.

Signature

In the left background above the armrest of the chair, in thick dark brown <*Rembrandt. f.* /1635>. Gives no reason to doubt the authenticity.

Varnish

A quite badly yellowed layer of varnish.

4. Comments

The painting is marked by a chiaroscuro that produces a strong suggestion of depth. This is manifest in the face, where on the righthand side the play of light and shade is exploited to give emphatic definition to the convexities of the countenance. It is also seen clearly in the very dark and sometimes black shadows cast by the woman's right arm and hand, and in the shadows of the left hand on the book. Apart from these concentrations of chiaroscuro and detail there is in general a less marked attempt at strict definition. In the still-life in

Fig. 5. Detail with signature (reduced)

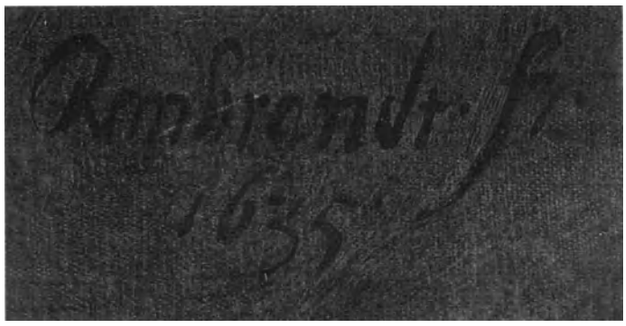


Fig. 6. Ascribed to F. Bol, brush in greys and black over black chalk, 25.7 × 20.2 cm. Amsterdam, Rijksprentenkabinet



the background this leads at some points almost to negligence in rendering materials.

The similarity with the Madrid *Sophonisba* of 1634 (no. A 94) is striking. Not only are there similar compositional elements such as the placing of the table with its cloth and book, and a main figure set askew behind it, but the brushwork and chiaroscuro — and especially the illusionist effect of shadow — are very much the same. The refined effect seen in the *Sophonisba* of the lost profile, lit by reflected light, of the serving maid that makes her stand out light against the dark background occurs in a different form in the *Minerva*; here it is the wrist and hand that, because of the reflexion of light, stand out against their own cast shadow so that the shadow is, so to say, bridged. While the *Sophonisba* background has lost its original aspect (see also *Corrigenda and Addenda* in this volume), that in the *Minerva* is lively in tone and translucent in its manner of painting. In this no. A 114 comes much closer to the *Scholar* of 1634 in Prague (no. A 95); here, the treatment of the still-life and tablecloth is also very alike in approach and manner of painting. Apart from recalling the painted knee-length works, the composition is also reminiscent of the etching of the *Great Jewish bride* (B. 340), which in its third state also carries the date 1635.

Because of the similarities just mentioned to Rembrandt's work, and of features such as the rhythm and suggestion of plasticity in the lively swelling contours, there can be no doubt as to the work's authenticity; the reliable signature and date confirm this view. The canvas does, besides, come from the same bolt as other works by Rembrandt or from his workshop in the years 1635/36 (see *Support*, SCIENTIFIC DATA).

In the literature, views on its autograph nature have in fact been less positive. J. G. van Gelder[2] suggested a collaboration between Rembrandt and his pupil Ferdinand Bol, then nineteen years of age — a suggestion that Sumowski[3] was inclined to follow but that Blankert, in his book on Bol, did not pursue. Gerson[4], lastly, voiced his doubts as to its authenticity in more general terms. The name of Bol in connexion with this painting is prompted by the existence of a drawing signed *F: bol.fc* in Amsterdam (see *7. Copies*, 1; fig. 6) that shows exactly the same composition, and has rightly been looked on as a drawing after the painting. That Bol did the drawing soon after his arrival in Rembrandt's workshop is likely in spite of doubt as to the genuineness of the signature (see Sumowski *Drawings* I, p. 276). However, the existence of this admittedly faithful but at the same time somewhat clumsy drawing makes any collaboration between Bol and Rembrandt in the painting itself less, rather than more, probable. One simply cannot accept the idea of such a collaboration, because of the homogeneous features of style in the painting that have already been discussed: the rendering of plastic form is far more powerful than Bol ever achieved, and the brushwork more direct and more free than we know from him. The same can be said of the accessories, even where these are cursorily done. The doubts voiced in the literature about a Rembrandt attribution may perhaps stem from the broader manner of painting, though this ties up with the type of the painting and the different focus of attention in such pictures (which can it is true be compared with portraits in format and motif, but which plainly belong to a quite different category). In this respect Gerson was consistent when he rejected the authenticity not only of the *Minerva* but also of the 1633 *Bellona* in New York (no. A 70) and the 1634 *Cupid blowing a soap bubble* in the Bentinck collection

(no. A 91), and left that of the *Sophonisba* open to doubt. Seen in the right context, however, none of these paintings gives any reason for doubt.

It has been assumed, wrongly, that Saskia may have been the model for this figure[1].

5. Documents and sources

None.

6. Graphic reproductions

None.

7. Copies

1. Drawing 25.7 × 20.2 cm, signed in black ink: <*F: bol. fc*>, brush in black ink and grey and black wash over black chalk, heightened with white. Amsterdam, Rijksprentenkabinet (Sumowski *Drawings* I, p. 276, no. 126; our fig. 6). A faithful copy, with rather narrower framing. Although the signature is unlike any authentic Bol signature and may well have been added later, the attribution to Bol seems plausible, and the drawing may be seen as one of the numerous copies that were made in 1635–37 in Rembrandt's studio after paintings by him (see also Introduction, Chapter II).

8. Provenance

- Coll. Lord James Somerville; Mrs Louisa Harriet Somerville, Melrose (Scotland), sale London (Christie's) 21 November 1924, no. 123.
- Dealer Lord Joseph Duveen, New York.
- Coll. Marczell von Nemes, sale Munich 16 June 1931, no. 59.
- Coll Dr Axel Wenner-Gren, Stockholm.
- Sale London (Sotheby's) 24 March 1965, no. 21.
- Coll. Julius Weitzner, London.
- Sale Paris (Galliéra) 6 June 1975, no. 27.
- Paris, private collection, until 1988.

9. Summary

The painting is marked by a strong chiaroscuro, designed to give plastic form and a suggestion of depth. The manner of painting is relatively broad, though in some components such as the woman's left hand the detail is quite thorough. In the less fully worked up passages the manner is rapid and sometimes bold. No. A 114 belongs to a group of paintings of lifesize figures in fanciful costume, mostly on a classic theme, that were done around 1633–35. They invite comparison with portraits, but certainly must not be seen as such. In this the *Minerva* comes closest to the 1634 Madrid *Sophonisba* (no. A 94). It must be seen as a wholly autograph work from 1635, as is confirmed by the signature and date it bears.

REFERENCES

1 Br. 469.
2 Van Gelder 1953, p. 296 (p. 24).
3 Sumowski 1957/58, p. 224.
4 Gerson 94; Br.-Gerson 469.

A 115 Portrait of Philips Lucasz. (companion-piece of no. C 111) 1635

LONDON, THE NATIONAL GALLERY, NO. 850

HDG 660; BR. 202; BAUCH 376; GERSON 178

1. Summarized opinion

A well preserved and mostly authentic painting from 1635, in which however the collar and remaining costume together with an originally visible left hand seem to have been executed by an assistant. As early as the 17th century the format was altered from rectangular to oval; the hand was evidently overpainted at that time.

2. Description of subject

The sitter is seen down to the waist against a grey curtain hanging in folds; he faces three-quarters right, and looks towards the viewer. He wears a flat lace-edged collar over a black cloak that hangs from his right shoulder and leaves exposed the shiny sleeve of a dark grey doublet made from a napped cloth. The cloak can be seen on the extreme right, draped in folds over the man's left arm. A gold chain hangs down from under the collar, with four or five rows of links running downwards from his right shoulder. 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 day- and artifical light, out of the frame; examined again in October 1982 (E.v.d.W.) with the aid of a microscope. Six X-ray prints, together covering the whole painting, were received later from the museum.

Support

DESCRIPTION: Oak panel, grain vertical, oval 79.5 × 58.9 cm. Thickness *c.* 1.4 cm. Single plank. Back bevelled at the bottom along a straight ridge, and traces of straight bevelling apparent at right and left but none at the top; this indicates that the panel was originally not oval (see also *Paint layer*, CONDITION).
SCIENTIFIC DATA: Dendrochronology (Prof. Dr J. Bauch and Prof. Dr D. Eckstein, Hamburg) provided no date but did show the panel to be a radial board.

Ground

DESCRIPTION: A light yellow-brown is exposed in open patches in the white of the eye, and shows through in translucent areas — in the shadows, in the hair and to some extent in dark parts of the background.
SCIENTIFIC DATA: Two cross-sections of samples taken by Mrs Joyce Plesters of the Scientific Department of the National Gallery show a double ground. The bottom layer contains chalk and possibly some white lead in a binding medium that is — or has turned — yellow. Over this layer there is a thin layer containing lumps of white lead and some orangish and brown pigment. In one of these cross-sections there is a thin layer of yellowed medium between the two main layers.

Paint layer

CONDITION: Generally good. Somewhat worn in the dark parts of the background, where there is also some paint loss in patches running vertically with the grain. The paintstrokes end abruptly along the edges, and here and there the paint layer is somewhat crumbly, obviously due to the panel having been sawn at a later date. Craquelure: a fine and regular net pattern in the collar.
DESCRIPTION: The painting technique can be readily appreciated with the naked eye and with the microscope in this evidently rapidly-done work. Using the procedure already described as routine (see Vol. I, Introduction Chapter II, pp. 20ff) a first lay-in was made in tones and lines of translucent brown paint over the ivory-coloured ground. The ground and this underpainting and underdrawing are visible in, for instance, the eyebrow on the right, the eyes and occasionally in the hair, and they show through at many places in the shadow side of the face. Some light areas have been underpainted with light paint containing white lead; areas like this show through in the nose and the lit part of the cheek. The collar, too, is similarly underpainted. In the shadow parts of the lefthand half of the collar this underpainting appears somewhat grey. Whereas in most portraits the ground and underpainting are to some extent visible in the dark areas of the background, in this painting the curtain forming the background is painted almost entirely opaquely in fairly thin greys and thin black, with lighter strokes showing the sheen of light. The paint used for the curtain along the edges of the figure is, as one would expect, overlapped to some extent by that used for the figure — the paint of large areas of the hair, together with that of the neck, collar and costume. Only along the righthand side of the hair and the cheek on the shadow side does the paint of the background, remarkably, lie over that of the figure. This can probably be explained by the shadows in the righthand side of the head having already been executed in the underpainting stage as we see them today.

The paint of the collar overlaps both that of the costume and — though only at one point — the flesh colour of the neck. Otherwise the neck and collar are separated by a narrow gap in which the underpainting is visible; this can perhaps been seen as support for the assumption made below that the collar was executed by another hand.

In the manner of painting in the head one is struck by the rapidity with which this was done; at many places it is plain that the paint was applied wet-in-wet. By one lock of hair the thick paint of the forehead has even been pressed to one side as the lock was done. The hair is further detailed, over the brown underpainting, with dark brown strokes and lighter sheens of light. At many points it is possible to notice how at the end of a stroke the bristles of an obviously quite hard brush made scratchmarks in the underlying paint. In the head the shadow parts were the first to be worked up, after which the lit areas were executed relatively thinly with small brushstrokes; only then were the highest lights added in thicker paint. This procedure can be readily followed in the area around the lefthand eye, though the same sequence can also be made out in the righthand half of the face. The white of the eye was also added at a late stage. The speed at which the artist worked can also be detected from the almost careless way black accents were used to place the nostrils, mouth-line, shadow line between neck and collar and the pupils (done as thick spots).

The white of the collar is laid with firm strokes over the underpainting that is apparent in the relief; at some places, in particular in the lobes of the lace, white highlights have been set down and the pattern of the lace then suggested with lively and sometimes chaotically applied lines and dots. After this, the chain glimpsed through interstices in the lace was done with short strokes of thick yellow paint. And finally, black paint was used to retouch the figuring in the lace. The part of the collar in shadow is indicated cursorily in a very light grey, with a few strokes of darker grey.

In the black costume only the sleeve, with a black nap, on the left is modelled extensively with grey sheens and black shadows. On top of the black lies the chain, painted in thick ochre yellow and yellow. This ends abruptly on the right beneath a black in which, in relief, one can see the underlying paint of the man's left hand; the black placed over this differs from the rest, shows a fairly wide craquelure, and proved to be readily soluble[1]. On the far right curving brushstrokes in grey show the folds of the cloak draped over the arm.
SCIENTIFIC DATA: Of the two samples mentioned under *Ground*, SCIENTIFIC DATA, that at the lower left was taken from the extreme edge of the (sawn-off) panel, where the sheen is on the sleeve. Lying over the ground there is a very smooth black paint

Fig. 1. Panel 79.5 × 58.9 cm



Fig. 2. X-Ray



layer — probably that used for the black costume. On this, matching the sheen on the clothing, there is a grey layer containing little lumps of a white pigment (no doubt white lead) and fairly large particles of black pigment.

The other sample was taken from the lace edging of the collar, by the edge of the lefthand shoulder. A black layer lying on the ground has visible grains of pigment undoubtedly belonging to the costume which, as might be expected, runs a little beneath the contour of the collar. On top of this layer there is an opaque layer of white; it may with some caution be deduced from the X-ray that the border of the light underpainting remains at this point a few centimetres inside the final outline of the collar, so that the underpainting does not fall within the sampling area. It is noteworthy that in both cross-sections the underpainting is absent, an indication that it was executed very sparingly.

The cross-section of a shallow sample taken from the overpainted hand shows (beneath the black pigment grains of the overpainting embedded in what is presumably a layer of varnish) a layer containing white, yellowish and orangish pigment grains, evidently the light flesh tint of the hand.

X-Rays

The reserve for the hair appears clearly in the slightly radioabsorbent central area of the background; the hair to the left of the ear seems to have been extended slightly over the background during execution. In the background the sheens of light on the curtain can be traced here and there. The head appears in the lit areas as a pattern of small brushstrokes clustered together to make a solid structure.

The radiographic image of the collar shows, besides what is plainly the light underlayer, occasional rather random white accents that in their intensity do not match what one would expect from the final execution. The chain and the left hand (the latter now painted out) can be followed quite distinctly. The part of the collar in shadow on the righthand shoulder is seen to have been, as a whole, somewhat lower in an earlier stage (perhaps only as an underpainting, though it may also already have been worked up); in its present position it is (beginning with the slightly bulging part) taken out over the background, and part of the first version or underpainting is covered by the black of the clothing. At the lower left sheens of light on the clothing are underpainted differently from their final execution.

Signature

In the background on the right, slightly below centre, in a dark and somewhat worn patch <*Rembrandt/1635*>. Though worn and partly reinforced — most clearly in the *b, n* and the last three figures of the date — the inscription appears to be basically authentic.

Varnish

No special remarks.

4. Comments

The direct and subtle way a bold but totally controlled handling of paint is used to suggest the fleshy face and renders the atmosphere of the surrounding space convinces one entirely of Rembrandt's authorship. The date inscribed, 1635, fits in well with our picture of Rembrandt's stylistic development which in that year led to an extremely terse rendering of form, with details suggested rather than described. The motif of a curtain hanging in folds used for the background reminds one of the full-length portraits of the Elisons in Boston (nos. A 98 and A 99) and those of Marten Soolmans and Oopjen Coppit (nos. A 100 and A 101), all of 1634, and is so far as we know used in bust portraits only in the present man's portrait and its companion-piece (no. C 111). Yet it is very questionable whether the whole of the painting comes from Rembrandt's hand. There is reason to doubt this first of all in the execution of the lace collar (for more on this, see Vol. II, Introduction, Chapter III). The way this is worked, with partly bold flicks and strokes in white and small lines and dots in grey and black, does not always show the proper balance between an interesting brushwork and a convincing suggestion of a regular lace pattern, such as we are used to seeing in Rembrandt's autograph lace collars from the years 1633 and 1634 (cf. nos. A 78, A 79, A 84, A 100 and A 101). Compared to these, the effect lacks firm structure and verges on the chaotic. Once one has become attuned to seeing this, one realizes that neither the rather confused rendering of the gold chain (where it is already hard to tell whether it has four or five rows) nor the somewhat superficial execution of the shiny sleeve are such that they can really be thought of as by Rembrandt himself. It can be assumed that Rembrandt — besides in all probability doing the whole underpainting — dealt himself with the curtain providing the background and the head, and left the costume including the left hand (now overpainted and, as we have said, visible only in relief and in the X-ray) to an assistant. The same assistant was probably responsible for the execution of the companion piece (no. C 111; see *Comments* in that entry).

A jarring note here is the strong accent on the lit sleeve, which runs to the present edge of the panel; normally in Rembrandt's portraits the detail drops off sharply towards the edges. This unusual element can however be explained by a change in format. MacLaren[1] already pointed to the unmistakeable evidence of the panel having been sawn — the partly crumbling termination of the paint layer and the abrupt end to brushstrokes along the present edge (which furthermore cuts through the cuff of the left hand — now overpainted — visible in the radiograph). To this one may add that the bevelling on the back of the panel, where it has not been lost, is along straight ridges. The panel was without any doubt originally rectangular, and to judge from the extent to which bevelling disappeared during the sawing it has lost most at the top, a certain amount at right and left, and least at the bottom. Bearing in mind the relatively thick panel (a radial board) one must reckon on the bevelling having been quite wide, and the dimensions of the rectangle can be put at *c.* 85 × 65 cm. This makes the format comparable to that of the *Portrait of Antonie Coopal*, likewise of 1635 and probably done by a workshop assistant (cf. no. C 108), which in the lighting of the head exactly

Fig. 3. Detail (1 : 1)



Fig. 4. Detail during cleaning, 1977 (1 : 1)



matches the *Portrait of Philips Lucasz.* and can perhaps give us some idea of the composition intended for the latter. The thought that its original format was like that of the *Portrait of Antonie Coopal* is borne out by the fact that it shows a signature at the same place, though missing the *f.* of 'fecit' (for which the present edge only partly leaves space).

MacLaren concluded that the overpainting of the left hand was not the work of Rembrandt from the varying consistency of the black used there; he moreover reports that 'the overlying paint was removed from parts of the third and fourth fingers when the picture was cleaned in 1941–42 but as the hand was judged unfinished they were covered again'[1]. The hand was exposed in its entirety, and covered again for the same reason, during restoration in 1977[2]. One has to assume however that, whatever its present state, the hand was in fact finished; this follows from the photographs taken in April 1977 of the exposed hand (fig. 4), which indicate that the hand and chain have indeed suffered (from being scraped off?) but show definitely more detail than one would expect of an underpainting — in particular, glistens on a ring and the fingernails and an indication of crosswise folds of skin on the fingers.

There can be little doubt that the painting-out of the hand and the change of the panel to an oval shape are connected — with the altering of the panel's format, the arm and hand on the right will have looked awkward. If the painting-out was in fact not Rembrandt's work, but was done later, then this means that the change in shape, too, happened later. There is support for this assumption in the fact that

Fig. 5. Inscription on the back of the *Portrait of Petronella Buys* (no. C 111)



along the present edge the paint is partly fractured and thus must have been hard and brittle when the panel was sawn. It is, besides, hard to imagine that those commissioning the portrait suddenly changed their minds and wanted an oval instead of a rectangular portrait. It may be commented that this is not the only instance of a rectangular panel being later reduced to an oval (see Vol. II, Chapter I, p. 5 note 7).

Unhappily, nothing is known of the fate of the painting between 1655 (when it was listed in an inventory mentioned below) and 1836 (when John Smith[3] described it as oval), and it remains unclear when it was sawn to make an oval. This must however have been still in the 17th century; this can be deduced from the paper that is pasted round the edges of the back of the panel, which consists of fragments of a printed list of French naval appointments, the earliest of which is 1641 and the latest 1673[1]. Towards the end of the 17th century oval portraits were back in fashion — this much is evident from, for example, a series of oval portraits of the governors of the Rotterdam Chamber of the East India Company that were painted in the final years of the century by Pieter van der Werff and others, and some of which were copied from rectangular prototypes (Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam, cat. 1976, pp. 706ff, inv. nos. A 4490ff). A date for the sawing of the panel late in the 17th century would also tie in with the handwriting and spelling of the inscription on the back of the panel not of the man's portrait (where it has become wholly illegible) but of the woman's (fig. 5; see also no. C 111 under 5. *Documents and sources*); it may be assumed that this inscription — which according to the text seems to date from before the death of Petronella Buys (buried on 3 October 1670) and her second husband (buried on 25 August 1671) — was appended at the time of the sawing.

The identity of the sitter was discovered by Hofstede de Groot[4]. Working from the inscription on the back of the *Portrait of Petronella Buys*, he assumed that no. A 115 was its pendant, and thus must show her husband Philips Lucasz. He saw confirmation of this in the 4- or 5-row gold chain worn by the sitter over his right shoulder; the East India Company used to make a gift of this kind to commanders of its returning convoys when they docked safely. More specific confirmation was found by I.H. van Eeghen[5] in a mention in 1655 of two portraits of 'de heer "Placas" ' (to be read as P. Lucas) and his wife painted by Rembrandt in 1635, in the estate of Philips Lucasz.'s brother-in-law Jacques Specx in 1655 (see 5. *Documents and sources*). Given this evidence, there can be no doubt that Hofstede de Groot's identification is correct.

According to the information provided by Hofstede de Groot[4], Van Eeghen[5] and Coolhaas[6], Philips Lucasz. (or Lucasse) was born in the final years of the 16th century in Middelburg, Zeeland. In 1625 he became the East India Company's Chief Trader (Opperkoopman) and 'Secunde' in Amboina (in the Moluccas), where he was governor from 1628 to 1631, and in 1631 was Commissioner Extraordinary of the Indies. He was married in the Indies to Petronella Buys (1605–1670), and came back to the Netherlands as commander of a return convoy on 20 December 1633 (probably together with his wife). On 12 April 1635 he was one of the witnesses at the baptism of a son of his brother-in-law Jacques Specx, one-time Governor-General of the Indies, and Maria Odilia Buys, sister to Petronella. On 2 May 1635, appointed Director-General for Trade, he sailed from Texel for Batavia, where he arrived on 20 September of that year. In September 1640 he was put in command of a convoy to Ceylon, and died at sea on 5 March 1641. His wife travelled back to the Netherlands with the return convoy of that year, and was remarried in January 1646 to Jean Cardon, several times burgomaster of Flushing in Zeeland.

It follows from the above that no. A 115 (and its companion-piece) must have been painted before 2 May 1635. It may be deduced that it remained in the Netherlands when Philips Lucasz. left for the Indies from the fact that in 1655 the portraits of the couple were listed in the estate of Jacques Specx, and left to his daughter Maria. From this one may conclude that the portraits were either commissioned by Philips Lucasz. and Petronella Buys and given to her sister and brother-in-law as a present (as Van Eeghen believed), or were commisioned by Specx.

5. Documents and sources

As was known to Hofstede de Groot[4], there were 'twee conterfeytsels van den Hr Placas [to be read as P. Lucas] sal[ig]er en syn huysvrouw a° 1635 gedaen door Rembrant' (two likenesses, of Hr Placas of blessed memory and his wife in the year 1635, done by Rembrant) mentioned in the division of the estate, dated 31 August 1655, of Jacques Specx who was buried in Amsterdam on 22 July 1652 and had been married to Maria Odilia Buys, the sister of Philips Lucasz's wife Petronella[5]. The portraits were willed to Jacques' daughter Maria Specx (baptized on 10 June 1636), the wife of Bartholomeus de Gruyter of Utrecht[6].

Fig. 6. Detail with signature (1 : 1)



Vaguely visible remains of an inscription on the back of the panel are not legible, and it cannot even be made out whether the letters are of the same type as those of the inscription on the back of the *Portrait of Petronella Buys* (no. C 111).

6. Graphic reproductions

None.

7. Copies

None.

8. Provenance

*- Owned by Jacques Specx, brother-in-law of the sitter; apparently commissioned by him or gifted to him by Lucasz.
*- Coll. Maria Specx (1636-?), wife of Bartholomeus de Gruyter of Utrecht (see 5. *Documents and sources*).
- Coll. Sir. Robert Peel, Bart., towards 1836, according to Smith[3].
- Purchased by the National Gallery with the Peel Collection in 1871.

9. Summary

No. A 115 appears in the main a characteristic specimen of Rembrandt's portraiture from 1635. In the head the bold but controlled brushwork creates a powerful suggestion of plasticity and depth. The execution of the collar however prompts the belief that an assistant painted this and the costume. The same assistant is probably also the author of the companion-piece, the *Portrait of Petronella Buys* (no. C 111).

As can be seen from various features of the panel, this was originally not oval but rectangular; at the time of the change in shape, which took place later but still in the 17th century, a hand was overpainted.

From biographical information on Philips Lucasz. it can be deduced that the portraits of him and his wife were done before May 1635.

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3 J. Smith, *A catalogue raisonné of the work of the most eminent Dutch, Flemish and French painters* . . . VII, London 1836, no. 488.
4 C. Hofstede de Groot, 'Rembrandts portretten van Philips Lucasse en Petronella Buys', *O.H.* 31 (1913), pp. 236-240.
5 I.H. v[an] E[eghen], 'De portretten van Philips Lucas en Petronella Buys', *Amstelodamum. Maandblad* . . . 43 (1956), p. 116.
6 W.P. Coolhaas, *Het huis 'De Dubbele Arend'*, Amsterdam 1973, pp. 49-62.
7 HdG 667a.

A 116 The blinding of Samson

[1636]

FRANKFURT-AM-MAIN, STÄDELSCHES KUNSTINSTITUT, INV. NO. 1383

HdG 33; BR. 501; BAUCH 15; GERSON 76

1. Summarized opinion

A generally very well preserved, autograph work, inscribed with the date of 1636. On the grounds of its dimensions and complicated composition with lifesize figures it may be seen as one of Rembrandt's most ambitious history paintings from the mid 1630s.

2. Description of subject

The subject is taken from Judges 16:21. After Samson had finally revealed the secret of his strength, Delilah had his seven locks of hair shaved off and when he awoke 'the Philistines took him, and put out his eyes'.

The action takes place in a shallow space closed on the left at the back by a partly-visible stone archway and two dark curtains, hanging open with the light entering between them and falling mainly onto the body of Samson. He lies in the foreground, with his head to the right, and is held from behind by one of the Philistines, whose helmet is falling from his head. Samson's left foot and left elbow are pressed to the ground, and his right foot — tensed up to the toes — flails in the air as he struggles. A soldier, helmeted and clad in armour down to the hand, leans over Samson, holds him by the beard, and thrusts a dagger (more accurately, a kris) into his right eye; a second soldier, just behind the first, holds Samson's right wrist caught in a chain to which is attached an open manacle. On the extreme right, in the half-shadow, can be seen a figure wearing a sword in his raised right hand. In the left foreground a man stands out dark against the light archway; standing with the legs wide-braced, he is seen obliquely from behind as, leaning forward, he points a partizan (a halberd-like weapon) at Samson's face; he wears a cuirass over red clothing, and over his left shoulder and draped round his waist the skin of a beast of prey (a leopard?) with a dangling claw. On his head a cloth is wrapped round a fur cap, and an oriental sword hangs in a scabbard on his left side. Beside him to the left a table is covered with a cloth, with on it a gold-plated, lidded jug and a partly-visible basin; a blue belt, wrinkled in fine folds and with a gold clasp, hangs over the edge of the table.

Behind Samson's legs Delilah (with her chain-belt and earring flying out diagonally) is half-lit as she rushes towards the light on the left. A transparent veil covers her shoulders; her right hand holds a large pair of shears, while the left clasps a bunch of hair cut from Samson's head. Beside her to the right a grey, rectangular object is seen foreshortened; a row of copper nail-heads suggest that this is the back of a chair, which she has evidently just overturned. To the left of her, by the lit hand holding the shears, there is a horizontal fringe that forms part of a light blue area which appears to be a wall-hanging, though this is not clearly delimited and towards the bottom merges with large, diagonal folds (alongside Samson's left knee) that might belong to the curtain hanging on the right but ought perhaps rather to be understood as belonging to a separate bedcovering or sheet.

3. Observations and technical information

Working conditions

Examined on 8 June 1968 (J.B., S.H.L.) in good artificial light and in the frame. Examined again on 14–15 November 1982 (i.e. after cleaning) (J.B., E.v.d.W.) in good daylight, with the aid of a UV lamp and a large number of X-ray films, together covering almost the whole canvas (with a few gaps); a film of the right foot of the man with the partizan was received on this occasion, together with a photograph of a mosaic of 33 X-ray films covering about three-quarters of the painting, but not joining perfectly everywhere (fig. 2).

Support

DESCRIPTION: Canvas, lined *c.* 206 × 276 cm, not including an added strip some 30 cm wide at the top, and strips of the lining canvas on either side that (being about 15 cm wide on the left and 12 cm wide on the right) bring the overall dimensions to 235.5 × 302 cm. Despite some confusion there has been on this point (see *4. Comments*) there is, if only because of the kind of paint and of the craquelure, no doubt that these strips are later additions. Since restoration in 1981 they have, therefore been hidden behind the frame. A horizontal seam runs across the original canvas at exactly half-height.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: The original canvas shows more or less clear cusping on all four sides. This is most pronounced at the top and bottom, extending about 20 and 24 cm into the canvas respectively. Apart from the usual trimming-off of strips a few centimetres wide there will therefore be hardly anything missing on these edges. The pitch of the cusping varies from 10–13 cm at the top and from 10–12 cm at the bottom; two cusps at the bottom measure 19 and 21.5 cm respectively, but these must probably be seen as double cusps where the tension at the middle tacking point was too weak to cause any evident distortion in the weave. The cusping is less obvious to the left and right, where on both sides it stretches *c.* 8 cm inwards and is so vague at the outer edge that it has to be assumed that strips are missing on both sides. Since measurements made on surviving 17th-century canvases have shown that distortion to the weave can extend considerably deeper in the weft than in the warp direction (differences of up to 10 cm have been recorded), the strips missing on the left and right can be estimated as having been about 10 cm wide at most. Threadcount: upper strip 13.8 vertical threads/cm (12–15) and 12.4 horizontal threads/cm (12–14), lower strip 14.4 vertical threads/cm (13.8–15) and 12.4 horizontal threads/cm (11.8–13). In view of the direction of the seam and of the assumed strip-width, and partly because of the greater irregularity in the density of the horizontal threads, it can with certainty be assumed that the warp is horizontal.

The threadcount coincides so closely with that of the canvas of the *Danae* (no. A 119) that it can, with some reservation, be assumed that both canvases came from the same bolt.

Ground

DESCRIPTION: A light ground is visible in the scratchmarks in Delilah's hair.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

Paint layer

CONDITION: Generally good. The paint surface has for the most part kept its original character, and damages that have given rise to retouches are only local. Along the bottom edge, for instance, to right and left of centre, a narrow strip of paint has been lost, evidently through water damage. To the left of Samson's mouth, in the armour-covered hand of the foremost soldier, a horizontal damage that is clearly seen in the X-ray has been painted over, and a similar retouch can be seen in the toes of his right foot. A small and almost rectangular overpainting, with open cracks, is visible in the dark area to the left of the head of the front armour-clad soldier. Old retouches are also to be found, for instance to the left of Samson's left fist (just above, and extending partly into, the signature). The shadow in Delilah's face has been strengthened, probably by a later hand. Overpaintings that must have been meant to merge the added strips into the painting on the original canvas can be made out on the left, level with the knee of the standing man with the partizan, in the form of curving paintstrokes showing a decorative pattern in the tablecloth that do not occur elsewhere in the original portion. There are numerous retouches of more recent date. Craquelure: an irregular pattern extends almost uniformly over the paint surface, varying somewhat in size from one area to another.

DESCRIPTION: The paint is generally opaque and applied thickly, most so in the catchlights on the clothing and weapons; one of the most thinly painted passages is the chairback to the right of Delilah, where a rather patchy grey lies over a brown underpainting. The manner of painting is bold and broad almost everywhere. The colour-scheme is, within a frame of dark grey, governed mainly by the lighter grey and various tints of light blue used in the opening between the curtains, and by the blue of Delilah's clothing, the strong red areas and accents in the figure of the man standing on the left and in the tassel hanging from his partizan, the light yellow of Samson's tunic, the mixed tints (grey, salmon pink and white) of his trousers, and the dark and lighter greys of the weapons and armours, which have thick white catchlights and reflexions of light in a variety of colours.

The curtain closing off the picture on the left is done in dark grey with strokes of a lighter grey. The lighter blue-grey of the view through the archway is thickest below the left hand of the man with the partizan, where it seems to lie against and partly over the paint of the curtain, his hand and the pommel of his sword, while the hairs of the animal-skin are in turn placed over the grey. The masonry arch to the left of Delilah is executed in a thick, light grey that towards the right merges into a darker and somewhat brownish grey. A light, diagonal stroke marks the edge of the curtain, painted thinly at the top in brownish grey with strokes of black indicating the folds, and lively strokes of a blue-grey further down. Below Delilah's arm the light grey continues for a little way, and is then bordered horizontally by a light blue that is first set fairly thickly over the grey paint and in which a line of fringing is then suggested with strong and mainly vertical strokes; downwards, this passage changes in long oblique strokes of light blue-grey and yellow-white along Samson's left knee. Standing out against this light background is Delilah's right hand, done in a light and mainly warm flesh colour and white with light grey showing the shadows — only a string of pearls around her wrist shows, in addition to catchligths, dark lines to outline the shapes; so do Samson's right foot (painted in a yellowish flesh colour, with a little pink and grey in the heel and partly outlined in black), the sharply outlined light blue of Delilah's robe (with ornamented stripes done with strokes of blue and touches of broken white), and the predominantly light colours of Samson's breeches and his left calf and foot (which differ from the background not at all in tonal value and only slightly in colour). The foot is sketched in yellowish and rather pinkish flesh colour, with strokes of light red that offer hardly any contrast between the tones. It may be deduced, from the colour of paint that can be seen through small discontinuities in the red of the sheen of light along the top edge of the partizan held by the man in the foreground, that Delilah's gown was initially painted in a darker blue.

The man with the partizan is painted broadly in a variety of mostly dark browns and red, with bold strokes of red on the right sleeve and crisp accents of light in white on the left. His outline is interrupted by lacing and ribbons in a translucent red; that of the left arm is now formed (after having, according to the X-ray, originally bounded a smaller shape) by the paint of the background, placed just over a red that shows through. His right hand is done in a dark brown that makes a strong contrast with the background, with touches of a quite dark flesh colour along the edging of light, with some red in the shadow. Between his legs, where there is a greyish autograph retouch in the background paint, greys with strokes of light blue and white and light brown represent drapery. The glow of light on the floor, otherwise done in browns, is in a somewhat ruddy sand colour (close to flesh colour in tint). To the left of this figure, the tablecloth is painted with grey paint, with a sheen of light in a cool grey and, at the bottom, decoration done with small strokes of golden yellow making no clearly distinguishable pattern. The jug and basin on the table are painted in brown, brown-yellow and golden yellow with yellowish-white highlights, while the hanging, folded belt is done with strokes of blue.

Fig. 1. Canvas *c.* 206 × 276 cm



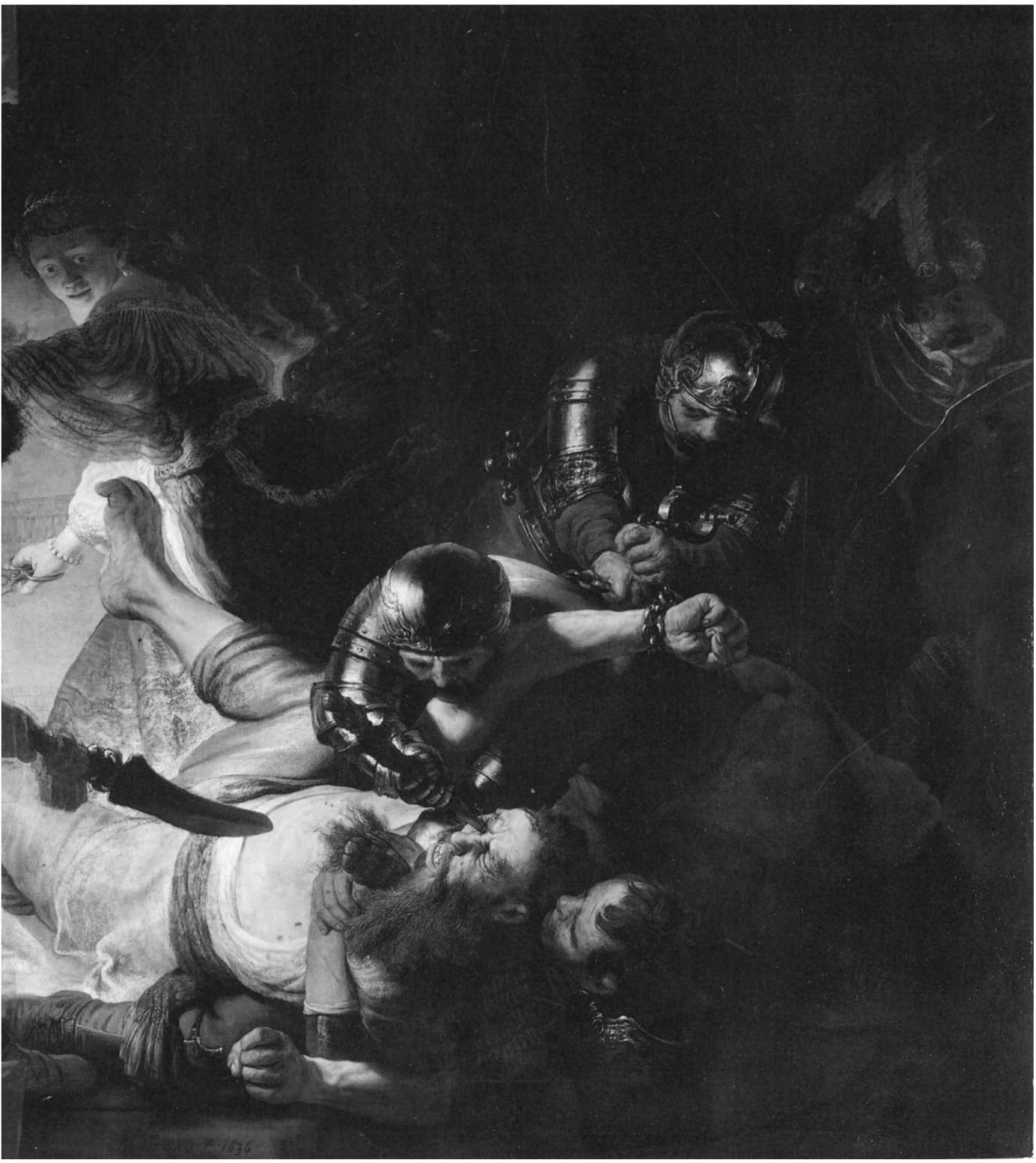
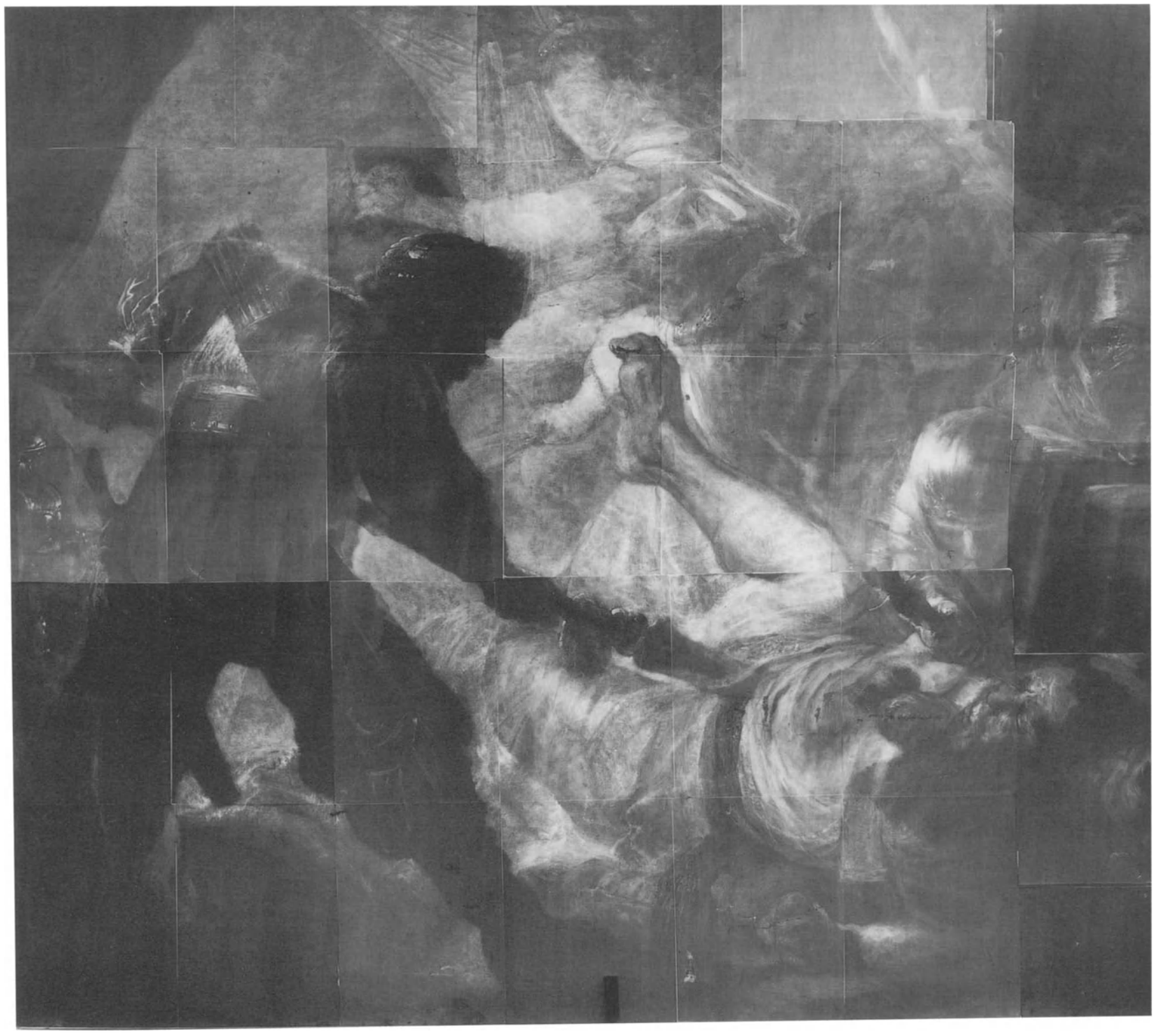


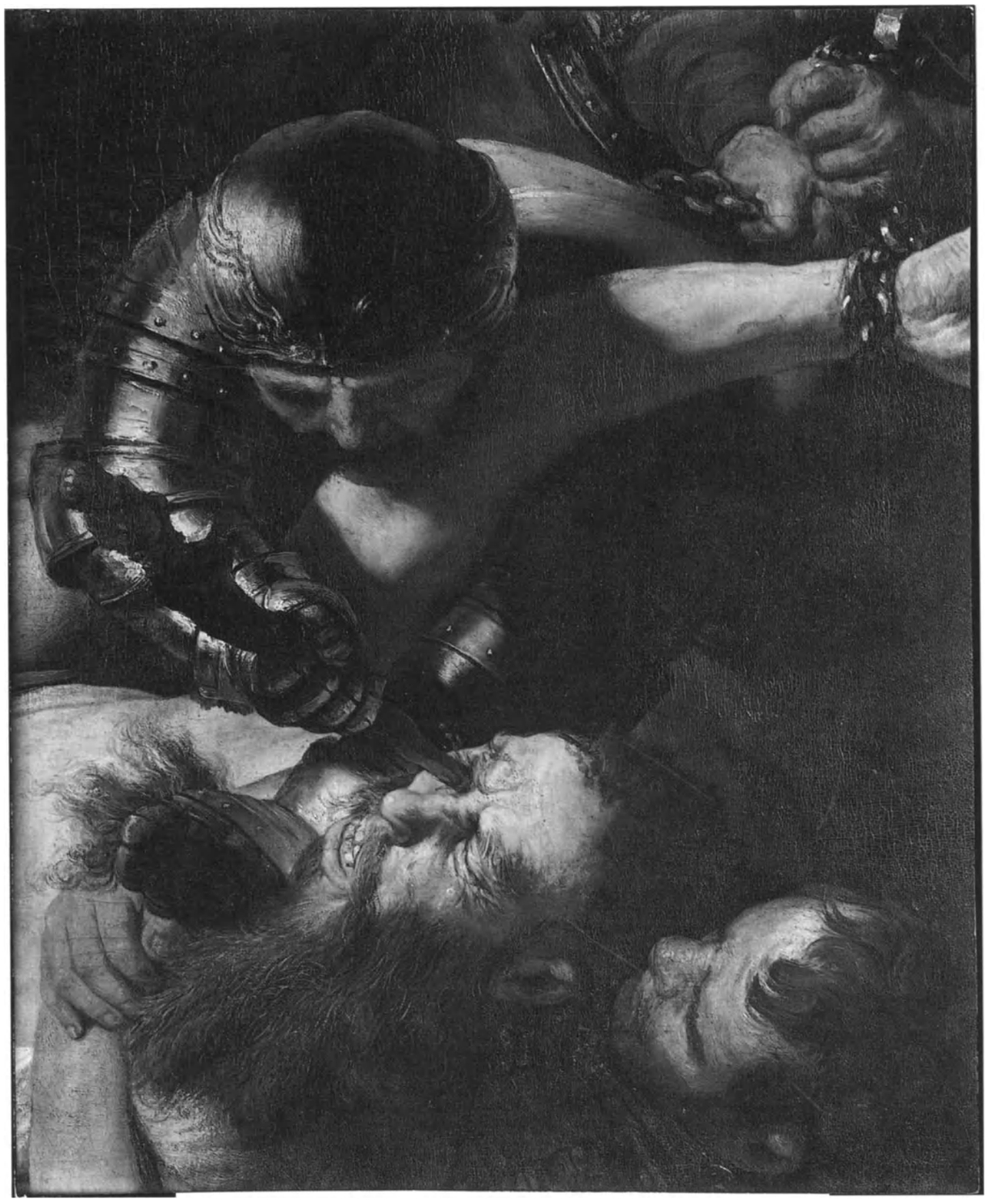
Fig. 2. X-Ray



Beneath the warm flesh colour of Samson's bare chest (which has some indication of body-hair) there are glimpses of an underlying light paint from a shirt that can be made out in the X-rays; further down the flesh colour continues under the broadly-brushed white of the shirt, where it was evidently extended out again over the flesh colour. His tunic is brushed cursorily in yellow paint with a little grey; a black can frequently be seen beneath the rather pale yellow. At the bottom, in the shadow, his sash is painted in browns and a golden yellow, while further up there are also strokes of a lighter grey in the wet yellow paint of the tunic. His breeches are executed in the broken tints already referred to, in broad, long strokes suggesting the folds. His head is done with broadly brushed yellowish flesh colour in the light, with shadows and drawn detail in greys and brown. His bare arms are painted in a similar fashion, with a strong suggestion of plasticity given by means of effective shadows, cast shadows and reflexions of light.

The Philistine lying on his back is painted broadly in muted

Fig. 3. Detail (1 : 4)



tints, with his head in a yellow-brown and light red flesh colour like those of the two armoured soldiers. Their weapons, done in dark and light greys with deftly placed white catchlights, show reflexions of light from surrounding flesh and other colours. The tunic of the second soldier has an ochre brown and a somewhat darker brown. The man seen to the right of him wears a brown cap with a plume painted broadly in brownish yellow and with brownish-yellow slashing in his tunic and an edge of light

(heightened in golden yellow) along his shield; his lower lip is painted in three shades of red with a white catchlight, and the open mouth is in strokes of grey, dark grey and black.

Delilah's head (which in the X-ray is seen to have a light underpainting) is marked by an execution that tends more to fields of colour, with fine linear accents. In the rather flat, yellowish flesh colour of the chin two shades of red show the lips, with between them a dark opening with a thin white stroke suggesting the upper teeth. The nostrils are shown by two small strokes of light brown, with a pink accent along them. The shadows along the nose, on the cheeks and on the forehead are in a fairly flat brown. A little red has been used in the upper eyelids, the corners of the eyes and both irises, which are otherwise brown and have oblique white strokes as catchlights that extend to the black pupils. In the brown of the hair sinuous scratchmarks have been made to right and left, exposing the light underlying ground. A small veil, shown in a light blue-grey, floats down from a diadem indicated with glistens of light. The veil draped over the shoulders is painted with brown-grey strokes on a grey-brown base tone; a decoration on the upper left arm is suggested with a trace of blue-green. Scratchmarks have been made in the flesh colour of Delilah's left hand to suggest hairs; the floating clump of hair itself is done in brown-grey paint with some coarse beige paint in the lit area on the left, and on the right in the dark grey of the shadow some scratchmarks that expose the lighter grey paint of the stone archway, painted earlier.

There appear to have been changes, either as contour corrections or as pentimenti. This is clearly so, for example, along the left sleeve of the man with the partizan, where the light grey background has been strengthened to cover over another form (on the evidence of the X-ray image, that of a quiver). The purpose of a number of shapes visible in the paint relief in and close to the figure of Delilah is less obvious, in particular that of a semicircular shape that appears in the archway to the left of the present position of her head.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

X-Rays

The available radiographs confirm not only the image already seen at the paint surface, of brushwork that is very firm everywhere, but also provide evidence of various less or more radical changes in form. The latter are in part hard or impossible to interpret — probably mostly where they relate to early stages in the sequence of the painting's production — and can partly also be seen as alterations made at a late stage to a first, finished version.

In the background there seem to have been at one time, to the right of Delilah, other shapes that cannot now be interpreted with any certainty. A roughly round form appears fairly dark, level with her shoulders; below this the reserve left for the back of the overturned chair is only partially respected by a radioabsorbent area coming from above. Diagonally above this to the left there are narrow radioabsorbent paintstrokes some of which penetrate into Delilah's face. Her head is remarkably strongly underpainted in light paint; one wonders whether this might indicate that the head in this position was a correction to some earlier form. In any attempt to reconstruct this passage one has to disregard a number of traces in the radiograph that plainly bear no relation to the paint layer; this applies to the radioabsorbent material applied to the rear of the canvas (the vaguely curving and roughly vertical strip to the left of Delilah's head), as well as to the material used for the ground or for lining the canvas (the long, vertical and slightly diagonal bands between Samson's right leg and the two armoured soldiers). Broad traces where the paint has been scraped away in long strokes in the light underpainting of the stone archway, looking more or less like cross-hatching in a drawing, are however connected with the picture; they appear to relate to the shadow placed on the arch in the painted execution.

As well as the head, other parts of the Delilah figure have a very distinct light underpainting. This applies to a number of items of clothing, to the left arm — the strikingly light image of which penetrates a little into the cap of the man with the partizan — and to the right arm, which seems to have been painted carefully around Samson's raised right foot. This is remarkable, and suggests a quite late execution of Delilah's present right arm, an idea that finds support in the presence, halfway between her two arms, of a shape showing up light that penetrates a little into the profile of the man with the partizan and gives the impression of matching the underpainting of an earlier version, pointing further down, of the right arm; with it in this position, her right hand must have been hidden behind the head of the man with the partizan. The present version of this arm appears in the X-ray with a rather dark-shadowed underside, from which it can be deduced that the hand does not lie over the light blue paint (yielding a light image) of the present background — which anyway is not necessarily or, given the confused radiographic image, even probably the only layer of paint at that point. From the shape that appears beneath the hand (perhaps Delilah's knee, raised as she flees?) it may be concluded that there were still changes made even after the right hand had been painted in its present position.

Samson's upper body shows a number of differences, of greater or lesser significance, from the image seen today. In his chest vestiges of light strokes and dark stripes, partly penetrating into the reserve left for the partizan blade, show that there is here the underpainting for the folds of a shirt. Beneath the armour-clad hand that grasps one half of Samson's beard one can see a broad reserve for the other half. There is interference here with a fuzzy, light shape that seems to be connected with the vertical left arm of the soldier holding Samson from behind; there is however no trace to be seen of his right hand, which is now between the two halves of the beard. The thought that the soldier lying on his back might have been added at a late stage is contradicted by the appearance in the X-rays of his left arm, painted fairly early on (since it is marked by reserves in the underpainting). It is hard to explain why his right hand should not show up.

The whole left outline of the armour-clad right arm of the front soldier leaning over Samson followed a tighter curve, so that the dagger projected beyond it and Samson's armpit was visible (where there is now the cuff of the gauntlet); Samson's right knee was also visible and the contour of the leg was, only on the right, shifted upwards a little when the contour of the armoured arm was being corrected. Rembrandt made this correction only at a very late stage, after the completed painting had already been copied — doubtless in his studio — as a painting and as a drawing (see *7. Copies*, 1 and 2). The corrections are not, or are only very slightly, apparent in the X-ray. There is however a rather dark reserve in the paint of Samson's breeches that matches the presentday elbow-piece of the armour; a repainting of the breeches at this point is confirmed by the painted copy just mentioned, where obviously an earlier version with less extensive sheens of light has been shown.

Changes that also appear to be pentimenti in a passage that was already completed (though made before the copies mentioned were made) are seen in the man with a partizan in the left foreground. It is obvious that in an earlier version he had a quiver on his back over a coat of mail and a wide, studded belt, and that the reserve for his left forearm was much narrower than the present shape of his baggy sleeve; the white highlights on the latter are clearly apparent. In the case of the righthand sleeve, too, there was no reserve left in the background for the baggy part, which consequently must have been painted over the paint of the background. An autograph retouch in the shape of an extension of the background paint is to be seen inter alia to the right of this figure, directly below the partizan and, as has already been observed at the paint surface, along the righthand contour of his left leg.

Fig. 4. Detail (1 : 1)

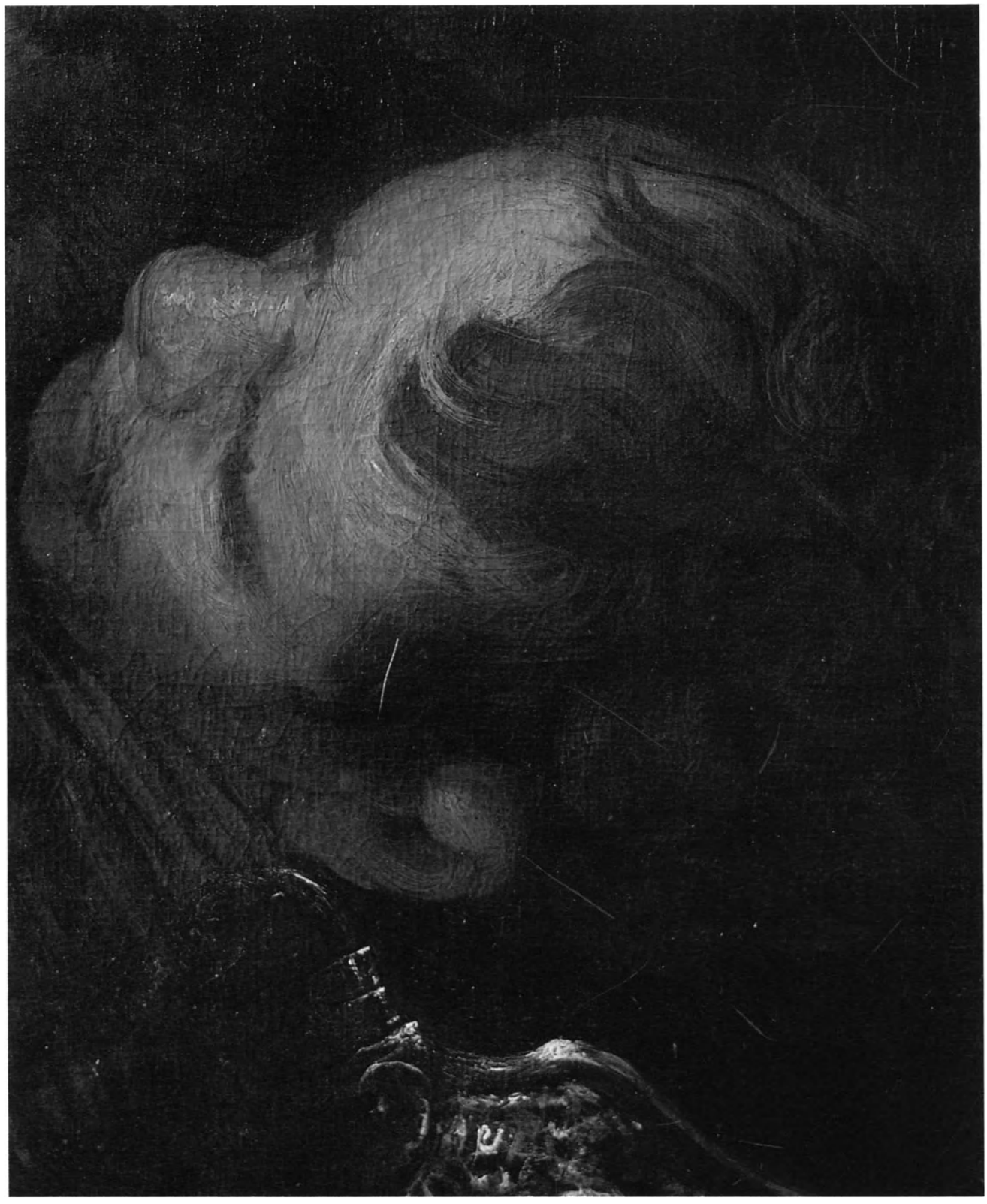


Fig. 5. Detail with signature (1 : 2)



Signature

At the bottom slightly to the left of centre in warm brown paint *<Rembrandt.f.1636.>*. The clumsy script and the upright stance of the letters do not inspire confidence in their authenticity. It is conceivable that the inscription was copied after an original one along the bottom edge when a strip of canvas was lost or folded over.

Varnish

No special remarks.

4. Comments

Seen in conjunction with the large-scale, multi-figured history paintings of the mid-1630s — the London *Belshazzar's feast* (no. A 110), the Leningrad *Abraham's sacrifice* (no. A 108) and the Berlin *Samson threatening his father-in-law* (no. A 109) of 1635 and the Leningrad *Danae* in the first version of 1636 (no. A 119) — the *Blinding of Samson* is as a composition the most ambitious. Given moreover the brilliant execution and great mastery of pictorial means, the painting is wholly convincing not only with regard to its authenticity but also in respect of the great importance it has for appreciating Rembrandt's style in those years. Even a surprising lack of clarity in the definition e.g. of the architecture and draperies to the left of Delilah and to the right of the man with the partizan, seems characteristic of his avoidance of an over-illusionistic effect, apparent in much the same way in other work such as *Abraham's sacrifice*. The rich but tightly controlled use of colour is evidence of a similar self-discipline. The cool colours of the grey and grey-blue background and the mixed colouring of Samson's clothing extend in a diagonal band against which the red accents of the man with a partizan form a contrast, finding a weak echo here and there; all the rest is done in dark browns and greys with white highlights.

The composition, like the use of colour, is determined mainly by the fall of light. The principle applied here of a concentrated shaft of light coming from the left with a dark repoussoir figure placed in front of it is certainly Caravaggesque in origin, and occurred a good deal earlier not only in Lievens (cf. *Esther's feast* at Raleigh, no. C 2) but in Rembrandt as well (e.g. in the *Stoning of S. Stephen* of 1625 in Lyon, no. A 1, and the *Two old men disputing* of 1628 in Melbourne, no. A 13). Rembrandt had not however made such consistent use of it in a large-scale work. This light here marks the diagonal spatial axis of the composition that is formed by the horizontal figure of Samson, to which the movement of Delilah, who as the victress is placed highest up in the picture area, is linked. The silhouette of the repoussoir figure on the left forms, with its surroundings, an effective colour contrast, though the action is weakly related to the composition's dynamic and spatial construction. To some extent it gives the impression of being a massive makeshift solution that, as Van Rijckevorsel[1] has pointed out, is based directly on a (slimmer) figure in an etching of a *Boarhunt* by Antonio Tempesta (Bartsch XVII, 1146; our fig. 6); borrowings from this artist's work can already be found in Rembrandt's etchings from *c.* 1630 onwards, and a large number of Tempesta etchings were in the 1656 inventory of his possessions.

Far more original, and more homogeneous in its effect, is the main group depicting the gruesome moment of Samson's being blinded, and the physical pain the hero is feeling. Campbell[2] put forward the idea that Samson's posture — with the right arm raised and right knee bent — is derived from the figure of Laocoon in the famous Hellenistic group statue; he points out that in 1656 Rembrandt owned a cast of this ('Een antieckse Laechon') (Strauss *Doc*, 1656/12, no. 329). The suggestion is in many ways an attractive one. The Laocoon figure was in antiquity an *'exemplum doloris'*, the prototype of suffering pain (see L.D. Ettlinger in: *De artibus opuscula XL. Essays in honor of Erwin Panofsky*, New York 1961, pp. 121–126), and this meaning must have still been current in the 17th century. One may assume that this is why, for instance, the figures of the beheaded Holophernes by Elsheimer (London, Wellington Museum, Apsley House) and Rubens (engraved by Cornelis Galle the Elder; cf. J. Müller Hofstede in: *Pantheon* 28, 1970, pp. 108–109), and of Prometheus by Rubens (Philadelphia Museum of Art), were given the form of a recumbent Laocoon in a number of variants. Rubens used a variation of the Laocoon figure for Samson, too, in the episode immediately preceding the instant chosen by Rembrandt — i.e. when, having just awoken, he is fending off the Philistines (oil sketch in the Chicago Art Institute; see J.S. Held, *The oil sketches of Peter Paul Rubens*, Princeton 1980, cat. no. 313). What Rembrandt's immediate source of inspiration was for using the Laocoon as Samson is for the time being unclear. A picture of the martyrdom of a saint

may well have been the basis for the composition. It is not really conceivable that Caravaggio's *Martyrdom of S. Matthew* in the S. Luigi dei Francesi in Rome was his direct model, as Stechow[3] believed, unless one takes it that he knew a reproduction of this, e.g. through the agency of Lastman[4]. It is similarly most unlikely that Rembrandt would have known Rubens' *Prometheus* and used it as a prototype, as various authors have suggested[5]. Slatkes[6] makes the surprising statement that the composition is based on a late 16th-century Mogul murder scene; but even if this were true, the painting remains a typical product of the influence of the Italian early baroque. This is evident from the composition being organised around a spatial diagonal, the lighting which is inconceivable without Caravaggio's providing a direct or indirect model, and the interpretation of the theme marked by the dramatic contrast between the physical suffering and brutality on the one hand and feminine triumph on the other. As in other Rembrandt works from these years — especially *Belshazzar's feast* and *Abraham's sacrifice* — the dramatic force of the moment is not only expressed by the momentary posture in which most of the main actors are depicted, but also emphasized by objects being shown as they fall — here, the helmet of the soldier clasping Samson from behind and (presumably) the overturned chair behind Delilah.

As in earlier works (cf. nos. A 24 and A 26), Rembrandt here stresses the historical and biblical character of the scene by the use not only of old-fashioned items of costume but also of oriental swords and a Javanese *kris*. The jug on the table could not be termed exotic, and is more a strangely asymmetric version of silverwear in the contemporaneous lobe (or ear-shell) style, another and much finer example of which may be seen in Rembrandt's work in the bed in the *Danae* of the same year, 1636. The jug is besides a permanent feature of the iconography of the Samson and Delilah theme, even when the episode concerned precedes that shown here. The motif is a play on the (non-biblical) idea that Samson was betrayed by Delilah while in a drunken stupor. Rembrandt chooses here a later and most unusual episode, probably because of the 'horror' awakened by Samson's physical suffering, which in his age was considered as a positive element aesthetically (cf. J.G. van Gelder in: *Antwerpen* 23, 1977, offprint pp. 4–7). Yet the choice of moment shown does not alter the meaning of the picture — it has to be seen as an exemplar of the power of woman, such as was popular especially in the 16th century (cf. the comments on no. A 24).

As is evident from observations at the paint surface and in the X-rays, the genesis of the painting was not without changes in the composition. While the foreground figures have, to judge from the reserves in the lighter surrounding paint that have remained intact, always had their present position and broadly also their present form, the background shows — mostly in the X-rays — traces of shapes that have since disappeared and can no longer be interpreted as a coherent whole. (For instance, the suspicion that just left of the masonry arch, level with Delilah's head, there was the head of a Philistine peering round the corner, just as there is in Rembrandt's Berlin painting no. A 24 and in the pupil's drawing in Groningen mentioned below, must remain speculative.) The unusually emphatic underpainting of the present head of Delilah, which shows up very light in the radiograph image, might be explained by Rembrandt's need to cover over earlier forms in the middle ground. Once in its present position, the figure of Delilah underwent further changes. Her right arm must, on the evidence of the light underpainting visible in the X-ray, have initially extended to the front lower down, and perhaps — though there is less certainty about this — her right leg was shown bent at the knee. It is interesting that in the area round her right hand (with the scissors) and the partizan held by the man with legs widespread there have been all kinds of changes and second thoughts; this is clear both from the X-rays and from the way areas in the paint surface can be seen to overlap. They all reveal the need to create a focus of bright light and cool colour at this point, against which the man with the partizan, and his bright red highlights, provide a contrast. Thus it seems that Delilah's gown initially was done in a far darker blue and that much of the adjacent background was given its present light tone only at a late stage, with various passages in a variety of colours (including Samson's breeches and left foot) playing a part. The man with the partizan was given his present form at a very late stage, with wide sleeves and with no quiver on his back, making his body even more massive than (compared with Tempesta's prototype) it already was. The closely-knit group of the struggling Samson and his attackers seems to have been designed as such in its broad outlines from the beginning; as a complex of diagonals intersecting each other in three-dimensional space at various levels it bears a direct resemblance to other compositions from the previous years, especially that of the Munich *Holy family* (no. A 88) and the Leningrad *Abraham's sacrifice* (no. A 108).

There have, however been a great many changes in the precise delineation of shapes and the way they are worked up. Samson's chest, for instance, was originally covered with a shirt with curving folds, and when this passage was covered over with the flesh colour of his bare chest the shirt was, along the lower edge, extended a little way over the flesh

colour; the result is that Samson's chest, as a sort of centre of interest in the central axis of the painting, helps to define his body as the hub of the whole dramatic action. The shifting outwards of the contour of the armour-clad right arm of the soldier leaning forward at the front was obviously intended as a correction; it helped to make the foreshortening of his shoulder and arm more convincing and provide a strong contrast with Samson's knee, which was for the purpose widened slightly and painted over again, this time somewhat lighter than before. This latter correction was, remarkably, carried out when the painting was not only complete but had (perhaps even twice) been copied — in a painting of similar size (until World War II in Kassel) and, it may be assumed, in a drawing in a private collection (see *7. Copies*, 1 and 2, figs. 7 and 8). Compared to the original both of these show, around the *kris* with which one of Samson's eyes is being gouged out, a different situation that was, admittedly, described by Eich[7] (in terms rather different from ours) but was not recognized as matching the state of the painting apparent in the X-ray before Rembrandt altered it at this point. The interesting conclusion is, of course, that probably both these copies or at least one of them — in that case certainly the painting — were done prior to Rembrandt's correction, and in his workshop (on the subject of workshop production of drawn and painted copies from the years 1635–37, see also Introduction, Chapter II).

No drawings by Rembrandt that might tell us about the genesis of this painting are known. A rougly-done drawing in Dresden (Ben. 93) has been linked with it, but shows the more commonly-depicted episode where Samson, asleep with his head in Delilah's lap, is being seized by the Philistine soldiers. The same applies to a drawing in Groningen (Ben. 530), which is still attributed by Benesch to Rembrandt and dated around 1642–43. This is however rather the work of a pupil, probably Ferdinand Bol, and its value for understanding Rembrandt's painting lies solely in the information it can, as a paraphrase especially with regard to the setting, provide: the position of the bed and the cloth hanging down from it in relation to the surrounding curtains (and perhaps even the heads of Philistines peering round the corner, as in Rembrandt's early painting in Berlin, no. A 24) may provide reminiscenses of the present work.

It may be taken as certain that the original canvas seen today does in fact almost match the original format, the same (two strips about 1 m or 1½ ells, wide on either side of a horizontal seam) as the original format of the *Danae* from the same year[8]. Important confirmation of this is provided by the copy already mentioned as being lost in Kassel during the Second World War (see *7. Copies*, 1) which almost matches the picture on the original canvas in its present state. The enlargements along the top (by means of an attached strip of canvas) and both sides were probably still not present when the painting was in Würzburg, i.e. up to 1751, and when it was (as Eich[7] has pointed out) copied in its original state in a painting ascribed to Johannes or Januarius Zick (see *7. Copies*, 3). They must have been made before 1760, as may be seen from a print of that year (see *6. Graphic reproductions*, 1). Until quite recently the painting was usually reproduced in this enlarged state, although it is obvious that in the broader framing the composition loses much of its solid structure — the diagonals that can be drawn in the oblong of the original canvas form a skeleton that is essential to the formal cohesion. At the time the painting was bought by the Städelsches Kunstinstitut in Frankfurt in 1905 Ludwig Justi, the current director of the institute[9], and Valentiner[10] believed the strip along the top to be original and to have been earlier mistakenly folded over, and that only the strips along the two sides were later additions; from what they write it may be deduced that at that time the two side strips were hidden behind the frame and that the latter had a curve at both of its top corners. The enlarged canvas was evidently later put into a frame that fitted it widthwise as well. Since 1981, when the painting was cleaned and examined, it has again been exhibited in its original format[7].

The matter of the original format of the painting holds special interest because of the dimensions quoted by Rembrandt himself (see *5. Documents and sources*) for the painting he sent to Constantijn Huygens in 1639 as a gift, to thank Huygens for the part he had played in Rembrandt's being commissioned by Prince Frederik Hendrik to supply the second pair of paintings in a series of pictures of the Passion. When announcing the gift in his third letter to Huygens, the painter spoke of a piece 10 feet long and 8 feet high [= 226.5 x 283 cm], a size that — if one makes allowance for the obviously approximate nature of the measurements given, and for the possibility that Rembrandt was expressing the worth of his gift in the format — corresponds reasonably well to that of the original canvas of the *Blinding of Samson* and the *Danae*. Given the fact that the *Danae* is known to have remained in Rembrandt's ownership — or at least was so around 1643 when he made changes to the painting, and in 1656 when it was described in the inventory of his possessions — the *Samson* is the most likely to have been the one he gave to Huygens. This idea has consequently, since Bode and Hofstede de Groot[11], been generally accepted in the literature; Schwartz[12] has however for no really sound reason, preferred the *Danae* (in which, incidentally, he saw a different theme). One might further wonder[13] whether the gift mentioned by Rembrandt in 1639 is identical with one that was described previously, early in 1636,

when he offered Huygens '[iets] van mijn jonsten werck' (something of my latest work), though to judge by the wording this was (as was, for instance, assumed by Gerson, *Seven letters . . .*, The Hague 1961, p. 23) more likely some of his recent etchings. Finally, there is the question of whether Huygens accepted the gift. Schwartz[12] assumed he did not. All that one knows for certain is that after a first mention of the large canvas in his letter to Huygens of 12 January 1639, Rembrandt wrote in a letter dated 27 January that he 'tegens mijns heeren begeeren dees bijgaenden douck toesenden' (was sending the accompanying canvas against my lord's wishes) with, in a postscript, the wellknown advice to hang the work in a strong light and so that it could be viewed at some distance (see *5. Documents and sources*). Evidently Huygens had, in a lost letter dated 14 January, reacted by declining the gift, but Rembrandt had read his letter 'met een sonderlin vermaeck' (with extraordinary pleasure) so Huygens' refusal may well have been a form of politeness, part of the same etiquette that called for the offering of gifts. At all events it would be going too far to conclude from this that Huygens never took delivery of the gift, and did not do so for reasons of taste that would match modern ideas of a contrast between 'classicist' and 'baroque'[14]. To sum up, we do not know for sure whether Huygens accepted a gift from Rembrandt (though given the conventions on the point it is quite likely), nor if that was the case whether it was the *Blinding of Samson* (though that is not improbable).

There is no subsequent trace at all of a large Rembrandt being owned by the Huygens family. H.E. van Gelder[15] assumes that Constantijn's grandson Constantijn Huygens IV (1675–1739) sold the painting to the dealer Gerard Hoet II (d. 1760). This assumption was however based on the premise that Hoet, who probably in 1753 sold a copy after the *Blinding of Samson* as a Rembrandt to Wilhelm VIII of Hesse-Kassel, owned the original and had this copy made, or made it himself. This now appears to be incorrect (see above, and *7. Copies*, 1), and there are today no grounds for thinking that Hoet ever owned the original. One might still surmise that Rembrandt offered Huygens not the original but a copy made in his workshop that subsequently ended up in Kassel via Hoet — a possibility that though perhaps not the most attractive ought nonetheless to be considered. Where the fate of the original is concerned, there remains a large gap in its pedigree before it turned up in the Schönborn collection in Vienna around 1751.

One conclusion can be drawn from the available information. From the fact that in 1639 Rembrandt had a large history painting available to offer to Constantijn Huygens — whether or not this was the *Blinding of Samson* — it follows that he did not necessarily paint such works to order but (bearing in mind other similar instances) probably as a rule did them on his own initiative and for the open market (see Vol. II, Introduction, Chapter IV, p. 95, and note 28a). This impression is strengthened by the occurrence of copies of works, especially from the years 1635–37, that can be assumed (or in the case of the *Blinding of Samson*, proved) to have been done in the workshop shortly after the completion of the original (on this, cf. the Introduction to the present volume, Chapter II).

Fig. 6. A. Tempesta, *Boarhunt*, etching



5. Documents and sources

In his third letter to Constantijn Huygens, dated 12 January 1639, in which Rembrandt announces the completion of the *Entombment* and *Resurrection* (nos. A 126 and A 127), that he had been painting for Prince Frederik Hendrik, he also mentions a gift intended for Huygens: 'Ende om dat mijn heer in deesen saeken voor die 2de maels bemoijt wert sal oock tot een eerkentenissen een stuck bij gedaen weesende 10 voeten lanck ende 8 voeten hooch dat sal mijn heer vereer[t] werden in sijnen Huijsen . . .' (And as my lord has been troubled in these matters for the second time, a piece 10 feet long and 8 feet high will be added as a token of gratitude, which will be presented to my lord at his home) (H. Gerson, *Seven letters by Rembrandt*, transcription I.H. van Eeghen, translation Y.D. Ovink, The Hague 1961, pp. 34–40; the last words are wrongly transcribed there as 'dat sal mijn heer vereerweerden in sijnen Huysen' and translated as 'which will be worthy of my lord's house'. Cf. Strauss *Doc.*, 1639/2, where the same reading is given).

In his fifth letter to Huygens, dated 27 January 1639 ('in haste'), Rembrandt replies to a (lost) letter of Huygens of 14 January in which the latter had obviously given it to be understood that he did not wish to accept a gift. 'Bevinden daer ue goeden gunst ende geneegentheijt soo dat ick van harten geneegen uwer obblijsier blijven ue rekumpensijve dienst ende vrienschap te doen. Soo ist door geneegentheijt tot sulx tegens mijns heeren begeeren dees bijgaenden douck toesenden hoopende dat u mijner in deesen niet versmaeden sult want het is die eersten gedachtenis die ick aen mijn heer laet' (I find there i.e. in Huygens' letter your lordship's good favour and affection so that I cordially remain obliged to you to repay with service and friendship. Thus it is by my inclination and against my lord's wish that I am sending this accompanying canvas, hoping that you will not decline this, for it is the first token I present to my lord). The letter ends with a request for speedy payment for

Fig. 7. Copy 1. Rembrandt workshop, canvas 195 × 261 cm. Formerly Kassel, Gemäldegalerie



the two Passion works, followed by a postscript: 'Mij[n] heer hangt dit stuck op een starck licht en dat men daer wijt ken afstaen soo salt best voncken' (My lord, hang this piece in a strong light and so that one can stand at a distance, then it will sparkle best) (Gerson, op.cit., pp. 50–55, where the final word is read as vouchen = voeghen, meaning 'fit'; this was corrected by W.F.H. Oldeweldt, cf. I.H. van Eeghen in: *Amstelodamum, Maandblad* . . . 49, 1962, p. 71; Strauss *Doc.*, 1639/4). There is no documentary evidence for the identification of Rembrandt's gift to Huygens with the *Blinding of Samson*, which is usually accepted in the literature.

6. Graphic reproductions

1. Engraving by Ferdinand Landerer (Stein, Austria 1730 — Vienna 1795). Inscribed: *Dessinée d'après l'Original par François Mayer — Gravé par Ferdinand Landerer 1760./Samson trahi par Dalila. Gravé d'après le Tableau original de Rembrand, qui est au Cabinet de Monsieur le Comte de Schönborn/à Vienne 1760./Large 9 pieds, 6 pouces — haut. 7 pieds, 4 pouces* [= 300.1 × 231.7 cm]. Reproduces the picture, with the added strips, in the same direction as the painting.
2. Mezzotint by Johann Jacobé (Vienna 1733–1797). Inscribed: *Peint par Rembrand 1636 — Gravé par J. Jacobé à Vienne en Autriche 1786/Samson trahi par Dalila/Dédié à Son Excellence Monseigneur le Comte de Schönborn — Heussenstamm . . .. Large 9 pieds. 6 pouces: haut. 7. pieds. 4. pouces.* [= 300.1 × 231.7 cm]. Charrington no. 96. Reproduces the picture, with the added strips, in the same direction as the painting.

7. Copies

1. Canvas 195 × 261 cm, Kassel, Gemäldegalerie (cat. 1903 no. 252; our fig. 7), destroyed in the Second World War. Described in the Hauptinventar begun in 1749, under no. 834: 'Rembrant. Simson, welchen durch die Philister die Augen ausgestochen werden dabey mit Ketten gebunden, auf Leinen in vergueldeten Rahmen vom Hoet [the art dealer Gerard Hoet II]. Höhe 6. Schuh 3. Zoll Breit 8. Schuh 2 Zoll [Rhineland feet, = 196.2 × 256.8 cm].

Its authenticity as the original was first doubted by C. Vosmaer (*Rembrandt*, The Hague 1868, p. 79), who thought of Jan Victors, but it was still regarded as autograph in 1870 by W. Bode (in: *Zeitschr. f.b. Kunst* 5, 1870, p. 241), as was the original then in the Schönborn collection in Vienna. It reproduced the original without the additions present in 1760, and on an only slightly smaller canvas. A discrepancy that was already noted (though not described entirely correctly) by Eich[7] is the narrower outline to the right arm of the soldier with a *kris*; this makes the *kris* project beyond the contour of this arm, and the arm does not meet Samson's knee. This situation matches (as may be seen in the X-rays, q.v.) an earlier state of the original. From this one has to conclude that the copy was made in Rembrandt's studio before he corrected the shape of this arm (improving the foreshortening) and slightly lengthened Samson's knee and lit it more brightly (thus creating intersections that heightened the impression of depth). The dating in the early 18th century that has up to now been mostly accepted — by Van Gelder[15] and Eich[7] — is thus discounted.
2. Brush drawing 32.2 × 39.9 cm, unknown private collection (fig. 8); published by Eich[7]. Reproduces the original in a frame that is rather larger to the top and bottom; at the top this makes the intrados of the masonry arch clearer and at the bottom gives the figures rather more room. The same difference from the original around the *kris* as in copy 1 appears here. One has to conclude that the drawing was made either after copy 1 above or after the original before Rembrandt altered it, i.e. in his workshop. The latter is a very real possibility — the style of drawing is very close to that of drawn copies of Rembrandt's paintings of the same period that were apparently produced in his workshop (cf. nos. A 112 fig. 6, A 114 fig. 6 and A 120 fig. 4).
3. Canvas 38.5 × 49.5 cm, attributed to Johannes (1702–1762) or Januarius (1730–1797) Zick, Cologne, Wallraf-Richartz-Museum (*Katalog der deutschen Gemälde von 1550 bis 1800*, 1973, no. 2387, fig. 71). Though of rather taller proportions, this poorly preserved copy does, as Eich[7] noted, reproduce the painting without the additions. If the attribution is correct, it must have been painted

Fig. 8. Copy 2. Rembrandt workshop, brush drawing 32.2 × 39.9 cm. Whereabouts unknown



between 1749, when Zick *père et fils* arrived in Würzburg, and 1751 when the original was transferred to Vienna.
4. Canvas 45.5 × 57.5 cm, private collection. Reproduces the original with the additions; reproduced by Eich[7], who dated it in the late 18th century. Perhaps identical with copy 5 below?
5. A copy by J. Abel, at the time owned by Prince Esterhazy in Vienna, was mentioned in Duchesne Ainé, *Musée de Peinture et de Sculpture . . . dessiné et gravé à l'eau forte par Réveil . . .* IV, Paris 1829, no. 242. Presumably the work of the history painter and etcher Josef Abel (Asnach, Upper Austria 1764 — Vienna 1818).

8. Provenance

— Coll. Count Friedrich-Carl von Schönborn, from 1729 Elector Bishop of Würzburg (d. 1746). Already described as in the Schönborn Gartenpalais in Vienna before 1731 (J.R. Füssli, *Allgemeines Künstler-Lexicon*, II, 1769, p. 280; cf. Yvonne Boerlin-Brodbeck, 'Johann Caspar Füssli und sein Briefwechsel mit Jean-Georges Wille. Marginalien zu Kunstliteratur und Kunstpolitik in der zweiten Hälfte des 18. Jahrhunderts', *Kunst des 17. und 18. Jahrhunderts in Zürich. Jahrbuch 1974—1977. Schweizerisches Institut für Kunstwissenschaft*, pp. 77–178, esp. 127, 173); probably taken to Würzburg in 1734, when Friedrich-Carl moved into the south wing of the castle at Würzburg, which had been completed. Moved to Vienna in 1751, after his death.
— Coll. Count Eugen Erwin von Schönborn-Buchheim, Vienna, from 1751. In the Schönbornsche Galerie, Vienna, until 1905.
— Bought by the museum in 1905.

9. Summary

With its brilliant yet tightly-controlled execution, the painting is wholly convincing as to its authenticity; that it is an original is, moreover, demonstrated by a number of changes in the composition, not all of which can however be interpreted. This is one of the most ambitious of Rembrandt's large-scale history paintings from the mid-1630s. In composition and lighting it betrays the influence of the early Italian baroque, though one can point to a variety of sources for its borrowings. The most important of these is the free use of the Laocoon figure, which as an *'exemplum doloris'* formed an appropriate model for the figure of Samson. The original canvas (which until recently was surrounded on three sides by strips added subsequently) virtually matches the original format and that of the *Danae* (no. A 119), which appears to have been painted on canvas of identical weave.

One cannot say for sure whether this painting is identical with a work presented to Huygens by Rembrandt in 1639 the dimensions of which the latter gives (in broad terms) as slightly larger than those of no. A 116.

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A 117 Susanna at the bath

1636

THE HAGUE, KONINKLIJK KABINET VAN SCHILDERIJEN, MAURITSHUIS, CAT. NO. 147

HDG 57; BR. 505; BAUCH 18; GERSON 84

Fig. 1. Panel 47.2 × 38.6 cm



Fig. 2. X-Ray



1. Summarized opinion

An authentic work, generally well preserved though not wholly in its original state, with surviving fragments of a reliable signature and date; the latter can be taken as having read 1636.

2. Description of subject

The subject is taken from the apocryphal story of Susanna attached to the Book of Daniel. A virtually naked young woman sits, lit from the left, in the centre foreground in otherwise fairly dark surroundings, turned to the left and leaning slightly forwards. Her face is turned towards the viewer, on whom the gaze is fixed. Her bent left arm is pressed to the body across the bosom, with the hair hanging down to one side falling over the raised hand. With her right hand she presses a white cloth (probably the tail of the shirt lying to the right of her) against her pubis. She wears a headband, a pearl necklace and a two-row bracelet at each wrist. The left foot is in a mule, while the right foot is placed on a mule lying askew. Her white undergarment lies on the right on a bench, over a wine-red overgarment most of which hangs down in broad folds to the ground.

To the left of her is a low stone wall, with carved decoration in which a goat's-foot can be made out. On its flat top stand a metal dish and a richly-decorated bowl doubtlessly intended to hold ointment or oil. In front of this, steps lead down to a pool, on the other side of which a fence can be seen. In the extreme left foreground there is an only partly visible low wall that throws a shadow onto the adjoining area of foreground. Behind the woman is a mass of foliage among which can be seen the heads of two men, one seen in profile, the other, with a cock's feather on his turban, bent forward and seen square-on immediately to the left of and partly hidden by the first. At the top a treetrunk emerges from the foliage. Monumental architecture is visible in the left distance, and beyond a terrace to the left of this a hill rises to meet a fairly dark sky.

3. Observations and technical information

Working conditions

Examined in October 1973 (J.B., S.H.L.) in good artificial light and out of the frame. Radiographs of the whole painting were available.

Support

DESCRIPTION: Oak panel, grain vertical, 47.2 × 38.6 cm including a strip some 4.5 cm wide that is attached at the right and must be looked on as not belonging to the original panel. Thickness on the left *c.* 0.5 cm, on the right (the original panel) *c.* 0.8 cm. The grain is wide and follows a curve, while that of the attached strip is straighter and tighter. The back has indistinct bevelling at the left and top to a width of some 3.5–4 cm, and at the bottom to a width of about 2.5 cm. As De Vries, Tóth-Ubbens and Froentjes[1] have said (p. 121), it has to be assumed that the bevelling *c.* 1.5 cm wide that the main body of the panel still shows on the right is the remains of wider bevelling part of which was sawn off to make a firmer attachment possible for the added strip. Basing themselves on the shapes of the dark spandrels at the top especially apparent in a reflectogram made of the painting (see *Paint layer*, DESCRIPTION), these authors calculated that the original panel must have been about 0.5–1 cm wider on the right, i.e. slightly less than is suggested by a rather freely drawn copy by Willem de Poorter in Berlin (see *7. Copies*, 1). While omitting parts of the composition at the left and top, the same drawing shows considerably more of the foreground along the bottom: taken together with the relatively narrow bevelling there, this makes one suspect that the original panel was not only enlarged on the right at some later date but also trimmed at the bottom. There are no grounds for the suggestion made by Schwartz[2] that the panel was at one time considerably larger to the right. The join between the two parts of the panel was reinforced with canvas that was removed; vestiges of the adhesive show up light in the radiograph.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: Dendrochronology (Prof. Dr J. Bauch, Hamburg) yielded no date.

Ground

DESCRIPTION: A light yellow-brown shows through in the sky and hill, in patches of foliage, and in discontinuities in the shadow parts of the body, and lies more clearly exposed along part of the bottom edge.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: According to De Vries, Tóth-Ubbens and Froentjes (op. cit., p. 124), a chalk ground containing white lead. That on the added strip, on the other hand, is a dark brown-grey containing umber, bone black, chalk and white lead. The same mixture was found in worked-over areas at the top of the panel (op. cit., p. 130 note 2).

Paint layer

CONDITION: Good, apart from some wearing in the hair and in thinly painted shadow areas, and possibly also in the face. Small retouches have been applied here and there, e.g. occasionally along the contour of the figure and stone wall (see also the UV photograph published by De Vries, Tóth-Ubbens and Froentjes, op. cit., p. 122). Craquelure: a pattern of very fine cracks can be seen in the light flesh areas and in the white clothing; there is a somewhat different pattern in the rather thickly-painted dark areas. The craquelure on the added panel is no different from the rest. Here and there small cracks run vertically along the join between the two parts of the panel, while elsewhere horizontal cracks cross over the join.

DESCRIPTION: The paint is in some places applied thickly; the character of the paint relief is determined wholly by the material being depicted — lumpy in the foliage, in longish strokes in the clothing and brushed smoothly in the body. Other than in thickly-painted passages the grain of the panel is clearly apparent. At the top left one can see in relief the spandrel that originally bounded the picture at that point, as is especially evident from an infrared reflectogram (De Vries, Tóth-Ubbens and Froentjes, op. cit., pp. 121–122); the spandrels at top right and left were initially not painted.

The setting shows a scale of browns and greys; in translucently and fluently painted passages on the left an underlying brown also contributes to the effect. In the sky a thin, dark grey is placed over this with short strokes running in varying directions, in the hill a somewhat lighter and more evenly brushed grey, and in the buildings thin browns with some dark internal detail. A subdued brownish yellow is used for the vague light on the balustrade and on the building rising to the right of this, where the shadow part is done in an opaque grey. The vegetation to the left of the figure is shown with a fuzzily applied dark grey; thin brushstrokes placed crosswise indicates the fence below this. The low wall on the left is rendered in a light brown, with brush drawing in dark paint. The foliage behind Susanna, is done in the same way, in this case using paint thickly. The leaves, branches and tree above are painted deftly in a mixture of dark brown, grey and black; the turbaned head of one of the elders is sketched in much the same way, and so is the profile head (as far as it is on the original panel). This area is enlivened with scattered blossoms in some red and ochre-yellow.

Susanna's body stands out against these warm, subdued colours, in creamy flesh tints that in the face merge partly into a ruddy tint, in the raised hand into a warm ochre brown and in the other into a marked pink. Small strokes of impasto paint are used carefully and gradually to build up the modelling; shadows in a rather brownish grey, along the left arm, back and legs, ensure an effect of plasticity in the figure. The paint has a distinct relief in the jewellery and draperies around the woman's

right hand. In the undergarment (rendered in whites and a very light grey) the paint is also applied thickly, giving a relief that coincides with the very fine folds. The outer garment, in which a purplish red is sparingly used, forms a reticent colour accent at the lower right. A similar limited intensification of the colour is to be found in the area to the left of Susanna, where the very effectively drawn metal vessels are done in warm yellowish brown with black and white accents, the stone wall in a mixture of brown, grey and some ochre yellow, and the foreground in a flatly-brushed yellowish grey.

In the areas on the strip attached on the right, and not belonging to the original panel, the matching of colour is very successful; the head of the elder seen in profile hardly differs in tint from its surroundings. In the folds of Susanna's undergarment, the modelling is however a little hesitant.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: De Vries, Tóth-Ubbens and Froentjes (op. cit., p. 124) found, in the white lead on both the original panel and the added strip, traces of copper, silver and tin. Yellow ochre is used as the main yellow pigment, for example in the vegetation, together with umber and brown ochre; coarse grains of white and black pigment were also found here, but no trace of green pigment. The flesh tints consist of a mixture of white lead and yellow and red ochre, in places covered with a thin red glaze. The overgarment was found to be underpainted with yellow and red ochre, white lead and carbon black; on top of this was found vermilion, and as a top layer a generously-applied glaze consisting of a red lake pigment.

In the pigments used, and in the consistency of the paint, no difference was noted between the top layer on the added strip and that on the main panel, although some difference was noticeable as regards the coarseness of some of the pigments. On the added strip there is, beneath the top layer, a thin layer of paint containing carbon black (which explains its dark image in the reflectogram), and on top of this occasionally a thin layer of red lake pigment.

In the spandrels at the top right and left there is, under the present paint surface and directly on the chalk ground, a dark grey paint that contains carbon black and some white lead.

X-Rays

The radiographic image virtually coincides with what one might expect from the surface. Very slight changes seem to have been made to the modelling of the figure — the contour of the near shoulder lies a little further to the left in the X-ray, and the breast below it was originally slightly fuller. The part of the shirt painted on the added strip shows up relatively weakly, and obviously contains much less white lead than the part on the original panel, which was more thickly painted and gives the impression of having been underpainted with some bold strokes of white. In the underpainting more of Susanna's right thigh seems to be covered with the drapery than in the final execution; the end draped over her left leg hung down further (as may also be seen through points of wearing at the paint surface). The grain of the panel is very distinct, and the difference in the grain of the original panel and added strip is evident.

Signature

At the lower right, partly on the main body of the panel and partly on the added strip, in dark paint <*Rembrant ff*/ 163 [?] >. Of the last digit only a curved stroke can be seen, which could be part of a *6* or an *8*. The parts on the original panel, i.e. the letters *Rembr* and *f 163*, are convincing in their shaping, and can thus be looked on as the remains of an authentic signature. The very fact that the added strip did not form part of the painting in its original form means that the part of the signature placed on it (*ant f*), and the final, illegible digit of the date which is on the join, cannot be genuine. This is further indicated by the unusual spelling of the name, without the *d*, and by the admittedly graceful but very un-Rembrandtlike *f* following the signature.

Fig. 3. Detail with signature (enlarged)



The thought that the 0.5 to 1 cm that the original panel was wider would have allowed insufficient space for the rest of the signature led, in the recent investigation of the painting[1], to the conclusion that the whole of the signature is unauthentic and that the entire inscription was appended only after the addition of the strip. Apart from the fact that the first part of the signature and date argue for its authenticity, the repetition of the *f* is evidence that the inscription in its present state is not the work of a single hand.

Varnish

No special remarks.

4. Comments

The painting convinces one of its authenticity by the intense vitality (suggested without the slightest trace of finickiness) in the modelling of the central area — the figure, and the drapery lying behind her — and by the sketchlike, almost nonchalant treatment of the surroundings. Rembrandt's handwriting is recognizable in both modes of treatment, much as in the 1638 *Risen Christ appearing to Mary Magdalene* in Buckingham Palace (no. A 124) — although it must be added that the divergence between the two styles is decidedly greater here than in that painting. Coupled with this is a concentration of light and a consequent strong contrast in tonal values between the central area and the surroundings. The relatively large scale of the figure, compared to the picture area, and her self-containedness in the picture also make the painting somewhat unusual; Susanna, though certainly in a pose clearly to be understood as expressing her alarmed or frightened state of mind, appears isolated rather than in a clear narrative context. Yet even this peculiarity, though here taken to an extreme, is not in conflict with Rembrandt's iconographic thinking as this has been characterized by Tümpel through the introduction of the concept of 'Herauslösung' (C. Tümpel in: *Jahrbuch der Hamburger Kunstsammlungen* 13, 1968, pp. 95–128, esp. 113ff).

The period of the painting's production is usually based on the reading of the date. Bredius, Bauch and Gerson[3] (wrongly) read this as 1637. De Vries, Tóth-Ubbens and Froentjes[1] saw it as 1636. However, only a fragment of the last digit is visible on the original panel, and it could be filled in equally well as an *8*. As the works dated 1636 do not offer any close parallel in treatment to our painting, one might feel inclined to prefer the later date of 1638. A drawn copy by Willem

Fig. 4. Copy 1. W. de Poorter after Rembrandt, *Susanna at the bath*, 1636, pen and wash over black chalk, 22.7 × 19.2 cm. Berlin (West), Staatliche Museen Preussischer Kulturbesitz, Kupferstichkabinett (KdZ 12104)



de Poorter carrying the date of 1636 in Berlin (see *7. Copies*, 1; fig. 4) proves however that the painting was in existence (and virtually completed) in that year and that the date on the painting must consequently have read 1636. The similarities already mentioned to the 1638 *Christ appearing to Mary Magdalene* — to be seen mainly in the broad treatment of the foliage as opposed to the more precise handling of paint in the figures — must thus be ascribed to the fact that both pictures belong to the same category of fairly small-scale history paintings and not to a common date. It should be kept in mind that the panel was originally slightly narrower on the right and taller at the bottom (see *3.* under *Support*).

The relative isolation of the female figure has prompted doubts as to the iconographic interpretation. De Vries, Tóth-Ubbens and Froentjes (op.cit., pp. 126–130) preferred to see the scene as *Bathsheba at her toilet*, as the painting was occasionally described. This interpretation is however certainly incorrect. There is insufficient reason for calling the head of the elder seen in profile 'exceptionally weakly done and (...) certainly not (...) painted by Rembrandt's own hand', as De Vries, Tóth-Ubbens and Froentjes did, and the same authors completely overlooked the head of the other elder. The latter is admittedly difficult to recognize as the touches indicating his headdress and face are just as sketch-like as those used for the foliage in which he is hiding. It is however quite unmistakeable, and furthermore matches the corresponding heads in both Pieter Lastman's *Susanna* of 1614 in Berlin (fig. 5) and Rembrandt's drawing after this (see below). The agitated pose of the woman in the painting in The Hague is almost the same as that Rembrandt used in his *Susanna* in Berlin (Br. 516) that was completed in 1647. The similarity is so great that the interpretation of the woman as Susanna, already defended by Wheelock[4], can hardly be doubted on this ground alone. As Tümpel[5] pointed out, the gesture with which the woman covers her bosom and lap identifies her unmistakeably as Susanna. Support for this interpretation may also be found in the motif of the right foot placed on a slipper and thus shutting off entry to it. Bearing in mind the widespread erotic connotation of the slipper (cf. exhibition cat. *Tot lering en vermaak*, Amsterdam 1976, no. 68) this motif can — certainly if seen in combination with the lewdness hinted at by the goat's-foot carved in the parapet — be looked on as an allusion to the meaning of the Susanna theme as an example of chastity or (as the inscription under an etching by Pieter de Grebber of 1655, Hollst. VIII, p. 167 no. 3, says) constancy.

The design of the painting is, as Bode[6] and Freise[7] have noted, clearly based on two paintings by Pieter Lastman, one of which, in Berlin (cat. no. 1719; fig. 5) depicts *Susanna and the elders* and was copied by Rembrandt around 1635 in a red chalk drawing now in Berlin (Ben. 448), while the other, in Leningrad (Hermitage cat. 1958, no. 5590; fig. 6), remarkably enough shows *Bathsheba at her toilet*. The latter is brought to mind especially by the clothing lying on the right (which, as Valentiner[8] commented, is also reminiscent of Lastman in its execution), the pose of the figure and the setting. Benesch assumed that four figure sketches by Rembrandt (Ben. 155, 156, 157 and 158) were done in preparation for the painting. Of these, one shows a strong and the other a rather weaker resemblance to the elder at the front in Rembrandt's Berlin painting dated 1647, already mentioned; there is insufficient ground to connect one of these drawings with the painting in The Hague.

5. Documents and sources

— Note by Sir Joshua Reynolds, made during a visit in 1781 to the collection of paintings of the Stadholder William V in The Hague: 'A study of a Susanna, for the picture by Rembrandt, which is in my possession [the picture now in Berlin, Br. 516; J. Reynolds sale, London (Christie's) 11–14 March 1795, postponed to 13–17 March, fourth day no. 82]: it is nearly the same action, except that she is here sitting. This is the third study I have seen for this figure. I have one myself [probably the picture now in Paris, Br. 518, no longer accepted as original; J. Reynolds sale, London (Christie's) 11–14 March 1795, postponed to 13–17 March, third day no. 19] and the third was in the possession of the late Mr Blackwood [John Blackwood sale, London (Christie's) 20–21 February 1778, first day no. 10]. In the drawing which he made

Fig. 5. P. Lastman, *Susanna at the bath*, 1614, panel 42 × 58 cm. Berlin (West), Staatliche Museen Preussischer Kulturbesitz, Gemäldegalerie



Fig. 6. P. Lastman, *Bathsheba at her toilet*, panel 42 × 63 cm. Leningrad, The Hermitage Museum



for this picture, which I have [Ben. 609, now in the Louvre], she is likewise sitting; in the picture she is on her legs, but leaning forward. It appears very extraordinary that Rembrandt should have taken so much pains, and have made at last so very ugly and ill-favoured a figure; but his attention was principally directed to the colouring and effect, in which it must be acknowledged he has attained the highest degree of excellence.' *The works of Sir Joshua Reynolds . . .*, ed. Edmond Malone, 4th edn, London 1809, pp. 344–345.

6. Graphic reproductions

None.

7. Copies

1. Drawing by Willem de Poorter, pen and brown ink with brown wash over a sketch in black chalk 22.7 × 19.2 cm; signed and dated: *W.D.P./1636*; Berlin (West), Staatliche Museen Preussischer Kulturbesitz, Kupferstichkabinett (fig. 4; Sumowski *Drawings* 9, no. 2134 with further references). Although since long recognized as a drawing by Willem de Poorter after Rembrandt's painting, it appears never to have been introduced in a discussion of the latter. Yet, in spite of its rather summary rendering of the original and the omission of considerable strips along the top and lefthand side, it is a precious document for our understanding of the painting. Not only does it confirm the reading of the only partially preserved date on the painting as 1636, it is also evidence of the trimming of the panel on the right (already noted before) and along the bottom. How Willem de Poorter (1608–1648) got access to the painting, is not clear. There is no documentary evidence of his having ever worked in Rembrandt's studio, though he is often counted among the artist's pupils. Sumowski convincingly attributed to him a large unsigned drawing (in reverse!) after Rembrandt's 1630 *Jeremiah* (no. A 28) in the Cincinnati Art Museum (Sumowski *Drawings* 9, no. 2136). On the possibility of an early Rembrandtesque phase in De Poorter's development, see Vol. I, pp. 495–496.
2. A copy unknown to us was in the coll. L.D. van Hengel, Arnhem (auctioned at Ellecom, 19–21 May 1953, no. 390)[1].

8. Provenance

— Coll. P.J. Snijers, sale Antwerp 23ff May 1758 (Lugt 1008), no. 15: 'Een zeer schoon Kabinet-stukxken, Verbeeldende Susanna aen de Fonteyne in den Hof, met eenen Boef die doôr het hout ziet, doôr Rymbrant van Ryn; hoog 18 duym, breed 15 [= 46.8 × 39 cm]'. (Terw. III, p. 202 no. 39) (157 guilders to Fierens).
— Coll. Govert van Slingeland, Receiver-General of Taxes for Holland and West Friesland, sale The Hague 18 May 1768 (Lugt 1683), no. 12: 'Une Batseba, auprès d'un bain, epiée par David; par le même [Rembrant]. B[ois]. Hau. 18 Pou. Lar. 15 Pou [= 46.8 × 39 cm]'; but it was bought before 1 March by the Stadholder William V with the entire collection for 50 000 guilders (cf. information given by B.W.F. van Riemsdijk in: *O.H.* 10, 1892, pp. 219ff).
— From 1795 to 1815 in Paris.
— Since 1816 in the Koninklijk Kabinet van Schilderijen, The Hague.

9. Summary

Although a little unusual in execution because of the relatively cursory treatment of the predominantly dark setting compared to the careful modelling of the strongly-lit nude figure and drapery, no. A 117 entirely convinces us of its authenticity. The painting originally had unpainted spandrels on either side of an arched top; prior to 1758, it was made somewhat wider on the right, and probably slightly trimmed along the bottom.

There is no reason to doubt that it is intended to depict Susanna being approached by the two elders (though the head of one of these is difficult to detect in the foliage). This interpretation is borne out by the strong resemblance in pose and expression to the Susanna figure in the Berlin painting of the subject (Br. 516) and by the iconographic motifs that lend the picture the meaning of an example of chastity.

REFERENCES

1 De Vries, Tóth-Ubbens and Froentjes, pp. 121–131.
2 Schwartz 1984, p. 173.
3 Br. 505, Bauch 18, Gerson 84.
4 A.K. Wheelock, Jnr., [Review of De Vries, Tóth-Ubbens and Froentjes] *Art Bull.* 63 (1981), pp. 164–168, esp. 167.
5 Tümpel 1986, cat. no. 14.
6 [W.] Bode, 'Pieter Lastmans Gemälde der Susanna mit den Alten und seine Beziehungen zu den Darstellungen der gleichen Motive von Rembrandt', *Amtliche Berichte aus den Königl. Kunstsammlungen* 30 (1908/9), pp. 57–66, esp. 59.
7 K. Freise, *Pieter Lastman*, Leipzig 1911, pp. 249–257.
8 W.R. Valentiner, 'Rembrandts Darstellungen der Susanna', *Zeitschr. f.b. K.*, new series 19 (1908), pp. 32–38.

A 118 The Ascension

1636

MUNICH, BAYERISCHE STAATSGEMÄLDESAMMLUNGEN, ALTE PINAKOTHEK, INV.NO. 398

HDG 149; BR. 557; BAUCH 64; GERSON 80

Fig. 1. Canvas 93 × 68.7 cm

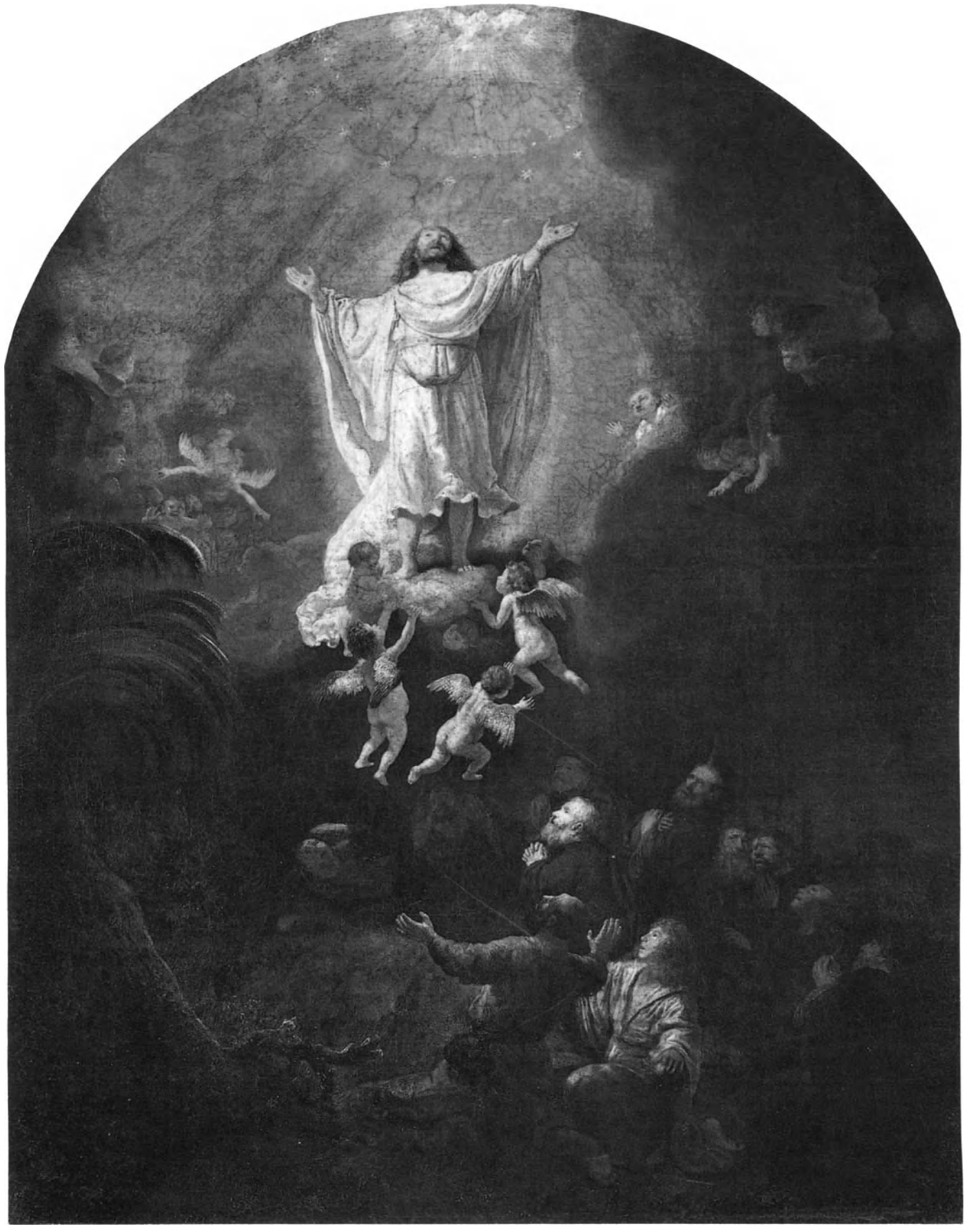


Fig. 2. X-Ray



1. Summarized opinion

An in part poorly preserved and considerably overpainted but authentic work, signed and dated 1636; it was mentioned by Rembrandt as having been completed early in that year.

2. Description of subject

Christ, surrounded by radiant light, rises on high standing on a cloud supported by cherubs with wings of coloured feathers. A white cloak is draped in wide folds over his chest and widespread arms, and hangs in a long train towards the left, floating somewhat lower down, as does the hem of his half-length white tunic. His open hands reveal the wounds suffered from the nails during the crucifixion, and his face is raised towards where, in the centre of the flood of light, the Holy Ghost can be seen in the form of a dove, above a triple crown of stars. To either side of Christ and by the borders of the celestial glory there are more cherubs, some of them no more than a shadow. To the right, angels are emerging from a dark mass of clouds that borders the lit area on that side right up to the top.

Separated from the celestial glory by a dark zone, the group of eleven remaining disciples can be seen in the foreground. They look upwards, the one furthest to the left shielding his eyes from the glare with one hand; others have their hands raised or clasped before the chest in prayer. The three at the centre front catch the most light — a white-bearded man seen in profile, probably Peter; a young man to the right of him, probably John; and to their left a kneeling man seen from behind with arms outstretched. Since he wears a purse at his belt, this third man is perhaps Matthew, the converted taxgatherer. The uneven ground on which the disciples are standing is sparsely lit. On the extreme left, and leaning to the left, there is a palmtree with some of its leaves glistening in the light; on the far right, in the distance, the vague outlines of a few buildings can be made out.

3. Observations and technical information

Working conditions

Examined in January 1969 (S.H.L., P.v.Th.), out of the frame. Seven X-ray films, together covering virtually the whole picture, were available, and prints of these were received later.

Support

DESCRIPTION: Canvas, originally probably rectangular, trimmed at the top corners along straight lines at differing angles and stuck to a rectangular canvas: height in the centre 93 cm, at the left 76.5 cm and at the right 77.5 cm; width 68.7 cm at the bottom and 32.9 cm between the cutoffs at the top. Other than at the two top corners, the crumbly and irregular edges of the original canvas are folded round the stretcher on all sides, together with the support canvas. At the bottom, on the wrapped-round edge of the original canvas there are vestiges of paint, while almost none can be seen on the side edges. Black paint is seen on the folded edge of the original canvas at the top between the arched upper edge of the picture and the diagonally-trimmed corners; obviously the spandrels, which survive only in part, were originally painted black.
SCIENTIFIC DATA: Because of the relatively high radioabsorbency of the paint along the top, cusping can be seen there only occasionally in the X-rays. While the right has none, the bottom has very marked cusping at a pitch varying between 7 and 9 cm and extending some 20 cm into the surface of the canvas. There are vague curves on the left. Threadcount: 12.1 horizontal threads/cm (11.5 – 12.5), 14.2 vertical threads/cm (13.5 – 15). There is insufficient evidence to identify the warp direction.

Ground

DESCRIPTION: Not observed.
SCIENTIFIC DATA: Kühn[1] found a very thin brown-red layer of ground that contained an ochrish pigment with an oil (or resin)-like medium. It is not unlikely that a second grey ground layer over the brown-red one, such as was common in this period, remained undetected during his investigation (see Vol. I, pp. 17–18 and Vol. II, pp. 42–43).

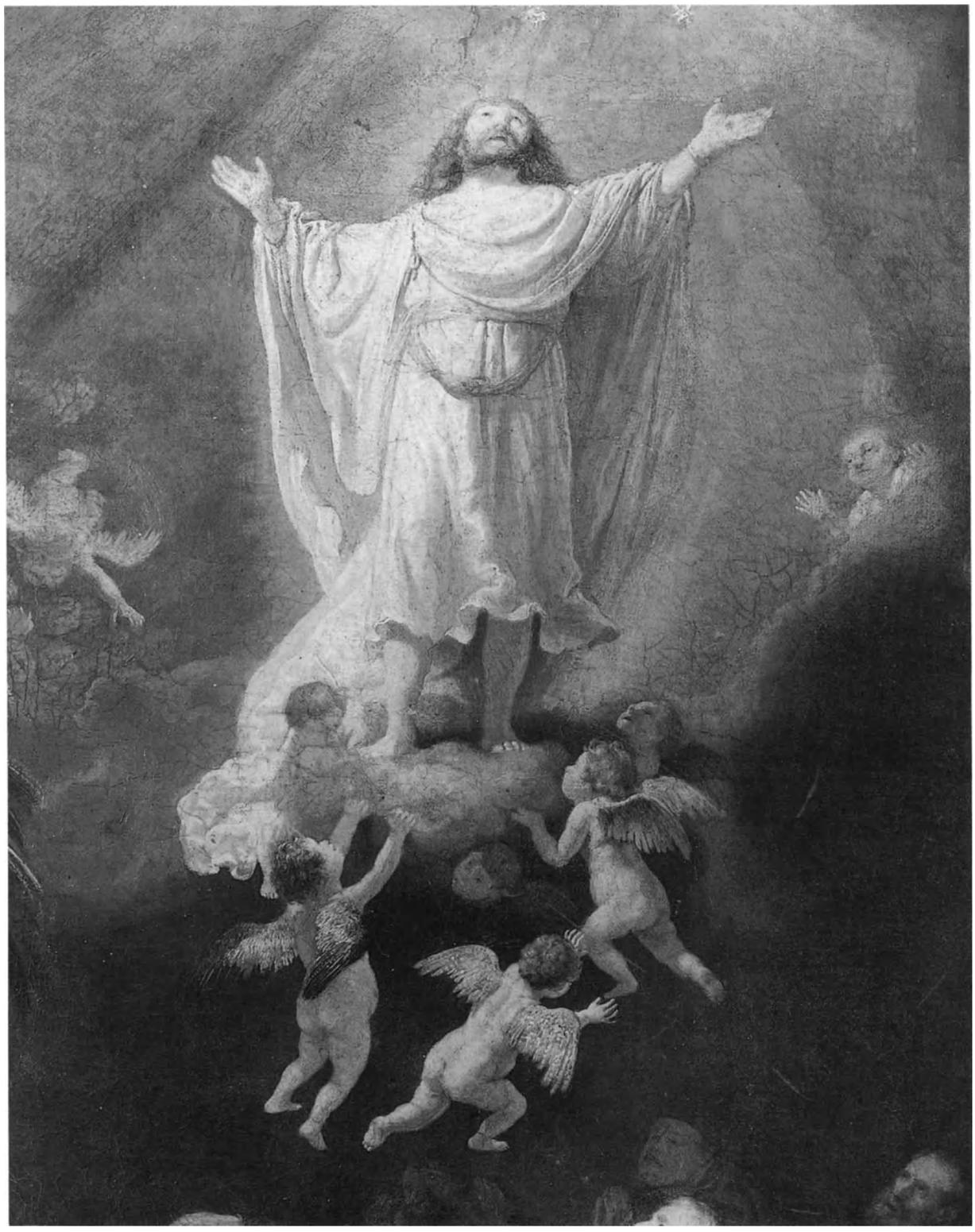
Paint layer

CONDITION: The painting has suffered badly. At places the paint layer is worn, as is apparent today especially in the area of sky above and to both sides of the figure of Christ; on the left one can even see through to the canvas. Where the paint layer has physically survived reasonably well (e.g. in Christ's white garment), it is heavily flattened. It can be seen with the naked eye, and even more clearly in the X-rays, that apart from the wearing there has at a number of places been paint loss that has been restored, in particular along the top where large passages are totally overpainted and in the bottom lefthand corner, as well as in and around the figure of Christ. In part this paint loss has occurred along some of the numerous and mainly horizontal cracks in the paint. The dark sky in the righthand part of the painting has been substantially overpainted, and the same applies to that below the cloud on which Christ is standing (and where the outlines of the cherubs have been insensitively redrawn). The angels to the left and right of Christ have in part been virtually rubbed away by overcleaning, while lit areas executed with more impasto have survived better. For the rest, it can be said to a greater or lesser degree of all the figures that fine gradations of colour and tone (and with them the modelling and detail) have disappeared, partly because of overpainting. A great deal of this may have happened as part of the restoration of the Passion series done by P.H. Brinckmann in the middle of the 18th century (see no. A 127). Craquelure: a great deal of this has been painted in. The impasto paint of Christ's white garment shows the irregular pattern of cracks normal in a 17th-century picture on canvas.
DESCRIPTION: The painting's ruinous state makes it hard to tell how much of the original survives in the present appearance of the work. A description is thus necessarily fragmentary and tentative.

Christ's garment is treated sensitively and subtly in shades of white, greys and, in the shadow on the right, grey-brown. The head, the hair done in brown and the yellowish tint of the face have suffered; spots of colour — a little pink on the cheeks, red in the lips, white for the catchlights in the eyes and for the teeth — are possibly still original. The hand on the left has a pinkish colour with a spot of red for the wound, and the fingers are drawn with individual strokes of paint. The hand and arm on the right are rather more yellow in tint, with a shadow that has been damaged. The lit leg, too, has a yellowish tint, while the damaged right leg is grey. (The shadows on either side of the right leg have been strengthened.) Around the figure of Christ there is a light blue that originally will have merged via fine gradations into the surrounding sky tint, an effect that, especially on the left, has been lost through wearing and insensitive restoration. The semicircular area of light above Christ's head is yellow, shot through with light greys and brown-greys applied with radial brushstrokes; the dove is painted with a thick white. (Immediately below this there has been paint loss in two places.) The triple crown of stars at the edge of the blaze of light is depicted with thick strokes and spots of yellow, the lower line placed over a grey tint that forms the transition to the area of sky below.

Traces of the refined handling seen in the figure of Christ recur in the cherubs around the cloud on which he stands. The wings of the two at the bottom provide the most colourful passage in the painting, and seem to be reasonably well

Fig. 3. Detail (1 : 2)



preserved: those on the left have blue with a little yellow and white, and those on the right an ochre colour with grey and pink, invariably applied with short brushstrokes and dots. The branches of the palmtree on the left are done with bold, rapid brushwork, with a few highlights in white; the trunk and a gnarled exposed root in the foreground are heightened with some ochre colour. In the righthand part of the painting it is mainly two figures that have most kept their original condition — the disciple in the centre of the group whose hands are clasped and whose face catches the strongest light (as we have already said, probably Peter), and the man seen from behind lower down, with outspread arms; the head and hands of the former and the hands of the latter still show sensitive detail. The clothing of the man seen from behind, in a subdued orange-red with brown in the shadow, forms a striking colour accent in the lower part of the painting, contrasting with the grey-white of the (in fact less well preserved) cloak of the young man standing to the right of him (probably identifiable with John). Of the other disciples lost in the semi-darkness, the three to the right of the presumed Peter in particular probably still give some impression of their initial appearance; elsewhere, overpaintings and inpainted craquelure interfere with the rendering of form. According to an etching made in the 18th century (see *6. Graphic reproductions,* 1), there was once more to be seen of the buildings in the right background than there is today.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: None

X-Rays

The radiograph of the painting provides useful information about its state of preservation; the scene as a whole can be only partially traced in the X-ray image. The figure of Christ, especially, shows up clearly; the placing and shape of the dark reserve for the hair and beard correspond to what can be seen at the surface, evidence that no changes were made here during the work. One remarkable feature is the presence of the light image of a head of an old, bearded man directly above Christ's raised face; this has already been interpreted by Brochhagen[2] as evidence that at an early stage God the Father was included in the scene. The area below the cloud on which Christ stands is lighter than might be expected; between this and the highlights on the bodies of the lowest of the cherubs one can see dark reserves that follow the body outlines. The relatively light radiographic image of this area of background gives some reason to suppose that the distribution of light in this part of the painting may, at least in a first lay-in, have been different.

The group of disciples at the bottom of the picture show up remarkably indistinctly — not only the figures largely lost in semi-darkness and probably thinly painted, but also details that one might have expected to have been done with more radioabsorbent paint, such as the raised face of the presumed Peter and the light garment of the presumed John. The sole exception in this vague image is the foreground figure seen from behind with outstretched arms, the clearly-visible reserve for which matches in placing and shape what is seen at the paint surface. The paint of the palmtree on the left shows up comparatively light.

Signature

At the bottom edge, right of centre and interrupted by a few gaps in the paint layer: *<Remb(...)dtf(.)636>*, with the *R, b, t* and final *6* of the date only partially surviving. What remains gives an authentic impression.

Varnish

No special remarks.

4. Comments

Despite the poor state of preservation there are enough surviving parts of the painting showing so much quality that — certainly when taken together with the external evidence — there need be no doubt as to its autograph execution by Rembrandt. A major indication of this is to be found in the central group of Christ and the cherubs below him, which in spite of local damages and insensitive restoration still, as a whole, makes an homogeneous impression. In the meticulous manner in which plastic form and draperies are rendered the treatment of this group matches in many respects that of other centrally-placed figures in Rembrandt's Passion series. The appearance of the cherubs is moreover reminiscent, in the interpretation of anatomy and the handling of light, of the figure of Ganymede (done, admittedly, at larger scale) in the Dresden painting (no. A 113). The date of production of these two works can indeed have been very close — the *Ganymede* carries the date 1635, and the *Ascension* is mentioned in Rembrandt's first letter to Constantijn Huygens of early 1636 as having been finished[3]. Otherwise, there is little if any similarity in treatment with Rembrandt's other paintings from the mid-1630s. In line with what he himself says in that letter, he has obviously aimed here at unity of style with the earlier works in the Passion series, the Munich *Descent from the cross* and *Raising of the cross* of about 1633 (nos. A 65 and A 69), which in turn exhibit in their approach a link with the last works from the Leiden period such as the *Simeon in the Temple* of 1631 in The Hague (no. A 34). When one considers that the same is true of the *Entombment* and the *Resurrection*, which in 1636 were already 'ruym half gedaan' (easily half-done) (Gerson, op. cit., p. 18) but were mentioned as finished only in 1639 (Gerson, op. cit., p. 34), one realises the remarkable fact that in the case of the pictures in the Passion series the manner of working that Rembrandt developed in the early 1630s spanned virtually the whole decade. This way of working gradually became distinct from the broader and looser style such as appears in larger-scale works in the mid-1630s.

In the case of the *Ascension* we also have documentary evidence to show that Rembrandt aimed at harmonizing this work with the two already delivered, in his comment in the second letter to Constantijn Huygens (Gerson, op. cit., p. 26) 'dat ick corts volgen sal om te besien hoe dat het stucken met de rest voucht' (p. 30: that I shall follow anon to see how the picture accords with the rest). It is not known whether this trip to The Hague in fact took place; a postscript to the same letter does give the impression that Rembrandt was familiar with the circumstances there: 'op de galdeerij van S. exc[ll] salt best te toonenen sijn alsoo daer een starck licht is' (It will show to the best advantage in the gallery of His Excellency since there is a strong light there), knowledge that he will have gained during an earlier visit, perhaps when painting the portrait of Amalia

Fig. 4. Detail (1 : 2)



of Solms (no. A 61) dated 1632. No visit to The Hague need have been connected with the supplying of the earlier works in the Passion series. In the third letter to Constantijn Huygens dated January 1639, Rembrandt proposes sending the completed works to Huygens' house, as previously (Gerson, op. cit., p. 34): 'dat men die twe stuckens eerst tot uwent ten huijsen bestellen sal gelijck als voormaels is geschiet' (that the two works shall be delivered to you at your house, as happened before); whether the 'before' means that all three previous completed works were delivered in this manner is however not certain.

As with most other Passion scenes, the picture of the *Ascension* is dominated by a slightly off-centre and finely detailed focus of interest, concentrated around the brightly lit figure of Christ. The subject-matter means that this focus has been placed quite high in the composition. The link with the lower half of the painting, shrouded in darkness, is provided by the busy movement of the cherubs. Dark overpaintings of the background against which they are placed may have intensified the chiaroscuro still further in this area, and with it the restless impression this passage makes. At all events, the immediate juxtaposition of this group of celestial beings, shown in very material physical form, with that of the disciples directly beneath is not very happy. The crowding-together of the two groups may be due to the influence of not fully assimilated models leading to a multiplicity of motifs that had to be accommodated in the central axis of the painting. At an earlier stage in the work yet another figure (later left out) was added — the X-ray shows God the Father appearing above Christ's head.

The Rembrandt literature — by Valentiner[4] in 1905 in the first instance — has regularly mentioned as the source of inspiration for this composition Titian's *Assunta* in the S.Maria dei Frari in Venice. Rembrandt must have been familiar with this composition through a print, most probably the large folio engraving by Theodore Matham (Hollst. IX, p. 252 no. 8). He appears to have taken Titian's work as a model not only for the general layout of his scene but also for the postures and gestures of several apostles. The presence of God the Father (though in a different place from that in the *Assunta*) and the supporting angels belong, as Brochhagen[2] remarked, more to the Assumption of the Virgin Mary than to the Ascension of Christ. One does however get the impression that in the composition of Rembrandt's *Ascension* models belonging to older art play a role that is not adequately defined by pointing to Titian's *Assunta* alone. For instance, the initially-planned placing of God the Father immediately above Christ's head seems rather to have been inspired by a depiction of the Trinity; but why Rembrandt should choose this roundabout route via a different iconography is unclear. The crown of light with stars and the dove of the Holy Spirit (missing from the *Assunta*) could well have been taken from a depiction of the Trinity. This element, which mars the suggestion of depth in the scene, is in fact an anomaly in Rembrandt's conception of space. Nevertheless, the paint layer in this passage does appear at least partially to belong to the original painting.

A drawing with a free variation on the composition, showing a specific resemblance to

Rembrandt's painting only in the Christ figure, is in the Print-room of the University of Leiden. Rembrandt's cherubs have here been replaced with the heads of seraphims on the clouds beneath Christ's feet and to either side. The drawing has long been attributed to a Rembrandt pupil; Van Regteren Altena (in: *O.H.* 42, 1925, p. 145) thought of Gerbrand van den Eeckhout, and this attribution was adopted by Sumowski (in: *O.H.* 77, 1962, p. 12) who then later ascribed the drawing to Govaert Flinck (Sumowski *Drawings* IV, no. 949). Though Flinck did in the late 1630s paint free copies of a number of biblical scenes by Rembrandt (see, for example, Von Moltke *Flinck*, nos. 44 and 59; Sumowski *Gemälde* II, nos. 615 and 612), the drawing does not match his drawing style, and even less that of Eeckhout. A more likely author is Claes Moeyaert (cf., for instance, his *Christ driving the moneychangers from the Temple* in the Wadsworth Atheneum, Hartford, Conn.; exhibition *The Pre-Rembrandtists*, Sacramento 1974, no. 23), who had already copied Rembrandt's *Raising of the Cross* in a drawing (no. A 69 *Copies*, 1).

5. Documents and sources

See under no. A 65.

6. Graphic reproductions

1. Etching in reverse by Carl Ernst Christoph Hess (Darmstadt 1755–Munich 1828) for *La Galerie électorale de Dusseldorff* . . ., Basle 1778. Inscriptions: *Rembrandt pinx.* - Hess f. and on a coat-of-arms the cypher *CT* of the Elector Carl Theodor.

7. Copies

None.

8. Provenance

See no. A 65.

9. Summary

The best-preserved parts of the painting (which like all the works in the Munich Passion series done on canvas is in a poor state) and the historical evidence leave no doubt that this is an authentic work by Rembrandt, who mentioned in a letter of Constantijn Huygens in early 1636 that he had completed it. In treatment it resembles the works in the Passion series completed earlier, the *Descent from the Cross* and *Raising of the Cross* painted in about 1633. The deliberate striving for stylistic unity with these can also be deduced from a remark made by Rembrandt in the letter just mentioned; it also seems to extend to the *Entombment* and *Resurrection*, which were not delivered until 1639.

The composition and a number of elements of the picture appear to have been taken from Titian's *Assunta*, while others like the dove of the Holy Spirit, originally (as may be seen from the X-ray) coupled with the presence of God the Father directly above the head of Christ, may have been taken from depictions of the Trinity.

REFERENCES

1 Kühn, p. 201.
2 E. Brochhagen, 'Beobachtungen an den Passionsbildern Rembrandts in München', *Munuscula discipulorum . . . Hans Kauffmann zum 70. Geburtstag 1966*, Berlin 1968, pp. 37–44.
3 H. Gerson, *Seven letters by Rembrandt*, The Hague 1961, pp. 18–24.
4 W.R. Valentiner, *Rembrandt und seine Umgebung*, Strasbourg 1905, p. 81.

A 119 Danae

[1636–1643]

LENINGRAD, THE HERMITAGE MUSEUM, NO. 723

HDG 197; BR. 474; BAUCH 104; GERSON 270

Fig. 1. Canvas 185 × 203 cm



1. Summarized opinion

An until 15 June 1985 generally well preserved, though appreciably reduced, authentic work that was completed by Rembrandt in its first version probably in 1636 and subsequently (in 1643 at the latest) extensively reworked by him.

2. Description of subject

Danae lies naked, on her side, in a gilded tester bed ornamented in a sumptuous lobate style; the dull green curtains are drawn back. She raises herself slightly on her left elbow, and looks towards the left, where an old woman with a bundle of keys at her right wrist holds back one of the curtains, letting the light in. Danae holds her right hand slightly raised, with the palm opened away from her. Around both wrists there are gold-coloured bracelets with bright red bows, and the left wrist also has a double row of pearls. She lies on large white pillows, below which a fringed woven cloth hangs down. Her legs are partly covered by white sheets. Above her head, and half-hidden behind the righthand curtain of the bed, hangs a gilded figure of a winged Cupid with his quiver of arrows; his hands are manacled, and his face is screwed up in a whining grimace. The wing seen on the left runs into one of the volutes supporting the bed canopy. The base of the bed, covered with a blue-green material, stands on a podium curving towards the lower right on which there are two mules and, to the right, a table covered with a red cloth that hangs in heavy folds.

3. Observations and technical information

Working conditions

Examined on 18 September 1969 (J.B., S.H.L.) in daylight, in the frame and on the wall, with the aid of nine X-ray films covering the naked figure and the table top to the right of her, and part of the view through to the back with the old woman's head; certain

of these were subsequently available, some others only as published reproductions. Examined again in October 1981 (S.H.L.) with, additionally, ultraviolet photographs, and in the spring of 1983 (E.v.d.W.) with the help of a nearly complete set of X-rays.

Support

DESCRIPTION: Canvas, lined, 185 × 203 cm (according to the dimensions given in the literature). A horizontal seam runs at *c.* 85 cm from the upper edge (through Danae's neck). From contemporary derivatives painted by Ferdinand Bol it can be assumed that the canvas was originally a little larger at the bottom and considerably so on the other three sides (see *4. Comments* and *7. Copies,* 1 and 2; figs. 6 and 7). This assumption is, on the X-ray evidence, borne out by the total or almost total absence of cusping along the latter three edges. The present appearance of the picture, with the bed truncated, also makes this plausible.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: Along the bottom the canvas shows relatively marked cusping (not measured), while there is vague distortion of the weave along the upper edge. No cusping to right or left. (See also *Support,* DESCRIPTION and *4. Comments.*)

Threadcount: *c.* 13 horizontal threads/cm (12–14), *c.* 13.5 vertical threads/cm (11.5–15). In view of the direction of the seam, the warp must be assumed to run horizontally. These measurements could be taken at only a few places, using the available X-ray films, and was made difficult by the fact that in the radiographic image the weave of the canvas was veiled by concentrations of radioabsorbent material due to reworking precisely in the area covered by the available films. The threadcount matches that of the canvas of the *Blinding of Samson* (no. A 116) so closely that it can be assumed, with some caution, that both these canvas were taken from the same bolt.

Ground

DESCRIPTION: Could not be observed.
SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

Paint layer

CONDITION: At the time of our examinations, generally good apart from some local wearing and paint loss. Some damage was noted along the edges, and Kuznetsov[1] describes 'two considerable losses of paint and priming painted out later: under the pillow and on the bedspread below Danae's shins. The ultraviolet plate shows restoration retouching applied to the lower abdomen and the right hip of Danae, as well as to the old woman-servant's head'. Darkened retouches are seen at the righthand shoulder of Cupid. Craquelure: an irregular pattern of cracks, remarkably severe at some points such as Danae's neck and armpit in the shadow.

After the last time the painting was seen by us it was, according to an announcement by the museum at a meeting of the International Council of Museums (ICOM) in Paris in June 1985, badly damaged when it was attacked on 15 June of that year, with sulphuric acid and two slashes with a knife, measuring 2.5 and 12 cm. The acid struck the painting at various points above the figure of Danae, and then dribbled down over the figure; as a result the paint was at numerous places eaten away down to the ground. The most severe damage is in the face and hair, the right arm and the legs; narrower bands of paint loss affect the whole of the body. The bottom edge was particularly severely damaged by the acid that collected there. The old woman, curtains and figure of Cupid are undamaged.

DESCRIPTION: The fact, established by the investigations published by Kuznetsov in 1966[2], 1967[3], 1970[4] and 1971[1], that the painting was in a second phase partly overpainted and drastically altered is evident most of all in stylistic discrepancies. Passages from the second phase — the main figure, the old woman and adjacent areas — are treated mainly as large fields of colour with merging differences in tone, while areas from the first, large parts of the periphery of the picture, are more draughtsmanlike or given local impasto. There is little to be seen at the surface of the presence of an earlier paint layer beneath that of the second-phase passages, although underlying brushstrokes can be detected in relief here and there. Though it will therefore be impossible to trace the borderline between the earlier and later phases in detail, we shall try to show the difference between the two as clearly as possible.

In the peripheral areas the materials depicted are characterized clearly by the handling of paint. The gilded parts of the bed are painted in browns and ochre colours with yellow and a few white highlights, mostly with firm brushstrokes that convincingly suggest their shiny surface and swirling lines. A hint of a reflexion of the lefthand foot of the bed on the wood floor is set on the horizontally-brushed brown used to paint the latter. A darker (and somewhat more patchy and worn) brown is used for the upholstery of the podium, with vertical strokes along the edge to show a fringe. The mules show a treatment akin to that of the gilded bed, though using shorter strokes of thick paint to render the sheens of light on edges and ornament; a green-yellow along their upper edge seems to be intended as a reflexion of light from the upholstery. This is painted with quite bold strokes in a blue-green that becomes thinner towards the left; copper studs are indicated summarily in a thin yellow with thicker, irregular white-yellow catchlights. A manner of painting closely resembling that of the mules is used to show the ornamented edge of the tablecloth in the dull, dark wine-red of its hanging folds, using dark brown, ochre brown and animated strokes of yellow some of which clearly lie on top of the blue-green of the bed upholstery; long strokes of grey show the sheens of light on the folds. Along the upper half of the contour of the fold furthest to the left there is a band of bright red, of the same colour and consistency as the paint used to overpaint the upper surface of the tablecloth; according to the X-rays this was done only later, in the second phase. An indication of a string of beads hanging down from the table comes as it were from underneath this added paint on the top of the table, and evidently forms part of an object that is partly hidden beneath the later paint. The latter lies, to judge from light paint that shows through, some way over the paint of the pillow.

Clearly allied to the treatment of the bed is that of the winged Cupid, modelled in browns and ochre yellow with bright yellow highlights. One gets the impression of the contours of the head and wing on the left being defined by the surrounding brown colour, which was therefore added later (in the second phase?); the X-ray shows that the reserve left here for the head and wing had a different shape.

Below the Cupid is the upholstery of the bedhead, the topmost horizontal band of which has a hint of fringing given by vertical strokes in ochre brown over a brownish tone; at this point wavy brushstrokes belonging to an underlying layer are visible in relief. In the area below this, over a layer of greys, a pattern is shown with a few curved strokes and groups of parallel straight strokes in browns and, on the right, some pink and broken white. The pattern on the blanket at the foot end of the bed is rendered quite differently — with a squiggling indication of the motif in dark brown over a grey-brown, thick and fairly dry strokes of ochre browns are placed on the strongest highlights.

The three sections of the bed curtains all differ in treatment. On the left the brushwork, and effect achieved, are similar to those of the gilt bedpost; firm brushstrokes, for the most part following the direction of the folds, model the material in greys and browns with lighter grey and (furthest to the right) light brown in the sheens of light. Over large areas there are fairly unobtrusive spots done in ochre brown paint. The middle curtain, which is the least lit and into which the spots extend some way, is for the most part more flatly painted in dark grey and black; this is darkest in the diagonal fold held back by the servant-woman, in which on the left a sheen of light is rendered

in olive green and, partly over this, some ochre brown. The X-ray shows that this passage in any case does not match the first phase of the painting. Where this curtain is beside the sheets and catches more light, it is painted in olive-green tints and some flat grey where the shadow begins. The righthand curtain differs from the others not only through the warmer tint of the slightly translucent vivid brown paint, but especially through the very free and sometimes zigzag brushstrokes with which sheens of light are rendered in olive green and green-yellow; a golden yellow braiding along the lower edge is shown with crisp but scarcely accurate brushstrokes.

The band of lace decorating the pillow is picked out with small strokes and spots in a brown-grey; the tassel hanging from its corner is rendered effectively in the same colour, with white highlights on the knobbly ball and the hanging strands. A second tassel to the right of Danae's elbow is shown less emphatically; to the right of it brownish tints show the continuation of the pillow, bordered by a flat, dark blue-green.

The X-ray shows that throughout Danae's body there have been major and minor alterations, so that one may assume the entire paint surface in its present state to come from the second phase. Some of the particular features to be described below (such as those relating to the chin and left hand) in themselves already point to alterations. The body is painted with mostly visible, long brushstrokes, in the light in a reddish to yellowish flesh colour with here and there some pink, and in the half-shadows in merging tints of light grey and grey-brown. In general the paint covers, but in a few patches it lets something of an underlying colour show through — for instance in a thin patch below the head, by the armpit, where a light paint can be seen beneath the brown paint of the shadow. Subtle reflexions of light contribute to the delicate modelling, such as at the lower right along the elbow (in a light flesh tint along a light grey zone of shadow) and along the underside of the right upper arm (in a white broken towards brown, amidst a greyish shadow). Sometimes, as on the right shoulder and arm, the flesh-colour seems to have been placed over the relief of brushstrokes already present, so that a rather notchy or ragged outline results. The paint of the white mattress has, in part, clearly been set over that of the left leg.

The face is painted with shorter strokes in similar tints. Some white marks the highest light in the centre of the forehead, and a thin, broken line runs parallel to the contour of the bridge of the nose on which, halfway down, there is a narrow touch of bright red; a small touch of the same red is seen on the tip of the nose. A little light grey shows the teeth between the strokes of pink and pink-red forming the lips. The partly pink flesh colour of the chin lies over the broad brushstrokes of the adjoining flesh colour, producing a slightly ragged — but highly effective — contour, similar to that of the right shoulder. Both eyes (that on the left is cursorily drawn) have a thin, broken line of white as the catchlight. The half-shadows are subtly gradated in smooth greys and warmer tints, giving a suggestion of reflected light. In the hair, which is painted with thick streaks of yellow-brown in the light and elsewhere in brown with some black and light brown, there is a headband done in black with yellow highlights. A second jewel in the hair is painted, over the white of the pillow, with long strokes of black and red, with some white along and partly over the white of the pillow. The back of the hand resting on the pillow is painted thickly in flesh colour, and the paint of the adjacent shadow in the armpit lies partly over this. The lit fingertips, too, are painted thickly in places. A strong pink shadow is placed along the side of the middle finger; crosswise highlights mark the knuckles, and small catchlights show the fingernails. The ring finger has a ring rendered with spots of black and white highlights. The pearls around the wrist are, alongside zones of thin paint showing their cast shadow, done in a thin grey-white with vivid white catchlights, and here and there some yellow in between the pearls. The gold bracelet is sketched in yellow with white accents, and the bows in broad and (especially at the top) thickly brushed bright red. The raised right hand, which is partly in shadow, is set down with firm brushstrokes — in the shadow mostly in yellow-brown with shading in a glaze, in the light in a yellowish flesh colour, and along the edges and at the tips of the fingers in a strong pink. The bracelet is, in rather more subdued tints but with the same bright red bows, painted in a similar way to that around the woman's left wrist.

The paint of the bedclothes, done in greys, white and some brown, lies over the flesh colour at some places, such as along the underside of the lower leg, and it may be assumed that here too at least partial adjustments were made in the second phase.

Faint traces of the underlying version can be seen in the part of the background between the curtains with the old woman, who according to the X-rays shifted position and was drastically altered. In the background, painted in for the most part thick and opaque grey in a variety of shades, one can follow in relief part of the diagonal edge of the curtain running to the left of the presentday one; at some points a yellow colour shows through. To the left of this there is some flesh colour to be sensed through the paint, which probably formed part of the old woman's nose in its original position. There is also, in and around the old woman's head, a pattern of bold and mostly vertical underlying brushstrokes, continuing beneath the top layer in the edge of the present curtain, head and surrounding background; this pattern evidently formed part of the earlier curtain. The present head of the old woman is set down, in the shadow areas, in fairly flat opaque browns and dark grey; the contour of the underjaw has been placed on top of this, wet-in-wet, with a long, wide stroke of flesh colour. The lights are applied with broad strokes of flesh colour and pink, in a way akin to the manner of painting of Danae's raised right hand. In the shadow the eye on the right is indicated with a little brown and black, with fine strokes of white along the upper lid, while the lefthand eye is rendered with a dark patch with some pink above it; the eyebrows are sketched with animated strokes of dark grey. The old woman's headdress and clothing are set down in dark neutral colours and then worked up with firm strokes of colour — broken white and tints of pink and bright red in the headdress, broken white over black in the sleeve on the right, and ochre yellow in that on the left; the same ochre yellow is used for catchlights on the end of the curtain, which hangs down in front of her over her right arm. Both hands are executed very cursorily in dark paint with here and there, as on the bunch of keys at her left wrist, a few catchlights.

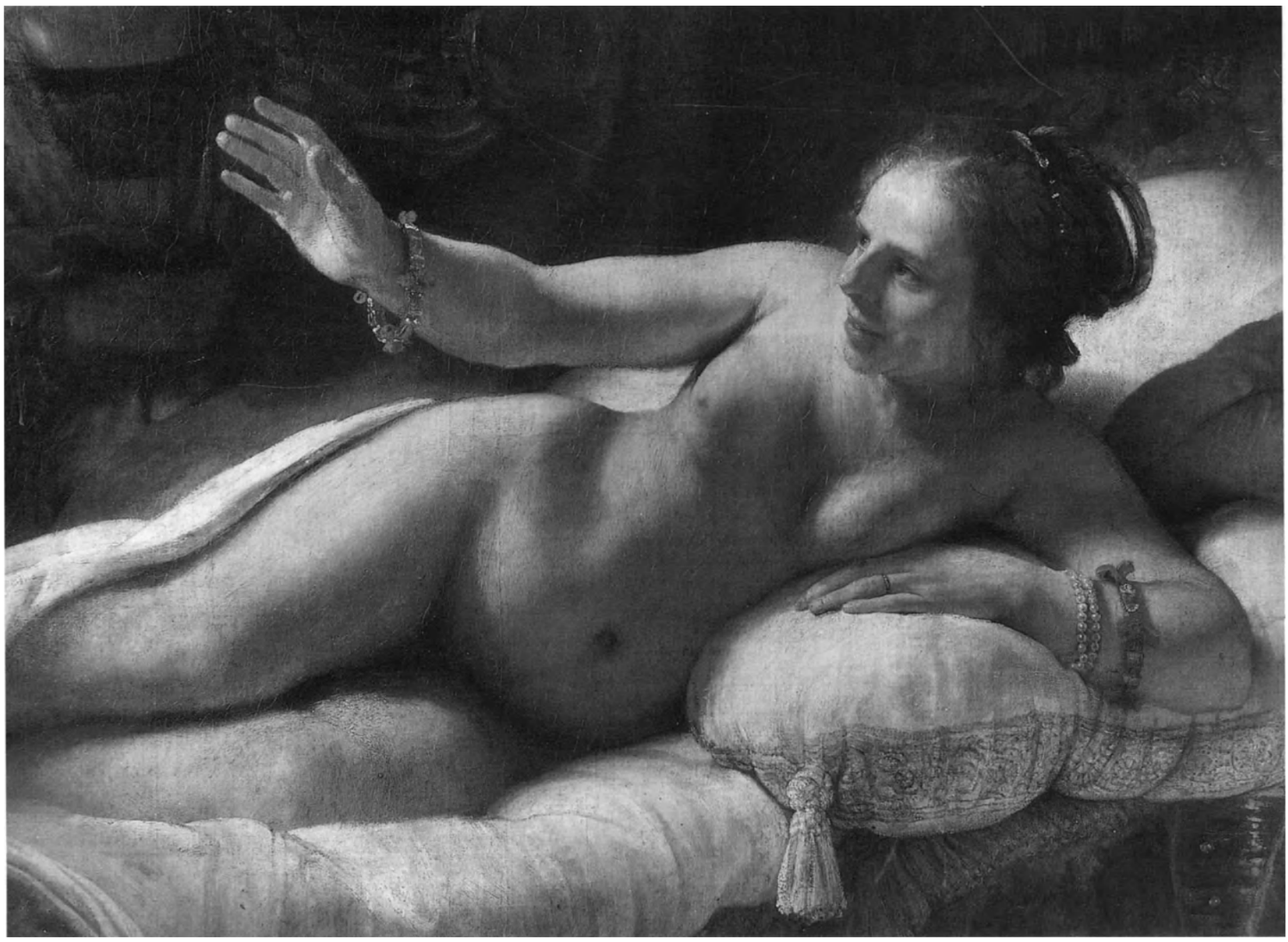
SCIENTIFIC DATA: Kuznetsov reported in 1966[2], 1967 (op. cit.[3], pp. 226 and 231) and 1970[4] that microscope investigation had shown the same bright red, mixed with white lead and ochre, used to overpaint the top surface of the tablecloth occurs in the paint used for overpainting the body of Danae, and that these overpaintings, like the paint of the red bows at both bracelets, are on a fairly thick layer of varnish. This important observation warrants the conclusion that the painting can be regarded as having been completed in its first state.

X-Rays

1. Danae's righthand (fig. 3). The raised right hand and arm appear quite distinctly, lightest in the lit parts of the palm of the hand and the forearm. The wrist and forearm show up light, in a form plumper than that of the final execution; it may be that here one is seeing an underpainting, where the clothing of the old woman (in her second form) was placed on top. There is however also an earlier version clearly visible in a lower, horizontal position, with the palm facing downwards and turned a little backwards. In this earlier version the hand and arm, which show up mostly light, seem to have caught more light than they do now. There are no traces of a bracelet around the wrist of the first hand; that of the second version interferes with the image of the previous forearm.

2. Danae's head, shoulders and left hand (fig. 3). The contour of

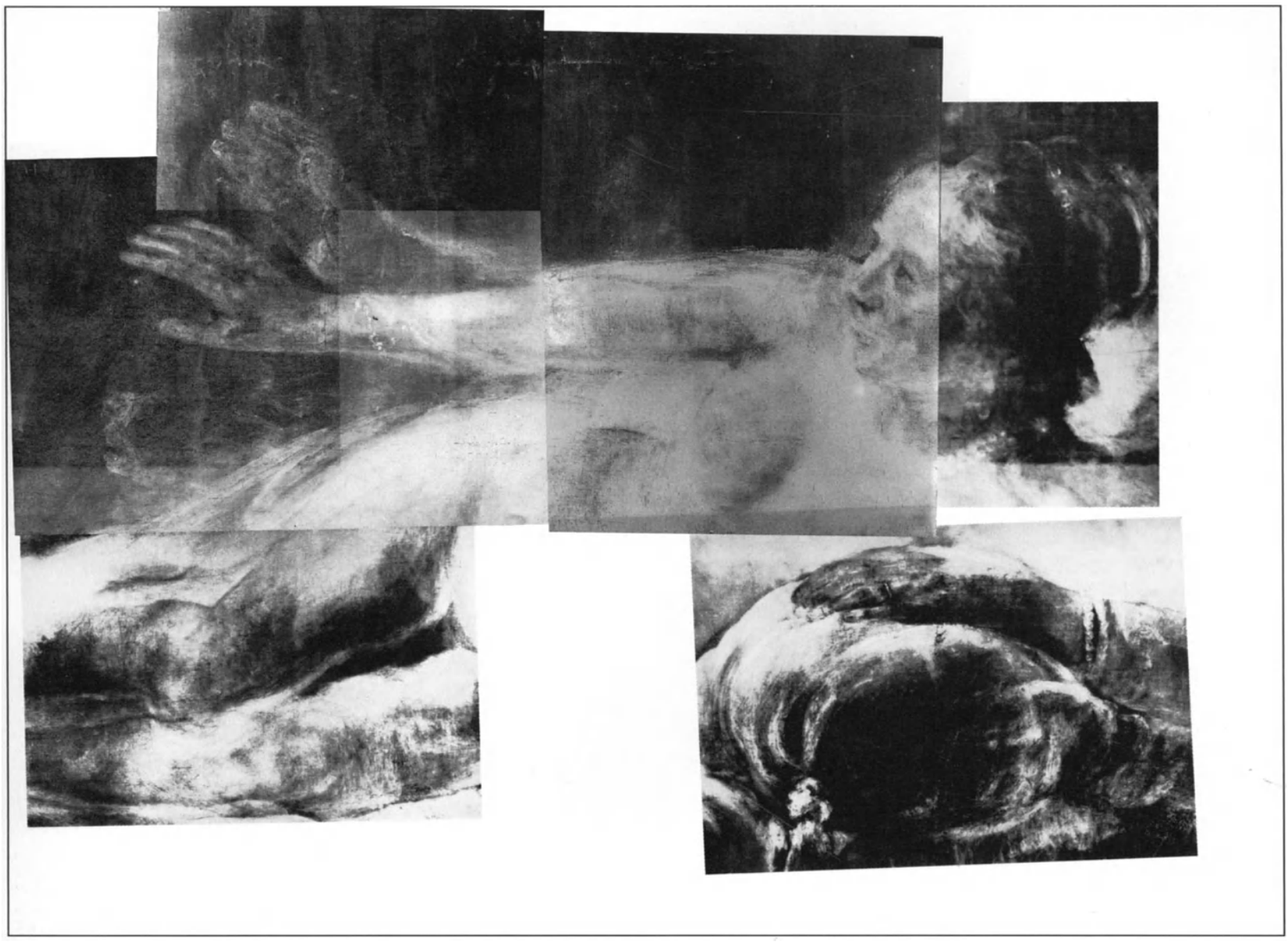
Fig. 2. Detail (1 : 4.5)



the right shoulder in the first version reaches the face at a lower point than in the present one which, already from the paint surface, can be thought to have been placed over paint that was already present — evidently that of the curtain; both versions can be made out in the radiographic image.

In the head the X-ray image has two versions, interfering with each other. The first must have been rather more in profile, and more sharply tilted. This is most evident from the position of the eye on the right, which in the X-ray appears further down to the left, and is more foreshortened. The eye on the left in the X-ray coincides largely with that seen today, but the averted cheek seen below it seems to have been much less visible in the first version than it is at the paint surface today, where it has been broadened to the tip of the nose. A light band above the further eye corresponds with the flesh colour seen there today, but above this there is a strong white that perhaps matches a more sloping shape of the forehead as well as (visible partly only as a white edging) the contour of the present, wider forehead. The present contour of the ridge of the nose shows up fairly distinctly — partly as a darker band along a white edge — and that of the first version may have coincided with it; but the position and direction of the nostril and wing of the nose and of the mouth are now different from those in the X-ray. Below the nose part of the further cheek has been added, and below the mouth the chin has been extended over the adjoining flesh colour. In its present state the head has more shadow areas than it had in the first version, where the hair as well seems to have caught more of the light; traces of an eardrop are plainly visible. Locks of hair can be seen hanging down to the shoulder (where the light image of a stretcher crossbar makes the image less clear); there was a double string of pearls around the throat. The present thick and fairly smooth paint of the shadowed neck and shoulder has evidently been placed entirely over the paint of an earlier version; this explains the formation of quite long cracks in the paint layer. The same is true of at least part of the shadow of the armpit, breast, hand and forearm; in the first version the index finger, too, must have been seen in its entirety, bordered by the light paint of the breast and a less light zone (the thumb, or part of the pillow?), with a broadly-brushed radioabsorbent area to the right of it. This latter area coincides with flesh-coloured paint that today partly belongs to the lit back of the hand, and is partly covered to a varying extent by the dark paint

Fig. 3. X-Ray



of the shadow below the armpit. The tips of the middle and ring fingers were originally less long. The double row of pearls does in fact, to judge from the reserve for the cast shadow seen in the X-ray, belong to the original design, while the bracelet with bows must have been added only in the second phase. The subsequent upper contour of the forearm, rising slightly, differs from that in the X-ray, which falls. The pillow beneath the hand seems to have had a somewhat different distribution of light and shade, in which deep folds can be seen.

3. Danae's left elbow and the upper part of the table; reproductions published by Kuznetsov in 1966[2], 1967 (op.cit.[3] fig. 3), 1970 (op.cit.[4] p. 46) and 1971[1]. The tip of the present elbow appears vague and only partially; probably a brighter white shape to the left of it corresponds to an earlier version. The shape of the pillow supporting the left arm, showing up partly light and partly dark, is bordered at the top by a field showing a pattern of almost vertical brushstrokes placed side-by-side, corresponding with modelling strokes on the pillow to the right of Danae's shoulder. To the right, all that can be seen in the X-ray of the bottom pillow is the presentday tassel to the right of her elbow, where long strokes show up light; the passage in brown tints adjoining this to the right cannot be seen in the radiographic image. The top surface of the tablecloth, overpainted in bright red, shows up very light for the most part, and interferes with other forms. Above the string hanging from the table there is a hint of more beads and the hard-to-describe shape of a small heap lit from the left, the lit surface of which is indicated with numerous light strokes, and which merges to the right into a mostly dark form with a few light accents — Kuznetsov speaks of 'some jewellery objects heaped upon the table'. This heap appears earlier to have been underpainted with a rather wider shape than in the final execution. As well as by the red of the tablecloth, it is now covered by the blue-green that forms the dark field bordered by the bright red of the tabletop, the bottom pillow and the curtain.

4. Danae's legs (fig. 3). The most notable feature is that the right leg, bordered at the top by the strong white image of the sheet, shows a marked bend at the knee, whereas today the line described on the leg by the sheet takes a softly sinuous path. Obviously the leg was originally more sharply bent at the knee, and both the thigh and lower leg were seen a little foreshortened. The radiographic image shows alternations of

Fig. 4. Detail (1 : 1.75)



light and dark, including a reflexion of light along the underside of the leg; this leg was evidently more carefully modelled in the first version. The present, less emphatically modelled leg must have been painted partly over the earlier sheet. (A dark patch shown by the X-ray in the light sheet above the leg is separate from this, and results from a shadow in a fold painted with less radioabsorbent paint.) The left leg, too, seems to have been more firmly modelled. Compared to the earlier version, the sheet along the underside is here and there painted some way over it. There are brushstrokes showing up light over the left thigh that can also be seen in relief at the paint surface, and that suggest that there was originally a light drapery at this point. Kuznetsov even went so far as to assume that in the first version Danae was lifting the drapery with her right hand.

5. The head of the old woman, and the background to the left of it (fig. 5). The lit parts of the head show up quite distinctly. The traces of brushstrokes interfering with these, some vertical and, especially on the left, some running diagonally down to the right yield the image of a curtain with folds that extended further to the left, though it remains difficult to imagine its original shape. At all events there must have been a diagonal edge a little way to the left of the present head; a cluster of obliquely-placed light strokes runs downwards from this point. Just to the left of this a profile can be seen as a few light strokes and dark patches, which one must assume belonged to the old woman in an earlier version; it is more to the left, and is partly intersected by the earlier curtain.

6. The gilded Cupid; reproductions published by Kuznetsov in 1970 (op. cit.[4] p. 50) and 1971[1]. The sheens of light, showing up light, and the darkly contrasting outlines yield a clear and unequivocal image. The reserve in the background for the root of the wing on the left is much closer to the head than it is in its present form. A light horizontal shape interferes with the arm on the right, perhaps indicating that originally there was the top edge of the headboard of the bed at this point.

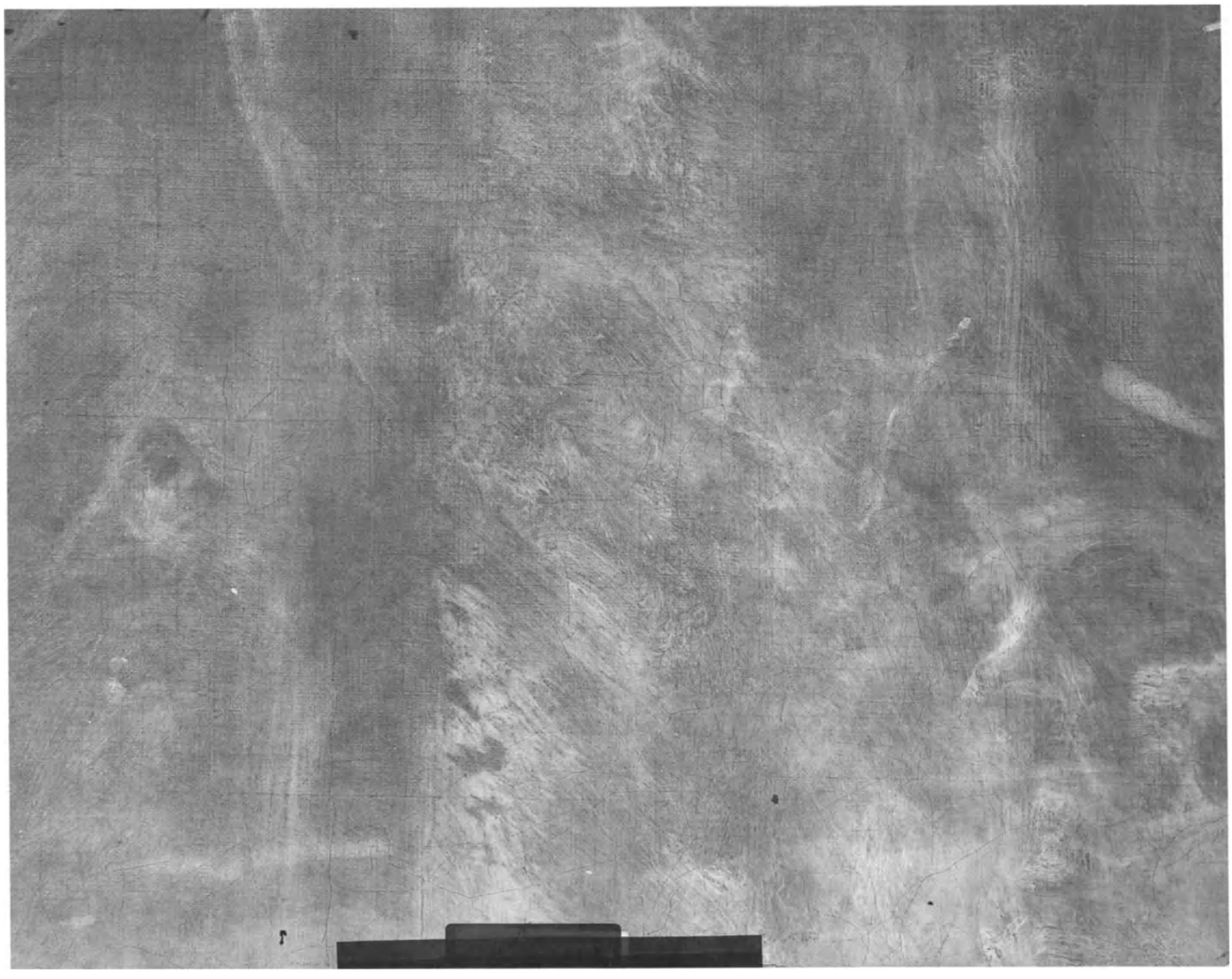
Signature

Close to the bottom edge at 21 cm from the lefthand side, in very thinly brushed letters in a fairly light grey, on a dark but also damaged place, <*Remb(...)f 1(..)6*>. As the inscription is hard to read, it is difficult to judge its authenticity. Neither what can be seen of the writing, nor the fact that it is done thinly in a light grey and close to a damaged edge, inspires confidence. It is quite possible that the present inscription was copied from an original one when the surrounding canvas was trimmed down (see *4. Comments*). The date was, as Kuznetsov[3] reports, read in the Hermitage catalogues published in 1863 and 1884 as probably 1646, and seen by Bode[5] as 1636.

Varnish

An old layer of varnish hinders observation only very slightly.

Fig. 5. X-Ray



4. Comments

Before going into any of the complicated problems — which relate mainly to the painting's original format, the two phases in its genesis, the pedigree and the subject matter — it would be well to state that (with one, unnotable exception[6]) there has never been any doubt in the literature that the painting is an authentic Rembrandt. The strong ties with other works from his hand will be discussed below; at this point it is enough to say that both pictorially and psychologically the work is a masterpiece that bears all the characteristic features of Rembrandt's style and technique, albeit from different periods.

The notion that the canvas no longer has its original dimensions comes from Van de Wetering[7]. Strong evidence for this is provided by a painting previously attributed to Rembrandt and showing *Isaac and Esau*, which may be looked on as an early work by Ferdinand Bol (fig. 6; see below under *7. Copies*, 1). The scene in this work takes place in a setting that, as Sumowski too has commented, reproduces that of the *Danae*, though framed more generously on all sides. Of particular interest is the fact that in the Bol the podium on which the bed is standing describes an S-shaped curve to the left and a second post of the bed is visible, while at the top more of the bed canopy can be seen in the shape of a (partly visible) open oval supported on curved posts. This lends the spatial situation and the construction of the bed a clarity that they do not have to the same extent in the *Danae* today. This, already, convinces one that the Leningrad painting, too, had roughly the same composition. One can of course wonder how far Bol faithfully copied the layout of Rembrandt's far larger canvas. Although at the bottom (where the canvas of the *Danae* still shows

Fig. 6. Copy 1. F. Bol, *Isaac and Esau*, panel 57.3 × 69.6 cm. Private collection



clear traces of cusping, and thus cannot have been trimmed by more than *c.* 5–10 cm) Bol's composition shows more foreground than its prototype ever did, the degree to which he reproduced accurately details such as the folds in the bed-curtains, and the way his composition is bounded logically by its framing, suggest that he did keep fairly closely to his original. This becomes even more evident when one notes how, in a large signed and dated (1643) painting in Dublin showing *David's dying charge to Solomon* (fig. 8; see below under *7. Copies*, 2), Bol used the same prototype a second time. The painting that was earlier attributed to Gerrit Willemsz. Horst is, ironically enough, trimmed down even more radically than the *Danae*, but the drawing at Besançon (fig. 7) recognized by Sumowski as a preparatory sketch shows, at least at the left and bottom, a border to the composition and a position for the podium and two bedposts that are similar to those in the *Isaac and Esau*; on the right the picture area seems (no doubt in connexion with the addition of the figure of Bathsheba) to be somewhat larger, and at the top rather smaller. There appears, all things taken together, to be reason enough to assume that the *Isaac and Esau* painting does (other than at the bottom) offer a fairly faithful and, especially, convincing impression of the shape of the bed and its placing in the picture area, one that must have found its prototype in the Leningrad *Danae*. This would mean that on the left Rembrandt's canvas would have been about 40 cm larger, on the right some 27 cm, at the top about 18 cm and at the bottom roughly 5 cm (see fig. 9); the overall dimensions would then have been a good two metres in height and about 2.70 m in width, i.e. just as large as the original canvas of the Frankfurt *Blinding of Samson* (no. A 116) which — like the first version of the *Danae* — dates from 1636. The *Blinding of Samson* has a horizontal seam and also consists of two strips each a good metre wide. The *Danae* too has a horizontal seam and would in its reconstructed format likewise have comprised two strips, of similar width. Adding to this the matching weave characteristics of the four strips (see *Support*, SCIENTIFIC DATA), each the usual 1½ ells in width, one can assume that they came from a single bolt (see Vol. II, pp. 28 and 39). The loss of strips of the original canvas explains the presence of an evidently non-autograph signature that one can suppose to have been copied from an original one that was lost when the canvas was reduced.

One cannot say exactly when the painting was trimmed down, but it must have had its present dimensions by the time it was in the collection of Crozat de Thiers. Admittedly it was then twice described, in 1755 and 1770/71 (see *8. Provenance*) as about 195 cm square — i.e. slightly less than it now is high! — but a sketch made of it in 1770/71 by Gabriel de Saint-Aubin unmistakably shows the present appearance (fig. 10; see *7. Copies*, 5). It was subsequently mentioned around 1780, in the Russian imperial collection, with approximately the present dimensions.

Gerson reported[10] Julius S. Held already suspected that the painting had been executed in two phases; but as Kuznetsov relates, he in fact had gone no further than seeing the earlier version of the curtain as a pentimento. Proof came only with Kuznetsov's investigations, already referred to (see [1], [2], [3] and [4]). The latter author concluded, from the X-rays described above, that there had been radical changes — in the position of Danae's right hand, in her head and legs, in the background, the line of the curtains and the placing of the old woman, and in the area round the top of the table. Furthermore he showed convincingly that these changes dit not form part of a single creative process but had to be seen as later alterations made by Rembrandt to a painting he had already completed. Kuznetsov based this last conclusion on the one hand on observations made under the microscope (see *3. Paint layer*, SCIENTIFIC DATA), and on the other on a difference in style and, especially, colour between the peripheral passages (the bed and the Cupid) and the figure of Danae and the adjoining areas — the top of the red tablecloth and the background with the figure of the old servant-woman. From stylistic comparisons and from the partly legible date on the painting this author assumed the firstmentioned passages to have been painted in 1636; this seems quite plausible — though the inscription is not authentic it does appear to provide reliable information, and the stylistic similarities with work from 1635/36 may be termed convincing.

One can try to form an idea of what the first state looked like both from the painting itself and the published X-rays of it, and from works that have

Fig. 7. Copy 2. F. Bol, *David's dying charge to Solomon*, pen and brush 15.5 × 21 cm. Besançon (France), Musée des Beaux-Arts et d'Archéologie



Fig. 8. F. Bol, *David's dying charge to Solomon*, 1643, canvas 171 × 230 cm. Dublin, National Gallery of Ireland



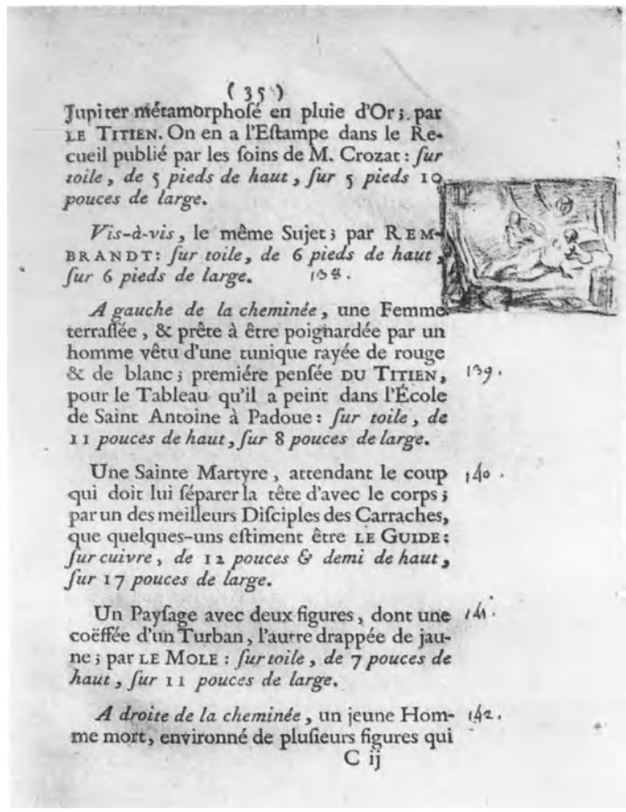
already been mentioned as being by, or attributed to, Bol together with a similar derivative that will be mentioned later. There can be no doubt at all that the first version included the bed and Cupid figure still visible at the present surface, the bed-curtains (other than the part of the curtain pulled back in the middle), the entire foreground including the mules, and large parts of the red tablecloth. This is confirmed by the *Isaac and Esau* attributed to Bol; there the line of the folds in the somewhat extended tablecloth differs and points to a rectangular shape for the table (though his *David's dying charge to Solomon* again reproduces the present folds in the *Danae* quite faithfully). The bedclothes will, though to a great extent subsequently strengthened, have for the most part matched the present state, and the sheet over the foot end of the bed probably dates, in its present state, from the first phase. All of these passages exhibit, in manner of painting and colour-scheme, a character that is very familiar from works such as the Berlin *Samson threatening his father-in-law* (no. A 109) and Leningrad *Abraham's sacrifice* (no. A 108), both from 1635, and the Frankfurt *Blinding of Samson* (no. A 116) and the *Standard-bearer* in a private collection, Paris (no. A 120), both from 1636. This connexion is manifest in the modelling of heavy hanging fabrics with broad strokes of browns and greys with the colour obtained by some green on the sheens of light; in the modelling of shiny metal surfaces with somewhat graphic brushstrokes; in the use of animated, darker strokes and tellingly-placed thick catchlights to render a richly decorated edge or items of clothing; and in the use of largish fields of dark red as a contrasting colour. The similarities extend to such details as the reflexion of a green-blue material in a densely worked surface, of the kind seen in Danae's mules and in the handle of Samson's dagger in the Berlin painting. There must, in the layout of the composition and, especially, in the fall of light through held-back drapery in the rear wall, have been a remarkable resemblance to the Frankfurt *Samson*. From the X-rays, and from the yellowish underlying paint that shows through, one however gets the impression that the opening had in the *Danae* a mid-tone rather than being a source of light, and that the figure received fairly strong light from the left front without, for instance, the outstretched right hand and arm having the subtle contre-jour effect seen today. This lighting can still be perceived in the placing of highlights on the Cupid and the bedpost. The reason for the drastic changes Rembrandt made to the picture may well have been his desire to have the light fall in from between the back curtains, drawn further apart, and to involve the old woman in the new lighting.

It is clear from both the paint surface and the X-ray that the diagonal edge of the curtain was considerably further over to the left, roughly matching that in Bol's drawing in Besançon, where furthermore the position of the young Solomon more or less coincides with that of Danae's left-facing servant-woman in the first version. In the X-rays (especially those of the legs) Danae's body gives the impression of having been modelled with great care. Just as in the complex curving shape of the bed, the accent seems to have been on plasticity in the nude female body as well; this is in line with the greater stress on foreshortening that must have marked the right leg with a slightly bent knee. Kuznetsov has commented that a painting in Braunschweig attributed to various Rembrandt pupils (fig. 11; see *7. Copies*, 3) reproduces the figure of Danae, with a different position for the right arm which hangs down, approximately as according to the X-rays it must have looked; the head more in profile than it is now, one breast overlapped by her left hand, the right knee slightly bent, and above it a wide area of sheet in which there is even a small horizontal fold that can be found in the X-ray of the *Danae* as a dark patch. A further derivative of the Danae figure in its earlier state seems, remarkably, to be the figure of Isaac in an early etching by Bol

Fig. 9. Reconstruction



Fig. 10. Copy 5. G. de Saint-Aubin, Sketch in a copy of the catalogue of the Crozat Collection, 1770/71. Paris, Musée du Petit Palais



(35)

Jupiter métamorphoſé en pluie d'Or ; par LE TITIEN. On en a l'Eſtampe dans le Recueil publié par les ſoins de M. Crozat : *ſur toile, de 5 pieds de haut, ſur 5 pieds 10 pouces de large.*

Vis-à-vis, le même Sujet ; par REMBRANDT : *ſur toile, de 6 pieds de haut, ſur 6 pieds de large.* 138.

A gauche de la cheminée, une Femme terraſſée, & prête à être poignardée par un homme vêtu d'une tunique rayée de rouge & de blanc ; premiére penſée DU TITIEN, pour le Tableau qu'il a peint dans l'École de Saint Antoine à Padoue : *ſur toile, de 11 pouces de haut, ſur 8 pouces de large.* 139.

Une Sainte Martyre, attendant le coup qui doit lui ſéparer la tête d'avec le corps ; par un des meilleurs Diſciples des Carraches, que quelques-uns eſtiment être LE GUIDE : *ſur cuivre, de 12 pouces & demi de haut, ſur 17 pouces de large.* 140.

Un Payſage avec deux figures, dont une coëffée d'un Turban, l'autre drappée de jaune ; par LE MOLE : *ſur toile, de 7 pouces de haut, ſur 11 pouces de large.* 141.

A droite de la cheminée, un jeune Homme mort, environné de pluſieurs figures qui 142.

C ij

showing *Abraham's sacrifice* (Hollst. III, p. 15 no. 1), where only the position of the two arms has been entirely altered. The setting in the Braunschweig painting just mentioned shows a general similarity to that in Rembrandt's painting, but is not copied from it. None of the derivatives gives any clear indication of what stood or lay to the right on the table; the X-ray shows here besides traces of a number of pearls or precious stones, a mysterious structure of light strokes seen by Kuznetsov as a heap of jewels, and — vaguely recognizable — a dark object.

Finally, one must mention the substantial role played in the composition by the design and rendering of materials in the gilded bed, of which the fettered Cupid forms part. The affinity that Rembrandt shows in the middle 1630s for the lobate style (Dutch *kwabstijl*) — the 17th-century term was *snakerij*, or 'drollery', brought to its apogee by the gold- and silversmiths of his own time and a generation earlier, — already prompted Neumann[11] to extensive discussion of this phenomenon. Items of metalware in the Frankfurt *Blinding of Samson* and Dresden *Wedding of Samson* of 1638 (no. A 123), like the armrest in the Amsterdam *Portrait of a young woman* of 1639 (no. A 131) are evidence of this, but none of the objects depicted there makes such a fantastic and at the same time professional impression as the gilded bed in the *Danae*. The triangular foot that is still visible reminds one most strongly, with its curving and layered surface with deep reentrant cavities, of the salt cellars by Johannes Lutma, the design of which was adopted by later artists on a somewhat larger scale for candlesticks. Prototypes that Rembrandt might already have been using in 1636 do not however seem to be known of, nor any for the fat-bellied monster at the foot end or for the treetrunk-like bedpost above. Motifs like this, though less deceptively suggestive of a Lutma style, were used by Rembrandt in the bed in the etching, dated 1639, of *The death of the Virgin* (B. 99). In the *Danae* he seems, more than in any other work, to have found in an ornamental style developed by others a vehicle for his own striving for an animated play of sheens and reflexions of light on the almost tactile surface of metal objects. In this sense, his interest in the lobate style is symptomatic of the amalgam of plastic suggestion and rich play of light that marks this style in general and the *Danae* in its first version in particular.

The figure of the fettered Cupid, too, is evidence of this. The motif of the child in tears occupied Rembrandt a number of times during these years, most strikingly in the Dresden *Ganymede* of 1635 (no. A 113). It was, as P. Schatborn ('Over Rembrandt en kinderen', *De Kroniek van het Rembrandthuis* 27 (1975, pp. 8–19) has argued and as this example confirms, linked to a tradition that existed especially in sculpture; the similarity between the Cupid and a weeping putto (reproduced by Schatborn) on Hendrik de Keyser's sepulchral monument to William I of Orange in the Nieuwe Kerk in Delft is so striking that it has to be supposed that Rembrandt knew of a prototype of the kind. In this connexion it may be mentioned that on 22 February 1635 Rembrandt bought '1 houtkintgen' (one wooden child) at the sale of the estate of the painter, art dealer and innkeeper Barent van Someren (Strauss

Doc., 1635/1)[12].

After the extensive overpaintings that Rembrandt carried out in a second phase, well after 1636, the formal qualities just described remained wholly intact in the peripheral areas. In the centre, however, the whole of the woman's figure was overpainted. In this version it is, probably far more than in the first, marked by a lively interplay of half shadows and reflexions, produced by light falling rather more from the rear and in parts grazing the body at a shallow angle. Assuming — from the X-rays, and the Braunschweig painting (fig. 11; see *7. Copies*, 3) — that the figure was in the first version lit more from the front and more strongly modelled, it is clear that the presentday appearance represents a rendering based more on a subtle alternation of large fields of light and half-shadow. Details like the head seen less in profile and the left breast less covered by the hand make their contribution to this, as does the slighter accent the knees receive in the present version. The bedding is used to some extent for this; the distribution of light on the pillows beneath the left arm has been altered so that the folds seen in the X-ray have virtually disappeared, and the contour of the sheet over the legs has become tauter. It is possible that, as Kuznetsov assumes, the flesh colour in the later version was given a somewhat warmer tint; at all events, that will be true of today's raised right hand, where the glow of light is rendered with pink paint. The bright red of the bows on the two bracelets, and of the top surface of the tablecloth, which come from this phase, must also have introduced a quite new colour component. The elimination of the still-life on the tabletop seems the only instance of peripheral passages being adapted to the new formal character of the central area that Rembrandt felt to be necessary. The less strongly lit areas of the bed and curtains otherwise kept their original appearance, apart from the background in which the servant-woman and the part of the rearmost bed-curtain she is holding back were moved more than 20 cm to the right. This enlarged the empty area of background, and one can assume that its intensity of light, accentuated by the tint darkening towards the bottom, came to play a greater role. The servant-woman changed her pose as well as her position: according to the X-rays her head was originally seen wholly in profile. Today she provides — by both her hands pointing to the right, as well — a clear link between Danae and the light falling through the opened curtain. The execution of this figure, scarcely more than sketchlike, is based entirely on broadly brushed indications of form with a minimum of colour accents, and has some resemblance only with that of Danae's right hand. This cursory but highly effective treatment may be connected with the placing of the figure further back.

Fig. 11. Copy 3. Rembrandt school (probably H. Jansen), *Mundus and Paulina*, canvas 81 × 100 cm. Braunschweig, Herzog Anton Ulrich-Museum



As to the difficult question of when Rembrandt reworked the painting, Kuznetsov put the date in the middle or late 1640s. He saw the model first as Hendrickje Stoffels (with whom Rembrandt lived from about 1649 onwards)[2,3], and later as Geertje Dircx (who was part of Rembrandt's household from Saskia's death in July 1642 until 1649)[1,4]; but it does not seem possible to arrive at a date in this way. He also rightly pointed out that Danae's headdress recurs in a few female heads painted by Rembrandt or by his followers (Br. 373 and 374), though these cannot be accurately dated and do little to help solve the problem. Gerson[10] preferred a date around 1650, basing his belief on a resemblance to the Paris *Bathsheba* of 1654 (Br. 521) 'in the softness of the surface painting and in the "classical" structure'. The validity of this comparison is open to question — the *Bathsheba* is far more 'classical' in structure and its manner of painting is bolder and more contrasty. But there is another more cogent and more precise reason to prefer a much earlier date for Rembrandt's reworking. The Dublin painting by Bol already mentioned, the *David's dying charge to Solomon* of 1643 (fig. 8), interestingly enough repeats (as Van de Wetering[7], note 6, remarks) almost exactly the gesture of Danae's right hand in the present state of the painting. The date on Bol's painting must thus surely provide the latest date for Rembrandt's *Danae* in its final version. Anyone who is surprised at the farreaching freedom and broadness with which the servant-woman is executed in this version need only look at the very similar free execution of heads in the *Night watch*, dated 1642 (no. A 146). For all that, the stylistic tendency that Rembrandt's overpaintings represent vis-à-vis the 1636 version is clear; the effect of the light on the plastic form became quite different — not so much that of an emphatically described modelling as of a pictorial interplay between form and tonal and colour values.

The painting's pedigree can be traced quite

confidently back to 1755 — when it was catalogued in the coll. Crozat de Thiers — and probably to before 1751 when it must have been owned by his elder brother Crozat de Tugny (see *8. Provenance*). It is not known how the painting came to Paris; one may suspect that it was there before 1715, from a drawing by Watteau (cf. see *8. Provenance*), that seems to contain a paraphrase in reverse of the Danae figure (alongside a small table), combined with an old woman who, in front of a bedcurtain, is approaching with a syringe — a recasting of the iconographic significance that was typical of the time. There is so far no real evidence that someone like the art dealer Gersaint, who had business dealings with Watteau, brought Rembrandt's work to Paris.

Whether the painting can be identified with a large *Danae* that was mentioned first in Rembrandt's 1656 inventory and with another, probably the same, in the estate of Clara van Domselaer née De Valaer in 1660 (see *5. Documents and sources*) will of course depend in part on how correct the iconographic interpretation of the subject-matter is. This can however be regarded as quite firm (see below). One may thus conclude with a probability verging on certainty that, not only in 1636 but also after the overpainting which he carried out in 1643 at the latest, the picture remained in Rembrandt's possession. The theory put forward by Schwartz[13] that 'a piece 10 feet long and 8 feet high' that Rembrandt sent to Huygens as a gift in 1639 was not the *Blinding of Samson* (no. A 116, see comments under that entry) but could be identified with the *Danae* therefore seems to be unfounded. The work must have been sold in one of the sales following Rembrandt's *'cessio bonorum'*, and have come then or soon afterwards into the possession of the Van Domselaer family. Documentary evidence on the painting's history during the years from 1660 to about 1750 is lacking.

There has never been any doubt that the picture shows a woman waiting for her lover, yet many have doubted that the woman can be identified with Danae, who was locked up with her nurse in a bronze chamber by her father King Acrisius and was there visited by Jupiter in the form of a shower of gold; subsequently, according to the Greek myth (as also related by Van Mander), she gave birth to Perseus, who an oracle foretold would kill King Acrisius. Smith[14] in 1836 called the picture *The lover expected*, and from 1873 a whole series of interpretations has been suggested and argued that compete with the title *Danae* (dating back at least to the 18th century). From the lists (by no means complete!) given by Rosenberg[15] and Kuznetsov[4] one can mention: *Sara awaiting Tobias* (W. Bode, 1873 and 1883; N. Chechulin, 1912), *Hagar being presented to Abraham* (A. Jordan, 1884; W. Niemeyer, 1931), *Messalina* (R. Wustmann, 1909/10; H. Kauffmann, 1920), *Potiphar's wife offering herself to Joseph* (J.C. van Dyke, 1923), *Bathsheba awaiting King David* (K. von Baudissin, 1923; A. Chlenof, 1960), *Delilah tempting Samson* (W. Drost, 1926), *Venus awaiting Mars* (W. Weisbach, 1926), *Rachel awaiting Jacob* (S. Rosenthal, 1928), *Leah awaiting Jacob* (C. Brière-Misme, 1952/54), *Semele* (MacLaren, 1960) and *Aegina visited by Jupiter in the form of a blaze of fire* (Schwartz, 1984[13]). One objection that can be offered to all these interpretations is that they are barely, if at all, reconcilable with any iconographic tradition. This does not apply to the traditional reading of the picture as *Danae*, as Panofsky[16] has explained at length. Especially important is the fact that in the Middle Ages emprisoned Danae was interpreted as a chastity type, and later particularly as a type of greed and venal love[17]. This explains the presence of the manacled and weeping Cupid forming part of the bed who is not (as various authors have believed) in contradiction with the anticipated carnal enjoyment but rather characterizes the situation of Danae in her enforced chastity. The fact that the golden rain is falling not in the form of a shower of coins but as a glare of light — the light brown spots on the curtain can scarcely be seen as an indication of this (cf. the reproduction by Kuznetsov, op. cit.[4], p. 56) — is in line with the iconographic role that light plays in Rembrandt and as Panofsky[16] and Tümpel[18] have demonstrated was not without precedent. One may take it that a stronger stress on the function of the light was the main reason for Rembrandt's reworking of the picture in or shortly before 1643. A detail that reinforces the interpretation of the picture as Danae is the bunch of keys hanging from the right arm of the old woman (identifiable as Danae's nurse); these are a direct allusion to Danae's incarceration.

Broadly speaking Rembrandt's painting belongs to the pictorial tradition inaugurated by Titian's pictures of Venus and Danae. Panofsky and Kuznetsov see the most direct prototypes in a *Danae* designed by Annibale Carracci (destroyed; formerly London, Bridgewater House; cf. D. Posner, *Annibale Carracci*, London 1971, I, p. 129; II, pl. 153a), where for example the right arm pushing aside the curtain is remarkably like Rembrandt's first version but where the old woman is missing, and in a print by Hiëronymus Wiericx. A link with the Venetian tradition can have been provided by a Danae described as a work by Padovanino, which in 1657 was in the estate of the Amsterdam art dealer Johannes de Renialme (A. Bredius, *Künstler-Inventare* I, The Hague 1915, p. 232, no. 124). At all events the great intensity of Rembrandt's lighting — further enhanced in the second version — and the richness of the rendering of material achieved with limited means relates clearly to a Venetian tradition, and

can at the same time be seen as a highly original interpretation of the climactic moment from the Danae myth. A direct prototype for the layout, and especially for the placing of the bed and table, could well have been Pieter Lastman's *Wedding night of Tobias and Sara* of 1611 in Boston (cf. cat. exhib. *The Pre-Rembrandtists*, Sacramento, Cal., 1974, no. 1 with further references).

There seem to be no autograph drawings by Rembrandt that might explain the genesis of the painting. A small sketch in Braunschweig that has been quoted in this regard (W.R. Valentiner, *Rembrandt. Des Meisters Handzeichnungen* II, Stuttgart-Berlin 1934, Kl. d. K. 32, no. 605) and was accepted by Rosenberg[15] as a Rembrandt though not included by Benesch does, admittedly, have the same subject and a similar composition, but it is so crudely sketched (moreover in a vertical format) that it provides no useful information. A drawing in Munich forming part of a group of nude studies that can be dated in the 1650s (Ben. 1124), which C. Hofstede de Groot (in: *Die Handzeichnungen Rembrandts*, Haarlem 1906, no. 504) linked with the *Danae*, is so unlike the painting as to be irrelevant.

As to the influence the painting had on Rembrandt's pupils, we have already spoken of the use made of the setting by Bol in two early paintings, applied to two quite different subjects. Kuznetsov (op. cit.[3], fig. 9 and [4], p. 20) points out that much later Bol used a reminiscence of Rembrandt's figure of Danae (in its reworked version), in reverse and with different lighting, in his large *Danae* (or *Semele?*) dated 1663 at Meiningen Castle; shortly before, in 1660, Bol had most probably had occasion to see the original again in the estate of Clara de Valaer (see *5. Documents and sources*). An earlier reflexion of the first state of the Danae figure, once again in reverse, seems to be apparent in a recumbent naked woman in a *Vanitas* by Jacob van Loo (1614–1670) (dimensions unknown; in the art trade in Berlin in 1928; photo RKD L 23711). A number of paintings by contemporaries known only by report depicted *Danae* and may have shown the influence of Rembrandt's work; for instance, Jacob van Loo painted, besides the *Vanitas* just mentioned, a *Danae* that was sold in Amsterdam on 16 August 1702 for a high price (Hoet I, p. 66 no. 37; cf. idem II, p. 84 no. 44), and a lost painting by Dirck Bleker (1622– after 1672) — whose known work does show some Rembrandt influence — was praised by Vondel in a poem published in 1650. There must also have been a painting of the subject by Jan Lievens, mentioned in an Amsterdam inventory of 1697 (A. Bredius, *Künstler-Inventare* I, The Hague 1915, p. 219).

How people at the time reacted to a picture such as this may be judged from Vondel's poem on Bleker's painting, just mentioned. The mediaeval allegory of chastity plays no role at all in this; the deceptive naturalness of the picture is a central feature, and prompts a joke about the 'snoeplust' (the Dutch word means both a sweet tooth and frivolous behaviour) of the god Jupiter, who finds 'nothing but canvas'.

5. Documents and sources

— In the inventory of Rembrandt's possessions drawn up in 1656 there is described as present 'Op de Schilder loos' (store): 'Een groot stuck, sijnde D(i)anae' (Strauss *Doc.*, 1656/12 no. 347). As Strauss and Van der Meulen comment and their reproduction of the document shows, the *i* has been added later by the scribe (in darker ink); it must originally have read 'Danae'. Though Rembrandt was not, as in other instances, mentioned as the painting's author, this 'large piece' can with great probability be seen as identical with no. A119 (see also the description of 'a large painting' in the document quoted below). Although Hofstede de Groot was aware in 1906 that the *i* had been added and consequently read 'Danae' (HdG *Urk.*, p. 209 no. 347), he later thought on the grounds of the reading 'Dianae', understood as Diana, that the mention could not relate to the Leningrad painting[19]. A valuation of the paintings belonging to Jan d'Abbijn of Amsterdam, dated 25 June 1644, mentions 'een groote schilderij van Venus van Rembrant . . ./fl/400,–' (A. Bredius in: *O.H.* 28, 1910, p. 9; Strauss *Doc.*, 1644/4). Weisbach[20], who tried to see *Venus expecting Mars* in the painting, found support for his interpretation in this, but it is more likely that the painting referred to in 1644 has been lost. One can of course wonder, with Strauss and Van der Meulen, whether the paintings mentioned in 1644 and 1656 are identical with each other and with the Leningrad work. In itself it is not inconceivable that a *Danae* might be described as a *Venus*. It is however less likely that the painting would subsequently have been back in Rembrandt's possession in 1656.

— In the inventory of the estate of Clara de Valaer (1584–1660), widow of Eduart van Domselaer (1568–1624) and then of Hendrick van Domselaer (1580/81–1652), drawn up in Amsterdam on 16 October 1660 and valued by Ferdinand Bol and Jurriaen Ovens, there is, included with other paintings described without a valuation under the heading 'De volgende goederen wesende Restant van een meerder party syn in desen boedel verpant' (the following items being the residue of a larger batch are pledged in this estate): 'Een groot stuck schilderij van Rembrant van Rhyn synde een Dane' (A. Bredius in: *O.H.* 26, 1908, p. 222; Strauss *Doc.*, 1660/15). Most probably the painting was the same as that described in Rembrandt's possession in 1656. It is not known who had pledged the batch of paintings (probably the same person who in 1657/58 had bought the painting in a sale of Rembrandt's belongings). Nor do we know what happened to the painting, though one can deduce from the document that it was sold. Another work belonging to the same batch, described as 'Een stuck synde twee pauwen ende een kint van Rembrant' (A piece being two peacocks and a child by Rembrant) appears later in the inventory of the estate of Tobias van Domselaer (1611–1685), the son of Clara de Valaer from her first marriage, drawn up in 1685 (cf. no. A 134, *8. Provenance*); but not the *Danae*.

6. Graphic reproductions

None.

7. Copies

Though none of the works listed below can, other than nos. 4 and 5, be looked on as copies in the strict meaning of the word, it may be useful here to review the derivatives mentioned above under *Comments* that reproduce parts of the original.

1. *Isaac and Esau.* Oak panel 57.3 × 69.6 cm, falsely signed *Rembrand.* on an overpainted section in the centre of the foreground (fig. 6). Geneva, dealer Maria-Louise Jeanneret (1979). Examined in August 1979 (J.V., E.v.d.W.). Since the earliest known mention (coll. David Ietswaard, sale Amsterdam 22 April 1749, Lugt 704, no. 34) known as a work by Rembrandt (and published as such, inter alia in: W. Bode and C. Hofstede de Groot, *Rembrandt* III, Paris 1899, no. 217; W.R. Valentiner, *Rembrandt*, Stuttgart-Leipzig 1909, Kl. d. K., p. 172; HdG 12) until Bredius omitted it from his book in 1935. The cautious and rather dull brushwork which uses a uniform rhythm to depict varying forms such as folds, fingers and other details, is strongly reminiscent of the execution of Ferdinand Bol's somewhat less colourful painting of *The angel appearing to Gideon*, signed and dated 1641, in the Rijksmuseum Het Catharijneconvent in Utrecht (Blankert *Bol*, no. 11; Sumowski *Gemälde* I, no. 79). The attribution of this painting to Bol is confirmed by Sumowski's identification of Bol's drawing for the figures (differing from Rembrandt's prototype) (whereabouts unknown; cf. Sumowski *Drawings* I, no. 199). A date around 1642 (the year that appears on the similar *Isaac blessing Jacob* by Gerbrand van den Eeckhout in New York) seems the most likely. As has been explained in *Comments* above, the painting's interest as a document lies in the fact that it copies faithfully the setting of the *Danae* on a smaller scale, reproducing it in a broader framing approximately such as Rembrandt's painting too must have had. The placing of Sara, matching that of the nurse in the first version of the *Danae*, shows that this derivative was produced before Rembrandt revised his painting.

2. *David's dying charge to Solomon.* Drawing, pen and brush, 15.5 × 21 cm. Besançon, Musée des Beaux-Arts (from the Gigoux Collection) (fig. 7). Formerly regarded as by Rembrandt (C. Hofstede de Groot, *Die Handzeichnungen Rembrandts*, Haarlem 1906, no. 544, as *Jacob's blessing*), but recognized by Sumowski[8] as a sketch for a painting in Dublin that was attributed to Gerrit Willemsz. Horst (cf. W. Armstrong in: *Burl. Mag.* 20, 1911/12, pp. 258–263 plate III D; J.C. van Dyke[6], p. 101, fig. 81; Blankert *Bol*, no. R 16); since then it has however been found to be a signed work by Bol, dated 1643 (*National Gallery of Ireland. Catalogue of the paintings*, 1971, p. 12, no. 47; J. Bruyn in: *O.H.* 97, 1983, pp. 211–213; our fig. 8). The painting is trimmed even more radically than the *Danae* and is consequently, though it represents the setting of that painting accurately, less interesting as a document than the drawing, which renders the setting reproduced in copy 1 equally faithfully and can thus be seen as also giving an impression of the *Danae* in its completed state. The gesture of David's right hand in the drawing and painting, and the way it is lit in the latter are evidence that when Bol did his painting in 1643 he already knew the *Danae* in its final version.

3. *Mundus and Paulina.* Canvas 81 × 100 cm, signed *F.B.*, Braunschweig, Herzog Anton Ulrich-Museum, inv. no. 246; R. Klessmann, *Die holländischen Gemälde . . .*, 1983, p. 67 (as: Flinck?); Sumowski *Gemälde* II, no. 396 (as: Van den Eeckhout); probably by Heinrich Jansen (fig. 11). The figure of the young woman matches on a number of points (with the exception of the pose of the right arm, and the feet which are fully visible) what the first state of the *Danae* figure must have been, as explained in *4. Comments.*

4. A partial copy by Fragonard (canvas 92 × 63 cm) was sold with the coll. Deshayes in Paris on 26 March 1765 (Lugt 1440), no. 138, together with a copy by the same artist of Rembrandt's *Young woman leaning on her broom*, Br. 378 (G. Wildenstein, *The paintings of Fragonard*, Phaidon 1960, nos. 3 and 2 respectively).

5. Sketch by Gabriel de Saint-Aubin drawn in 1770/71 in a copy of the *Catalogue des Tableaux de M. Crozat, baron de Thiers*, Paris 1755, Musée du Petit Palais (fig. 10). Cf. E. Dacier, *Catalogues de ventes et livrets de salons illustrés par Gabriel de Saint-Aubin* I, Paris 1909, p. 47ff; E. Dacier, *Gabriel de Saint-Aubin* II, Paris 1931, p. 190, no. 1030. Shows the whole painting in a very summary manner, unmistakeably in its present format.

8. Provenance

— Probably identical with a large *Danae* that was listed as being in Rembrandt's possession in 1656, and in the estate of Clara de Valaer in Amsterdam in 1660 (see *5. Documents and sources*). One has to assume that the work then passed to France; when this happened is not known, but a composition by Watteau from *c.* 1715 apparently based on it (see D. Posner in: *Art Bull.* 54, 1972, pp. 383–389, fig. 2) suggests that it was then already in Paris.

— Coll. Joseph-Antoine Crozat, baron de Tugny (1696–1751), Paris, according to M. Stuffmann (in: *G.d.B.-A.* 6th series 72, 1968, p. 34; cf. however also p. 120 no. 60, where it is not said that the work was mentioned in the inventory of the estate). Until a short time ago it was generally assumed that the painting was already in the coll. Pierre Crozat, uncle of Joseph-Antoine; it does not however appear in the inventory of his estate (cf. Stuffmann, ibid. pp. 100–102).

— Coll. Louis-Antoine Crozat, baron de Thiers (1699–1770), Paris, who inherited the paintings belonging to his older brother Joseph-Antoine as well as those of his uncle Pierre Crozat: *Catalogue des Tableaux du Cabinet de M. Crozat, baron de Thiers*, Paris 1755, p. 35: 'Vis-à-vis [i.e. opposite: 'Danae recevant Jupiter metamorphosé en pluie d'Or par Titien] . . . le même Sujet par Rembrandt: sur toile, de 6 pieds de haut, sur 6 pieds de large [=194.5 × 194.5 cm]'.

— With the entire Crozat de Thiers collection bought for Catherine II, Empress of Russia, at the instigation of Diderot and after negotiations conducted by François Tronchin, in 1772. Described by Tronchin in 1771 in an inventory drawn up for this purpose, as no. 219: 'Danae, toile, hauteur 6 pieds, largeur 6 pieds' (Stuffmann, ibid. p. 120 no. 60). *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. Leningrad, Hermitage): 'Paul Rembrant. 935. Danaé. Tableau composé de deux figures, a voir de la Danaë et d'une vieille. Il est d'un effet d'un reliëf et d'une vérité qui se disputent avec la nature. On regrète seulement que Rembrant n'ait pas employé la magie de son coloris sur un plus beau modèle. Sur toile haut 2 ar[chine] 9½ V[erchokk]. Large 2 ar. 14½ V. [=184.4 × 206.6 cm]'.

9. Summary

The painting is wholly convincing as to its authenticity, though it clearly shows two different phases in the development of Rembrandt's style. On the grounds of two early works by Ferdinand Bol in which the latter uses the same setting, comprising a tester bed on a podium with a small table beside the head end, one has to assume that the canvas was (already before the middle of the 18th century) reduced quite substantially; originally it must have had the dimensions of the *Blinding of Samson* (no. A 116). Otherwise it is — or, sadly, was until it was attacked on 15 June 1985 — generally well preserved.

So far as one can make out from the date of 1636 (?) on the painting (probably not authentic, but copied from an earlier inscription), and from a close similarity in approach and execution of the peripheral passages to Rembrandt's large history paintings from the mid 1630s, the first version was painted in 1636 and, according to microscope evidence, varnished in that state; from this it may be deduced that it was regarded as finished. Just as in the still visible parts of this first version — the tester

bed with its curtains, the foreground, large parts of the tablecloth and the sheets — there must, according to the X-rays, have been a strong accent placed in the figure of Danae on the modelling of her body in a light that fell rather further from the front than it does today. In the animated lobate style of the uniquely elaborate gilded bed Rembrandt seems to have found a suitable motif for his stylistic intentions. In this version, on the X-ray evidence, the opening in the rear curtain was narrower, the old servant-woman was placed more to the left, and the pose of Danae's head, right arm and legs differed from that seen today.

In the second phase Rembrandt must have completely repainted, especially, the figure of Danae. The forms of the body were, particularly in the legs, greatly simplified and characterised mainly (other than through long, sinuous contours) by half-shadows and reflexions of light. Since Ferdinand Bol copied Danae's gesture in this final version in 1643, this second phase must be dated in that year at the latest. It may be assumed that this version, because of the light flooding through a wider opening in the curtains (which puts Danae's slightly more raised hand partly in contre-jour) than it corresponds to Rembrandt's changed iconographic intentions.

The painting, whose pedigree can be traced back to the coll. Crozat de Tugny (d. 1751), may with a great measure of probability be identified with a large *Danae* in Rembrandt's possession in 1656; probably the same painting as a similarly-described work in an Amsterdam estate inventory in 1660. How and when it came to Paris is not known, but this was presumably before 1715.

There can be little doubt as to the subject-matter of the picture, despite a great deal of difference of opinion and a great many counterproposals. Following a tradition, originally Venetian, of Venus and Danae depictions, Rembrandt has — on the evidence of a number of details (the figure of a fettered and weeping Cupid, showing the function of the bed, and the bunch of keys held by the old woman that points to the captivity through which Danae was forced to chastity by her father) and especially of the light streaming in (and representing Jupiter's disguise as a shower of gold) — shown the climactic moment of the Danae story. As a depiction of this theme created by Titian it takes its place in a long and rich tradition, and was by no means uncommon in 17th-century Holland.

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3 J.I. Kuznetzow, 'Nieuws over Rembrandts Danaë', *O.H.* 82 (1967), pp. 225–233 (Dutch version of the article in reference 2).

4 Y. Kuznetsov, *Enigmas surrounding Danaë* (in Russian), Leningrad 1970.

5 W. Bode, *Studien zur Geschichte der holländischen Malerei*, Braunschweig 1883, pp. 449–451.

6 J.C. van Dyke, *Rembrandt and his school*, New York 1923, pp. 104–105 (as: Rembrandt school, probably Horst).

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17 M. Millner Kahr, 'Danaë: virtuous, voluptuous, venal woman', *Art Bull.* 60, 1978, pp. 43–55.

18 C. Tümpel, 'Studien zur Ikonographie der Historien Rembrandts. Deutung und Interpretation der Bildinhalte', *N.K.J.* 20 (1969), pp. 107–198, esp. 158–160; Tümpel 1986, cat. no. 100.

19 HdG 197.

20 W. Weisbach, *Rembrandt*. Berlin-Leipzig 1926, p. 244.

A 120 The standard-bearer

1636

PARIS, PRIVATE COLLECTION

HdG 270; BR. 433; BAUCH 171; GERSON 95

Fig. 1. Canvas 118.8 × 96.8 cm



1. Summarized opinion

An apparently very well preserved and authentic work, reliably signed and dated 1636.

2. Description of subject

A man is seen to the waist, standing turned to the right and with his face towards the viewer, on whom the gaze is fixed. He is broad and rather thickset, has long, dark, curling hair and a drooping moustache. His right fist is stemmed on the hip, palm outwards, and the arm is seen drastically foreshortened. This stance is to counterbalance a white flag held, with his left hand, with the upper part hanging down behind him while the lower part is draped over his left shoulder and arm. At the top and left there are vague indications in the flag of parts of a band with a pattern of tendrils; immediately below the hand on the right the end of the flagpole is decorated with a shiny, ornamented knob. A shaft of bright light falls from the left onto parts of the figure, the uppermost part of the flag and parts of the rear wall and a half-column on the right. The man's face is partly shadowed by the edge of a cap, and his head casts a shadow on the flag, while the top of the latter (not itself visible) throws a shadow on the half-column. At the lower left, too, there are — on the man's hip and on the wall — the cast shadows of objects not seen in the picture.

The man wears a grey, slashed cap with a wide, upstanding brim and two plumes (that at the front brown, the other dark green). The edge of his shirt projects over the rim of a gorget. A tunic of a light-green, shiny material, reaching down to the hips, hangs open at the front; vertical stripes of gold braid run down from a brown shoulder-panel, cut off straight across the chest, down to a wide band of trim at the hem of the tunic. The sleeve seen on the left has a wide bouffant section at the top while the lower part is closer to the arm (a 'leg-of-mutton' sleeve); where the sleeve is set into the tunic there is a decorative chain, while at the bottom a white pleated cuff stands out stiffly. On the chest the tunic is part-hidden beneath a sash of striped material that runs up to the righthand shoulder; at the upper left the long fringed ends of this hang down from where it is knotted at his back, with the one to the front covering the lower part of a heavy, shiny-gold dagger worn on the hip. The tunic hanging open at the front reveals a buttoned and braided jacket, with beneath it the pleats of the shirt that projects above the breeches, and a codpiece.

3. Observations and technical information

Working conditions

Examined in April 1971 (J.B., S.H.L.) in moderate light, on the wall and in the frame.

Support

DESCRIPTION: Canvas, lined, 118.8 × 96.8 cm (sight size). Single piece. No cusping could be seen.
SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

Ground

DESCRIPTION: In the shadows at the lower left and right background a light tint shows through, it appears to belong to the ground.
SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

Paint layer

CONDITION: So far as could be judged given the circumstances of our examination, this appeared very good. The background has been retouched along the right and lefthand edges. Craquelure: craquelure of the kind normal on 17th-century canvases, with a pattern varying in size, is evenly distributed over the surface.

DESCRIPTION: The paint has been set down rapidly, with mostly broad strokes that can be readily followed everywhere. In the figure, along the outline of forms, there is frequently some merging of the paint with that of adjacent areas, again pointing to a rapid way of working. A few scratchmarks are used in the tendril pattern in the upper part of the flag. The weave of the canvas is hardly visible at the paint surface: in the lit passages the paint is thick and sometimes coarsely applied, while that in the shadows (including those on the face) covers to a greater or lesser extent. The paint layer has translucency only in the shadow areas in the lower half of the background, where (as already mentioned) traces of a light-tinted ground show through a thin dark brown. In the shadow parts of the figure and flag one can see that there is an underlying brown on top of which opaque paint was applied with loose strokes in a range of colours determined largely by brown and grey in numerous gradations, mixed here and there and enlivened with some pink, ochre yellow and black. In the head, where this variation of tints is concentrated, the colour effect is intensified by the contrast with the flag done in greys and off-white. The most striking colour accent is in the lit parts of the gold-braided tunic, painted in light green, green and ochre yellow, and broken white.

In the head, the lit cheek and lit parts of the nose and ear, flesh colours in various tints of pink are set over and next to each other, with a haze of grey along the jawline and a strong cast shadow in dark paint below the ear. The shadow parts are rendered with broad brushstrokes, for the most part in a thickly-applied greyish brown that lightens in vague reflexions of light above the eyes and nose. Brown is used here and there, for instance in the cheek on the right that as a result has a ruddy appearance. The paint is applied thinly only in the shadows at the bridge of the nose and along the righthand side of it. The borders of the eyelids are shown with curved strokes of brown, while those of the eyes themselves are kept vague, with greys for the iris and white of the eye and a patch of black for the pupil. A touch of almost black paint is placed in the nostril on the left, with a dab of brownish red to the left of it. The lefthand half of the moustache is painted in browns, with some of the flesh colour drawn into the strokes of it at the top, while the righthand part is mostly in black. Some brown is placed on the upper lip and some muddy pink on the lower; the mouth-line, in a brown-black, is interrupted at the left by strokes of brown to show straggling strands of moustache hair. The chin is modelled with great plasticity with broad strokes of grey-brown, and the cast shadow of the trailing tip of the moustache on the left provides a marked three-dimensional effect. The curling hair of the head is painted fluently and broadly, on the left in greys and thin browns and in the shadows on the right in thin greys with loose strokes of black on top of them.

The cap is done in greys placed over a brown underpainting; at the top above the crown, where the grey is thinner, this brown contributes to the colour effect. The edge of lobes is shown on the left with bold brushstrokes of a pink that is often mingled with strokes of grey and occasionally applied with glancing touches of dry paint. In the upstanding lobes on the right there are thin dark greys over the brown underpainting; the edges catching the light are worked up with a pinkish grey and white, applied with invariably strong strokes giving the modelling. The plume to the front is painted with short brushstrokes placed crosswise, in browns and some ochre brown at the edge, while the other is done with strokes of a dark, somewhat bluish green running lengthwise. Both feathers are penetrated at the edges by the white paint of the flag.

The lit part of the edge of the shirt consists of thick strokes of white broken with flesh colour. The gorget is made up, from left to right, of successive zones of grey, grey-white and dark grey enlivened with a reflexion from the face in brown, white catchlights and brush-lines in black to indicate edges and, on the left, the head of a rivet. The shoulder-panel of the coat is rendered rather streakily in a fairly opaque paint, the sash below

Fig. 2. Detail (1 : 2)



it with strokes of dark brown, and the pattern with alternate strokes of dark brown and ochre brown. The entire shadowed front of the figure is for the rest worked up in a similar manner in greys and browns, with a rather draughtsmanlike drawing of detail. On the right, the treatment of the shadow parts of the flag and hand is similar — thin greys over a brown that is frequently left visible, and brush lines in black to draw the multiplicity of folds in the flag, the outlines of the fingers and the end of the flagpole.

On the left, in the shadow areas of the forearm and hip, deep browns and sometimes quite bold strokes of dark brown are placed over a brown underpainting that is left apparent at some points. The same happens in the lit part of the sleeve, where the underpainting provides, together with strokes of dark brown applied later, an indication of patches of shadow. The shiny surface of the material is rendered with short and longer wavy strokes of a thick light green and highlights in a matt yellow. The same colours are used in the lit part of the hip; the brush movement here is however short and straight. The gold braiding is shown with a mass of frequently thick strokes of light and ochre yellow and a dirty white, smeared one into the other. The dagger has an underlying lay-in in dark brown, which in the sheens of light is overlaid with short strokes and dabs of a bright ochre brown, bright yellow and off-white. The indication of the cuff consists mainly of radially-placed strokes of dark brown, between which there are broad brushstrokes of brown-grey in the shadows and strokes of broken white in the lit parts. The shadow of the hand is painted with strokes of a thick brown, merging towards the light into a flesh tint, with the contours shown with strokes of light and reddish brown. An off-white highlight is placed on the little finger. Cast shadows under the dagger and hand are marked with a deep dark brown. Fat greys and brown are used in the lit ends of the sash that hang down the man's back; the fringe at the bottom is rendered with short strokes, and the knot higher up is outlined with free strokes in a darker grey.

The lit top part of the flag is painted with broad strokes of various greys. Strokes of a darker grey, with some scratchmarks, give a hint of the tendril motif in the ornamented band. The background is done with strokes running in all directions, which are readily followed especially in the lightest, most thickly-painted passages. As has been mentioned, the light tint of the ground can be detected in the shadows on the left, showing through a thin dark brown.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

X-Rays

None.

Signature

At the bottom left in dark brown <*Rembrandt f/1636*>. The upstroke of the *R* has suffered somewhat, but the bold and regularly drawn letters and figures give an impression of reliability.

Varnish

No special remarks.

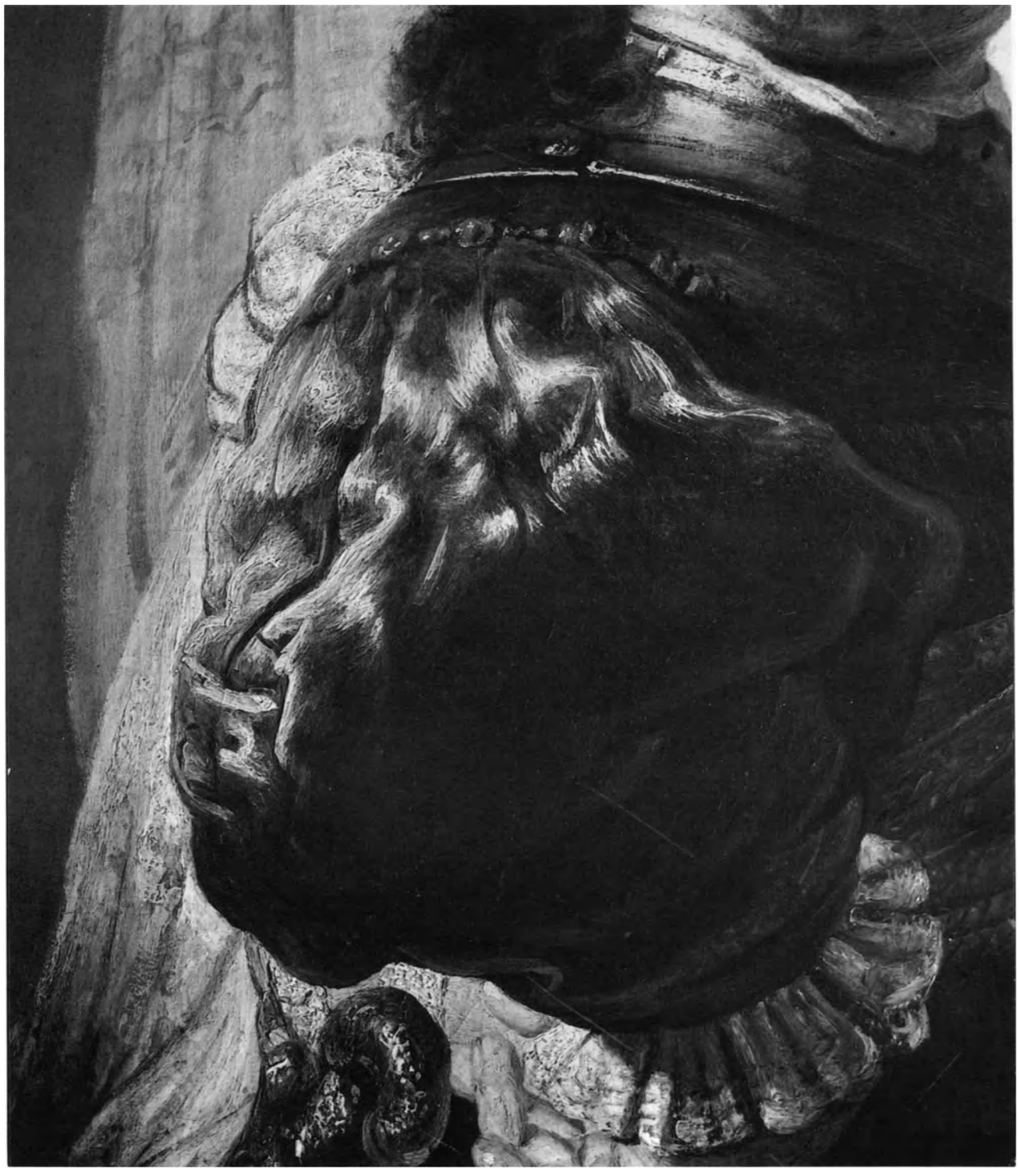
4. Comments

With its brilliant execution, which may be termed characteristic of an important aspect of Rembrandt's large scale works in the 1630s, the picture is wholly convincing as to its authenticity. The dynamic brushwork, through its all-pervading rhythm, determines the appearance of forms, and the strong effect of what is in fact only a small range of colour accents in a colour scheme dominated by browns and greys, combined with the powerful and extremely vivid contrast between light and shade, results in a suggestion of great three-dimensionality. In these respects the painting is directly similar to Rembrandt's works from the mid-1630s showing lifesize figures, most so to the Frankfurt *Blinding of Samson* of 1636 (no. A 116) in which on an even larger scale brushwork, colour accents and chiaroscuro play a similar role. The signature and date of 1636, in themselves confidence-inspiring, are wholly in line with the attribution and dating suggested by the style and execution.

Compared with similar half-length figures from the years immediately before, the painting represents a stepping-up of the contrasts. The London *Flora* of 1635 (no. A 112) shows a similar repoussoir in the extended left hand holding the flowers, but the way that here the foreshortened right arm planted against the hip is suggested purely by chiaroscuro contrasts marks an intensification of the effect of depth. The same is true for the animated contour of the head and cap, determined by contrasts of light and dark, standing out against the light tones of the flag that cuts across the subdued tints used for the background. Throughout the figure, but especially in the head, the carefully modelled light areas are combined in a very Rembrandt-like way with broadly treated shadow areas, in which the eyes are incorporated and the reflexions of light contribute to the modelling. Cast shadows — from the ear on the neck, from the figure on the flag and from the flag on the rear wall — play a great part in suggesting depth. Here and there a glistening surface is indicated by more precise treatment — in the gold braiding on the coat, and in the handle of the dagger immediately beside the free brushstrokes that show the right hand only in its main features. Both of them, dagger and hand, throw a shadow on the braided coat that itself disappears at the bottom into a cast shadow of unknown origin. A similar treatment occurs, with an even more pronounced broad brushwork, in the Washington *Half-length figure of a man in 'Polish' costume* of 1637 (no. A 122). In the latter painting the trend towards a more sober colour-scheme that can already be sensed in the *Standard-bearer* compared with the 1635 *Flora* or the *Minerva* (no. A 114) from the same year, is taken even further.

The *Standard-bearer* shares with the earlier half-length figures of Minerva and Flora the fact that the painting was reproduced (evidently in Rembrandt's studio) in an elaborate drawing (fig. 4), by the same hand that copied the *Flora* (see *7. Copies*, 1). One may assume that such drawings served as an exercise for a pupil and were also intended for sale. A note made by Rembrandt (again see copy 1) on the back of a drawing in Berlin that Benesch dated at around 1637 (Ben. 448) might have to do with the sale of such

Fig. 3. Detail (1 : 2)



drawings; there is successive mention of 'syn vaendraeger' (his standard-bearer) and 'floora' done by a pupil whose name is probably written above this (though it is illegible). Later too the painting was repeatedly copied (see *6. Graphic reproductions* and *7. Copies*); the subject is then referred to sometimes as the artist himself, or as William Tell (see also *8. Provenance*).

Right into the modern literature the model has been seen as the artist himself[1]; Bauch[2] thought he was Rembrandt's brother Adriaan. There is insufficient evidence for the first assumption, and no ground at all for the second. If the painter in fact used a model, it was probably not the intention to portray him as an individual — as in the portraits of ensigns by an unknown Dutch painter in Munich

Fig. 4. Copy 1. Rembrandt workshop, pen and indian ink wash, 21.9 × 17.3 cm.
London, The British Museum



(inv. no. 1315, dated 1590; our fig. 5), by Everard Crijnsz. van der Maes (The Hague, Gemeentemuseum inv. no. 314, dated 1617), Joachim Ottensz. Houckgeest (ibid. inv. no. 227, dated 1621) and Thomas de Keyser (The Hague, Mauritshuis inv. 806, dated 1626). Rather there seems to be a link with a 16th-century tradition — embodied in prints by Dürer (B. 87), Lucas van Leyden (B. 140) and Goltzius (B. 217, 218, 125) — of depicting ensigns as types of courage and contempt of death, as inscriptions on Goltzius prints suggest (see besides B. 125 his *Captain of the infantry*, B. 126). Rembrandt's painting has the 16th-century lansquenet costume in common with these prints, and its extravagance plays as important a role with him as it did with his forerunners.

5. Documents and sources

— Among the possessions of Maijke Burchvliet at the time of her second marriage in Delft, described on 13 May 1667, there was 'Een vendrager door Reynbrant van Rijn' (Strauss *Doc.*, 1667/2).
— The inventory of the estate of Herman Becker of Amsterdam, drawn up 19 October–23 November 1678, includes 'In 't voorhuys' (in the hall), 'een Vaendrager van Rembrant' (A. Bredius in: *O.H.* 28, 1910, p. 196).

It is impossible to tell whether these mentions relate to the present painting (or one of the copies of it listed below), or to a different work.

6. Graphic reproductions

1. Mezzotint by Pieter Louw (Amsterdam 1725–1800), inscribed:

Fig. 5. Dutch School, *Portrait of an ensign*, 1590, panel 105 × 87 cm. Munich, Bayerische Staatsgemäldesammlungen, Alte Pinakothek



Rembrand pinx. — P. Lauw fec. De Origineele Schilderij is in de Collectie van de Heer I.M. Quinkhard, te Amsterdam bij P. Fouquet Junior (Charrington 103 II). Reproduces the picture in reverse. The mezzotint must have been made before Quinkhard's death in 1772. The copy by Jan Maurits Quinkhard, son of Julius Henricus, mentioned below under *7. Copies*, 5 must also have been made after the same prototype as the mezzotint (which may or may not have been Rembrandt's original). Julius Henricus's copy was mentioned at the sale of Jan Maurits' collection in 1773, but not Rembrandt's work.

2. Mezzotint by Johann Gottfried Haid (Kleineislingen or Salach 1710–Vienna 1776), inscribed: *From an Original painted by Rembrandt. — G. Haid Fecit. / The true Effigies of the renowned William Tell, Banneret, or Standard-bearer of the / canton of URY, and Founder of the Liberty of Switzerland, and Helvetic Union,* followed by a poem (Charrington 75). Reproduces the picture in reverse. The print is one of five mezzotints by Haid after Rembrandt that were published by John Boydell in London in the years 1763–1766 (see P. Markthaler in: *Thieme–Becker* XV, 1922, p. 481). As in the case of Louw's mezzotint it is not certain whether that by Haid was done from the original (in view of the painting's provenance and the time and place of production of the print this is hardly likely).

3. For a mezzotint by J.F. Clerck, see *7. Copies*, 4.

7. Copies

1. Drawing, pen and Indian ink wash, 21.9 × 17.3 cm, London, British Museum (fig. 4; A.M. Hind, *Catalogue of drawings by Dutch and Flemish artists . . . in the British Museum I. Drawings by Rembrandt and his school*, London 1915, p. 49 no. 140). Reproduces the picture framed more narrowly to the left and at the top. Together with a drawing by the same hand in the British Museum after Rembrandt's London *Flora* of 1635 (no. A 112), regarded by Hind (op. cit., p. 49 no. 140) as an anonymous copy, curiously attributed by E. Haverkamp Begemann (in: Exhibition cat. *Rembrandt after three hundred years*, Chicago 1969, p. 23) to Lambert Doomer, and by Sumowski (*Drawings* I, no. 128) to Ferdinand Bol. The last attribution would imply, that the drawing was done in Rembrandt's studio not long after 1635/36 which seems an acceptable date; but if the drawing in Amsterdam signed *F:Bol.fc* after Rembrandt's 1635 *Minerva* (no. A 114) is indeed by Bol (though see no. A 114, *7. Copies* 1) then the attribution of the *Standard-bearer* and the *Flora* to the same artist cannot be right. The two lastnamed drawings show such a powerful treatment, almost entirely using the brush, and a so much more competent indication of form than the Amsterdam *Minerva* drawing that they cannot possibly come from the same hand. One is reminded of a note written by Rembrandt on the back of his drawing after Lastman's *Susanna and the elders* in Berlin (Ben. 448; Strauss *Doc.*, p. 594). Below a line (in red chalk) that has become virtually illegible and probably gave the name of a pupil, there is written (in black chalk): verkoft syn vaendraeger synt 15 / en floora verhandelt 6 (sold his standard-bearer, being 15 [guilders] and floora traded 6 [guilders]). The note then mentions work by 'fardynandus' (Bol) and Leendert (van Beyeren), from which it may be deduced that the two earlier works were by neither of these. That they are identical with the two London drawings is of course only supposition; the relatively high prices that Rembrandt noted against them rather suggest that they were paintings.

2. Pen drawing 16 × 13.7 cm, previously Dresden, Kupferstich-Kabinett (inv. no. C 1361), missing since 1945 (information kindly supplied by Dr Christian Dittrich in a letter of 7 December 1982). Mentioned by Hind (loc. cit.) who adds: 'Braun 67.256', which suggests that there is a reproduction of it. We do not know this drawing, in either the original or a reproduction.

3. Canvas 110 × 80 cm, Kassel, Gemäldegalerie (1903 cat., no. 251). Inscribed at the lower right: *Rembrandt 163.*. Acquired in 1752 and described in the *Haupt-Catalogus* begun in 1749 under no. 836 as: '[Rembrant] Ein Holländischer *Officier* mit einer weissen Fahnen auf der Schulter. Kniestück auf Leinen und [in] vergulteten Rahmen vom G[eneral] von Donop — Höhe 3 [Schuh]. 6 [Zoll] — Breite 2,8 [= 109.7 × 81.2 cm].' The picture shows less at the top, and the fall of light on the wall is less pronounced. The broad execution with often rather angular brushstrokes is not clearly rembrandtesque. Threadcount: 9.5 vertical threads/cm (9–10.5), 13 horizontal threads/cm (12–13.7), with the warp horizontal.

4. (Formerly?) Warwick Castle, known to us only from a reproduction. Differs from the original in that the picture area above the figure is higher. This is no evidence of the authentic painting having lost a strip at the top — the fact that in this copy the cast shadow from the flag continues to the top edge of the painting points to a deliberate variation from the original. There is a mezzotint after this copy, by Jakob Friedrich Clerck (Vienna 1769–after 1821; Charrington 37); it reproduces the picture in the same direction as the copy, and also shows the difference from the original just mentioned. According to *Thieme-Becker* VII (1912, p. 86) the undated mezzotint is signed *J.F. Clerck, graveur de la Cour de S.A. Monseigneur le Prince N. Esterházy*, and Clerck held this post around 1818.

5. Oval painting by Julius Henricus Quinkhard (Amsterdam 1734–1776), whereabouts unknown. Described in the sale in Amsterdam on 15ff March 1773 (Lugt 2138) of the possessions of his father Jan Maurits Quinkhard, who had died the previous year, as no. 137: 'Julius Henr. Quinkhard. De Vaandrager na Rembrand in Ovaal, hoog 33½ duim, breed 26½ duim [= 86.2 × 68.2 cm] (gemeten binnen de Lysten, volgens Amsterdamsche voetmaat)'. See also the sale of coll. J. Koller and J.H. Quinkhard, painters, Amsterdam 19ff December 1789 (Lugt 5837), no. 58: 'De Vaandrager naar Rembrant, door dito [J. Quinkhart]'. The model for this copy, whether or not Rembrandt's original, was in the possession of Julius's father, the painter J.M. Quinkhard, and was recorded in a mezzotint by Louw (see *6. Graphic reproductions*).

6. Canvas 101.6 × 73.6 cm, coll. Widener, Philadelphia, 1901 cat. II, no. 242 (no longer mentioned in the 1931 catalogue).

7. Canvas 84 × 70 cm, as Bol in the coll. Vicomte de Bus de Gisignies, sale Brussels 14 April 1896 no. 9; sale London (Christie's) 28 July 1922 no. 160 (Blankert *Bol*, no. R 101).

8. Canvas 114 × 89 cm, deposited in the Musée municipal de Cambrai by the Musée du Louvre (inv. no. 1752) since 1872. From the possession of the emigrant Pestre-Senef (as F. Bol), 13 July 1796. Cf J. Foucart, *Les peintures de Rembrandt au Louvre*, Paris 1982, p. 99.

The following items certainly or probably relate to copies, which may or may not be identical with any of those mentioned above.

— Anonymous sale, Amsterdam 4 May 1706 (Lugt 199), no. 146: 'Een vaandrager, na Rembrant'.

— Coll. Leonardus van Heemskerck, sale Leiden 2 September 1771 (Lugt 1958), no. 1: 'Een Man tot de knien dragende een Vendel op de linker schouder en de regter hand rust op zyn heup, uitgedost als een Krygsheld, en kragtig geschilderd, door Rembrant van Ryn, op Doek, hoog 44, breet 32 duim [= 115.1 × 83.7 cm, Rhineland measure].' (A Man seen to the knees carrying a Standard on the left shoulder and with his right hand placed on his hip, dressed as a War hero, powerfully painted by Rembrant van Ryn, on Canvas . . .) (61 guilders to Delfos). The low price already suggested to Hofstede de Groot[1] that this was a copy; the canvas is moreover too narrow.

— Coll. J. Clemens, sale Ghent 21ff June 1779 (Lugt 3020), no. 222: 'Rembrant van Rhin. Le Portrait d'un Homme tenant de la main un étendard, vigoureusement peint & coloré. T.[oile] H. 42 L. 30 ½ [= 109.2 × 79.3 cm, measured with the Ghent foot of 11 inches].' (i.e. considerably smaller than the original).

— Anonymous sale Leiden 4 November 1783 (Lugt 3624), no. 116: 'De Vaandrager naar Rembrand'.

— Coll. Comte d'Orsay, sale Paris 14ff April 1790 (Lugt 4566), no. 59: 'Rembrandt (Van Rhin), école hollandoise. Un guerrier, grosse figure vue jusqu'aux genoux, portant un drapeau blanc, et sur la tête une tocque surmontée d'une longue plume blanche. La touche de ce tableau capital est ferme et moëlleuse; il a passé depuis plusieurs années dans différens cabinets; c'est, dit-on, le portrait de l'auteur. T. 28 pouc. sur 24 de haut [= 75.6 × 64.8 cm]'.

— Coll. J.F. Wolschot, sale Antwerp 1 September 1817, no. 12[1].

— Coll. Duke of Buckingham, sale Stowe House 15ff August 1848, 24th day no. 415 (£54.12s. to Wakeford Attree)[1].

8. Provenance

— Possibly identical with one of two works mentioned in 1667 and 1678 (see 5. *Documents and sources*).

*— Possibly coll. Allard van Everdingen, sale Amsterdam 19 April 1709 (Lugt 220), no. 34: 'Een Vaandrager van Rembrant'.

*— Possibly coll. J.M. Quinkhard (see 6. *Graphic reproductions*, 1).

*— Probably [coll. Mallet] sale Paris 12ff May 1766 (Lugt 1537), no. 87: 'Un Tableau représentant un Guerrier, peint par Rimbrant Wanrin, sur toile, de 3 pieds 7 pouces & demi de haut, sur 2 pieds 9 pouces & demi de large [= 117.1 × 90.6 cm]'.

*— Probably sale Paris 15ff December 1766 (Lugt 1570), no. 87: 'Un Tableau représentant un Guerrier tenant un drapeau sur son épaule, la main appuyée sur son côté, peint par Rembrant Vanryn; on prétend que c'est son Portrait; c'est un très-beau Tableau de ce Maître, sur toile, avec bordure dorée; il porte 3 pieds & demi de haut, sur 2 pieds 9 pouces de large [= 113.7 × 89.3 cm]'.

*— Probably sale Paris, licence granted 2 December 1768 (Lugt 1727), no. 29: 'Un Tableau représentant un Guerrier tenant un drapeau sur son épaule, la main appuyée sur son côté, peint par Rimbrant-Vanrin, dans sa bordure dorée [same dimensions as preceding]'.

— Coll. Chevalier G.F.J. de Verhulst, sale Brussels 16ff August 1779 (Lugt 3038), no. 80: 'Rembrant van Ryn, Peint sur Toile, haut 46½, large 37 pouces [= 116.3 × 92.5 cm] (measured using the Brussels foot of 11 inches). Le Portrait de ce Peintre peint par lui-même: il s'y est représenté en Porte-Enseigne cuirassé, à larges culottes & avec un Echarpe, tenant un drapeau déployé, il a un chapeau à plumet & rabatu sur la tête. L'Estampe en est gravée en maniere noire par P. Lauw' (1290 francs to Fouquet).

— Coll. [Leboeuf], sale Paris (Le Brun) 8–12 April 1783 (Lugt 3550), no. 26. Description same as preceding, with the addition: 'Ce beau Tableau a fait l'ornement du cabinet de Verhulst à Bruxelles, Hauteur 45 pouces, largeur 39 [= 121.5 × 105.3 cm] - T.' (5299.19 francs to Devouges).

— Coll. Robit, sale Paris 11–18 May 1801 (Lugt 6259), no. 117: 'Par le même [Rhyn (Rembrandt Van)]. Peint sur toile, haut de 125, large de 105 c. Un autre Tableau, du plus grand caractère, et de cette force de couleur qui convient aux morceaux de premier rang dans les cabinets. Il représente le portrait de Rembrandt, dans un costume militaire, dénommé dans la curiosité sous le titre de porte-drapeau. Il provient des cabinets de Verhulst, à Bruxelles, et de le Boeuf. Voyez le catalogue de Le Brun, no. 26. Ces ouvrages marquans ne se rencontrent que très-rarement, et ne peuvent se trouver que dans les collections dont l'arrangement d'une galerie aurait été projeté. Il était destiné pour le pendant du morceau ci-après. 45 sur 39 pouces'. (3095 francs to Lafontaine). The 'pendant', no. 118, can be identified with the free copy after the Kassel *Half-length figure of Saskia* at Antwerp (see no. A 85, *Copies*, 4).

— Coll. George IV of England[3].

— Dealer Lafontaine, London, acquired by barter from King George IV.

— Coll. Lady Clarke, Oak Hill; coll. Sir S. Clarke, sale London 8 May 1840, no. 47: 'Le Porte Drapeau; Rembrandt in the Character of a Standard-Bearer' (£840 to Baron James de Rothschild).

9. Summary

In its brilliant execution and approach to chiaroscuro no. A 120 is so directly similar to Rembrandt's work from 1636 — especially the Frankfurt *Blinding of Samson* (no. A 116) — that any doubt as to attribution is excluded. The confidence-inspiring signature and date of 1636 confirm this view. The dynamic brushstroke, forceful contrast and economical use of colour accents are in this painting taken even further than in the previous Rembrandt half-length figures, among which the London *Flora* of 1635 (no. A 112) nevertheless shows a strong resemblance in the lighting and suggestion of depth as well.

The subject-matter, type and costume indicate that the painting has to be seen as a continuation of the 16th-century tradition of depicting the standard-bearer as the epitome of courage and contempt of death.

REFERENCES

1 A. Rosenberg, *Rembrandt. Des Meisters Gemälde,* 3rd edn, W.R. Valentiner ed., Stuttgart-Leipzig 1909 (Kl.d.K.), p. 147.

2 Bauch 171.

3 HdG 270.

A 121 The angel Raphael leaving Tobit and his family [1637]

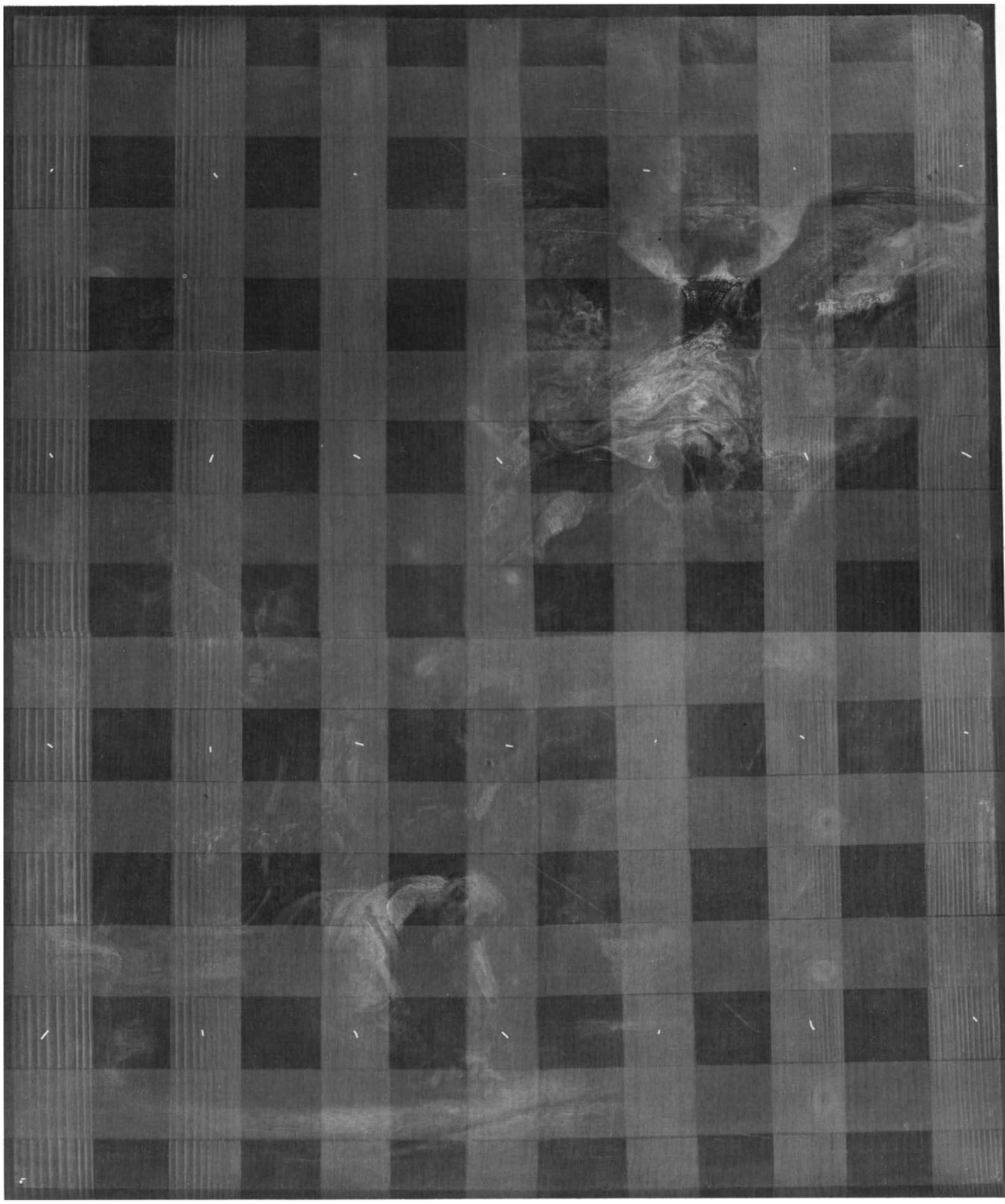
PARIS, MUSÉE DU LOUVRE, INV. NO. 1736

HDG 70; BR. 503; BAUCH 17; GERSON 81

Fig. 1. Panel 66 × 52 cm



Fig. 2. X-Ray



1. Summarized opinion

A quite well preserved, authentic work, with a signature and date of 1637 that are not authentic in their present form.

2. Description of subject

The subject is taken from the (apocryphal) Book of Tobit 12:21–22. Having guided young Tobias on his journey to Rages in Media, and having instructed how to cure his father's blindness upon their return to Nineve, the angel Raphael reveals his identity and then disappears. He is seen flying upwards in the midst of swirling clouds. The light falls on him from the right and reaches the foreground where old Tobit has prostrated himself, supporting himself on his folded hands. Behind him, largely in shadow, Tobias kneels with his hands raised, looking up at the angel. Just behind them at the top of a small flight of steps leading up to their house, are Sara the wife of Tobias and Anna the wife of Tobit. The figure of Sara, a richly-garbed young woman, catches the light falling from above; she looks up at the angel with her hands clasped. Behind her, in the shadow, Anna turns away, with a stick dropping from her hands. Crouched down in front of the women is Tobias's little dog. In the extreme left foreground there is a stone bench, while at the top left can be seen a climbing plant growing against the wall of the house. To the right of Tobias, past a low wall and an open window-shutter, a wooded landscape can be seen in the distance.

3. Observations and technical information

Working conditions

Examined in October/November 1968 (S.H.L., E.v.d.W.) in good light and out of the frame, with the aid of an infrared photograph of the whole and four radiographs together covering all of the picture; copyfilms of these were received later.

Support

DESCRIPTION: Oak panel, grain vertical, 66 × 52 cm. The grain follows a curve, especially at the upper right; a number of cracks run along the grain — one in the centre, from just left of the floating gown of the angel to above Tobit's head, and two from the bottom edge of the panel one of which extends from just right of the centre into the distant view while the other, much shorter, is a little to the right of this. A thin plank has been stuck to the back of the panel, and has a cradle attached to it. This plank is slightly wider than the panel on all sides; battens have been glued to the projecting edges, and as a result the edges of the panel cannot be seen anywhere.
SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

Ground

DESCRIPTION: Yellowish, visible in numerous translucent passages over the whole of the painting.
SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

Paint layer

CONDITION: Generally good. Along the cracks and occasionally in the background there are a few retouches. Craquelure: a small amount in the angel's righthand calf, otherwise hardly any seen.
DESCRIPTION: Almost everywhere a thin dark-brown underpainting contributes to the general appearance; this is clearly apparent in large areas of the architecture on the left, in Sara's clothing, in the dog and in the paving stones. In the dark of the doorway and in the dark clouds that stretch from the upper left to the far bottom right, a slightly translucent dark brown and grey-brown have been placed over this underpainting. The figures to the left have been worked up with a great economy of means; the rendering of the clothing is dictated to a large degree by a tonal painting in browns, and specific colours are seen only in the lit areas — e.g. blue in Sara's dress. The detail, in itself quite extensive, has been done fairly sketchily-edges, folds, sheens of light and the pattern on garments are drawn with strokes and dabs of thick paint in light and dark tints. The forms of faces and hands in the shadow are built up with strokes of opaque, greyish brown paint; the lit parts of the head and neck of old Tobit are, on the contrary, done with firm strokes of light paint that contrasts with adjacent parts of his face and his chest, where the underpainting is again somewhat exposed. In his cloak grey paint is applied quite thickly in the lit areas; a panel hanging across his back is shown in yellow, and the white edge of an undershirt contrasts with the dark shadow of this. A fairly thick grey is used in the most brightly lit part of the stone slab on which he is kneeling; the edges of this and other stones are marked with strokes of black, with rims of light in a yellowish paint. The way the dog was painted is easy to follow: over the yellowish ground and a brown underpainting forms and details were drawn in black or very dark brown, after which lighter tints were applied in opaque paint, and finally a few accents were added in an almost dry, light grey-white paint.

In contrast to the generally economical use of paint in the parts of the painting described so far, the figure of the angel and the lit clouds surrounding him are in paint that is for the most part opaque. Large parts of the angel's silhouette, and certainly the wings and swirling gown, are in reserves left for them in the surrounding clouds; this is most evident along the edges of the lefthand wing, where an underlying paint layer can be seen between the cloud and the feathers. The underpainting can also be glimpsed in the wings themselves, in between the touches of grey, blue, white and darker paint in which they are painted, as well as in the hair shown with sinuous strokes of yellow, pinkish white and white. The face, hands and legs are indicated fairly broadly, sometimes with bold brushwork; there is greater detail in the soles of the feet, seen in shadow, and especially in the embroidered yoke, drawn with fine, thick strokes, dabs and spots of brown, yellow, blue and greyish white.

Though the rendering of the angel is marked by the directness of treatment that is typical of the whole painting, the figure was not completed without a number of changes, the traces of which have probably become more evident with the passage of time. In line with the pose of the angel in the model used for this figure (see *4. Comments* and fig. 8) the left arm was initially — as may be seen from the infrared photograph — shown outstretched to the left; this is still dimly visible at the paint surface. Subsequently, the arm was greatly foreshortened, making it visible to the elbow and showing part of the hand above the upper edge of the wing, close to the head. A second change involves the clothing, where in the tail of the gown floating out to the left small blue lines have become visible, indicating that the panel of the overgarment hanging down on this side once extended further. There must have been a fairly substantial change in the bottom right of the picture, as indistinct forms can be detected in the paint relief. The IR photograph shows a number of light lines which look like scratchmarks made in the wet, dark paint of an underlying layer. According to the IR image, the back of the stone bench on the far left was angled forward at an earlier stage. Scratchmarks can be seen in Sara's veil.
SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

X-Rays

It is hard to read the available X-rays because the cradle shows up light and interferes with the image. What can be seen confirms what the paint surface leads one to expect: concentrations of radioabsorbent pigment occur especially in the lit parts of the angel, of old Tobit and, to a lesser extent, of Sara. The angel's left arm in its original position (see *Paint Layer*, DESCRIPTION) appears lighter than the surrounding clouds; the

Fig. 3. Infrared photograph



Fig. 4. Detail (1 : 1)



lower righthand corner where, as has been mentioned, there must also have been a pentimento, has no radioabsorbent areas. In Tobit's clothing the fall of the folds differs from what can be seen at the surface; one clearly sees a light underpainting in which this passage was handled more broadly. The shape of the hands, too, seems to have been sharpened up only at a late stage.

Signature

At the lower left on the stone bench, in black paint <*Rembrandt.*/ *f* (followed by three dots arranged as a triangle) *1637*>; the uncertain drawing of the letters and figures shows that they have been either strengthened or written wholly by another hand. As there is no trace of an underlying inscription, the latter is more likely.

Varnish

No special remarks.

4. Comments

The attribution of this work to Rembrandt can be based first of all on the character of the brushwork. Balancing the relaxed treatment of thinly-painted dark areas that lend the picture a quality of depth and atmosphere, there are a number of centres of interest in which the intensity of the lighting and treatment is heightened. This applies most of all to the figure of the angel and to that of old Tobit, whose prominence is wholly in line with the role he plays in the biblical account. Characteristic of Rembrandt's approach is the way in which, in these lit areas, a varied handling of paint is geared directly and effetively to creating an illusion of depth, rendering materials and — in the angel — creating an effect of colouristic splendour. However, the appearance of the painting is determined to a large extent by the predominance of muted tones in which the other figures, placed in shadow, are for the most part rendered. The considerable degree of

Fig. 5. Detail (1 : 1)



detail and the emphatic gestures in this group are moderated by the rather sketchy and often graphic treatment and the use of subdued colours — mostly browns and greys, worked up here and there with black and white and an occasional colour accent. The dark shapes of the projecting window-shutter and the low wall at the side of the steps separate the vaguely-lit head and hands of young Tobias from the distant sky, painted in a roughly similar tone.

A remarkable feature is the simplicity found elsewhere in the picture. Motifs that, to judge from traces visible in the paint surface, were originally placed in the right foreground have been deleted, and in their place free play has been given to the massed clouds that, with their swirling movement, effectively emphasize the rising movement of the angel. This is not to say that there is not still a certain void in the lower righthand corner of the picture; and neither the infrared photograph nor the X-rays give any clear evidence of what has been painted out in that area. Perhaps one ought to think in terms of the valuables, the 'half of all those' with which, according to the bible text, the father and son wanted to reward the latter's travelling companion, whereupon the latter revealed himself as the angel Raphael. In etching B. 43 of 1641 these objects do appear in a comparable position, together with an ass and a servant that are probably an allusion to the arrival of Sara from Rages. In the copy described under *Copies 2* (fig. 10), however, there is a plant in a pot at this point.

Dating the painting in 1637 is wholly acceptable, even though the inscription as it appears today cannot be regarded as authentic. Thematically the work fits well into this period, in which time and again Rembrandt chose a subject typified by a sudden revelation engendering a dramatic reaction — other examples of this include the Leningrad *Abraham's sacrifice* of 1635 (no. A 108) and the London *Belshazzar's feast* probably from the same year (no. A 110), while the approach is also reminiscent of the 1636 *Ascension* and 1635/39 *Resurrection* from the Munich Passion series (nos. A 118 and A 127). These works show a certain variance in treatment, and the painting now under discussion differs, in general, in showing a monochrome colourscheme and cursoriness of brushwork that is exceptional in a work of this size.

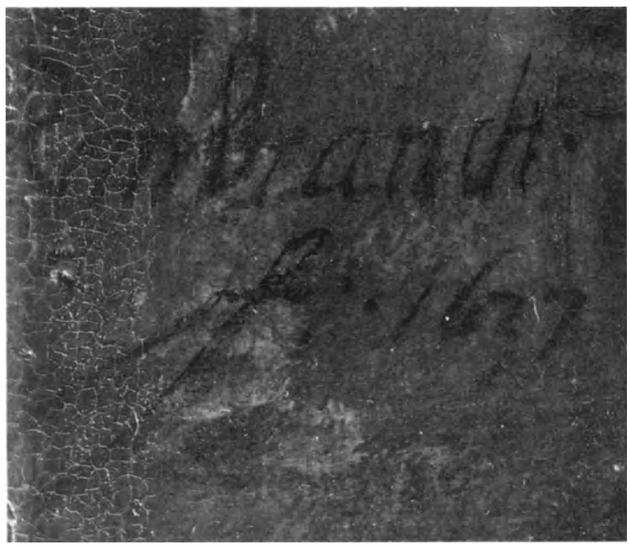
Also remarkable is the use Rembrandt has made of borrowings in designing his picture. This provides

Fig. 6. Detail (1 : 1.5)



an example of 'rapen' (garnering) that was, in the conventions of the period, not only allowed but actually encouraged provided the borrowing was incorporated with discernment and inventiveness into a new whole (see, for example, K. van Mander, *Den Grondt der edel vrij schilder-const*, ed. H. Miedema, Utrecht 1973, vol. I pp. 86–87, vol. II pp. 388–389, with further references). Vosmaer[1] was the first to point out that the figure of the angel was taken, in reverse, from a woodcut by Maerten van Heemskerck (fig. 8); a careful examination of the paint surface and study of the IR photograph and X-ray of the painting shows that Rembrandt altered the position of the left arm to a greatly foreshortened version after having first — in line with his model — placed the arm stretched out towards the left. Another work that appears to have served as a source when the picture was being constructed is the *Angel appearing to the shepherds* by Jan Pynas (fig. 9; cf. K. Bauch in: *O.H.* 52, 1935, pp. 155–156, fig. 13 as in the coll. Van Swinderen, The Hague; present whereabouts unknown). The Rembrandt work resembles this first of all in a number of general features — the placing of the angel in the upper righthand corner, surrounded by lit areas and dark clouds, opposite a group of figures in the lower lefthand corner, and the fall of light dictated by this arrangement. This overall similarity is coupled with a number of more specific correspondances of detail. These concern the poses of the two standing shepherds in Pynas's painting, the lefthand one of whom looks up at the angel and clasps his hands before his breast, while the righthand one turns away, his hands raised; we find

Fig. 7. Detail with signature (enlarged)



both these motifs in Rembrandt's picture, in Sara and Anna respectively. His figure of old Tobit is a variant of the Tobit in Heemskerck's woodcut, while the appearance of the lit head and neck is based on the shepherd sitting to the front in the Pynas painting (both Heemskerck and Rembrandt keep to the biblical text in the action of 'falling upon their faces'). The position and pose of young Tobias, kneeling behind his father and, half-raised, looking up at the angel, seem to have been inspired by Heemskerck's prototype, as is the idea of having the women standing in the doorway. The borrowing from Pynas is one of the most direct examples of the significance a work by this Amsterdam artist had for Rembrandt. In 1656 Rembrandt owned three works by Pynas, 'twee tronien' and a 'Juno' (Strauss *Doc.*, 1656/12 nos. 56 and 71). An *Angel appearing to the shepherds* by Pynas was in 1650 in the renouned collection of Marten Kretzer in Amsterdam, as is apparent from a panegyric by Lambert van den Bosch (J.H.W. Unger in: *O.H.* 2, 1884, p. 116). This explanation of the genesis of the painting contradicts the notion that a pen-and-ink sketch on the verso of a drawing at Dijon (Ben. 127) might have been a preliminary study for the figure of Anna[2]; Rembrandt's authorship of this drawing anyway seems open to doubt.

It may be hardly a coincidence, that this very painting by Rembrandt, examplary as it is of 'garnering', was in its turn plundered by his pupils. To start with, there is a free copy (in which the angel is seen from the front) whose extremely Rembrandtesque, if somewhat coarse, manner of painting suggests that it was done in Rembrandt's workshop by a competent assistant; one might, for instance, think of Ferdinand Bol who had probably entered the workshop in 1636 (see *7. Copies*, 2; fig. 10). Govaert Flinck used the figure of the angel (in reverse and with one arm bent like that in the Rembrandt, differing from Heemskerck's prototype) in his *Sacrifice of Manoah* dated 1640 (?) in Kingston, Canada (Von Moltke *Flinck*, no. 19, pl. 10, Sumowski *Gemälde* II, no. 617; cf. a drawing of the subject attributed to Rembrandt in Berlin, Ben. 180). Ferdinand Bol based two female figures in his large painting of *The three Marys at the tomb* of 1644 in Copenhagen (Statens Museum for Kunst, no. 77; Blankert *Bol*, no. 11, Sumowski *Gemälde* I, no. 83) on the figures of Anna and Tobit in Rembrandt's painting (and a third on the figure of Martha in his earlier etching of the *Raising of Lazarus*, B. 73, first three states). Jan Victors used Rembrandt's architecture and the angel in reverse, combined with a prostrate Tobit-figure like in his painting dated 1649 of *The angel leaving Tobit*, in the J. Paul Getty Museum, Malibu, Cal. (catalogue of exhibn. *Rembrandt and his pupils*, Montreal-Toronto 1969, no. 113). One may assume that the 'garnering' that Rembrandt demonstrated quite openly in his painting formed part of the training of young artists in his workshop, and was in turn legitimately practised by them. Apart from Rembrandt's use of Heemskerck's angel the majority of these borrowings — by Rembrandt from Jan Pynas and by Flinck and Bol from Rembrandt — involve figures expressing violent 'passions' in iconographic contexts different from that from which they were taken. Quite obviously they served — for both Rembrandt and his pupils — to convey passions in movement and pose; they were, to use Warburg's term, 'pathos formulas', carrying emotional rather than iconographic significance.

On the meaning of the story of Tobit as exemplifying a pious life, see the comments on no. A 3.

5. Documents and sources

None.

6. Graphic reproductions

1. Etching by Dominique Vivant Denon (Givry 1747–Paris 1825), inscribed: *Rembrandt pinx.* — *Denon sculp.* Reproduces the painting in reverse.
2. Etching by Joh. Pieter de Frey (Amsterdam 1770–Paris 1834), inscribed: *Rembrandt van Rhyn pinxit* — *J: de Frey fecit aqua forti/ Tobie et sa famille prosternés devant l'ange qui disparait a leurs yeux.* Reproduces the painting in reverse.
3. Engraving by Benoît Louis Prevost (Paris 1735–1804), inscribed above the print: *No. 141* — *Rembrandt* — *Ecole Flam/de.* Captioned: *Dessiné par Dabos* — *Gravé par Prevost./Tobie prosterné devant l'ange.* Reproduces the painting in the same direction. Appeared in Filhol, Galerie du Musée Napoléon, II, Paris 1804, no. 141. An engraving by Laurent Guyot (Paris 1756–1807), showing the picture in reverse, seems to be a crude imitation of Prevost's print which it matches in a number of deviations from the original.

Fig. 8. M. van Heemskerck, *The Angel Raphael leaving Tobit and his family*, woodcut



Fig. 9. Jan Pynas, *The Angel appearing to the shepherds*. Whereabouts unknown



4. Engraving by George Malbeste (Paris 1754–1843), inscribed: *Peint par Rembrandt — Dessiné par Gérard . . . Gravé par Malbeste./ l'ange Raphael quittant Tobie et sa famille*. Reproduces the painting in the same direction.

5. Engraving by Anthony Walker (Thirsk, Yorks, 1726–London 1765. Inscribed: *Rembrandt pinxt — Anthony Walker sculpsit/From a picture painted by Rembrandt in the Collection of Nathaniel Hone, Esq. (. . .) Publish'd (...) by Jn.° Boydell (...) May 1st 1765*. Reproduces the painting in reverse and with two discrepancies — the angel is seen from the front, and in the left foreground there is a plant in a pot — both of which also appear in a painted copy (see *7. Copies*, 2) after which this print was obviously made.

7. Copies

1. [Coll. de Mortain], sale Paris 5ff February 1776 (Lugt 2483), no. 30: 'Rembrandt Van-Ryn. Le jeune Tobie de retour chez son pere, l'Ange disparoît; ce tableau est un peu différent de celui du Roi, il est peint sur bois & porte 24 pouces de haut, sur 20 de large [= 65 × 54 cm]' (500 livres). The same painting (the dimensions match) then appeared successively at the [Martin, Donjeu] sale Paris 7ff May 1778 (Lugt 2850), no. 74, the [Leroy de Senneville] sale Paris 5–11 April 1780 (Lugt 3116), no. 228 (suppl.), in the latter case with the comment: 'est estimé une répétition à cause de quelques différences & du ton du couleur', and in the Paillet sale Paris 30–31 January 1782 (Lugt 3354), no. 38 with the same comment.

Probably the same painting, likewise on panel and with the same dimensions, appeared during the following years in various Amsterdam sales — sale Amsterdam 9 April 1783 (Lugt 3552), no. 45, listed in the catalogue as the Angel appearing to Manoah; coll. P.C. Hasselaar, sale Amsterdam 28ff November 1797 (Lugt 5672), no. 2, the subject identified as the Angel leaving Tobit and his family (705 guilders to Achtienhoven for Brentano); coll. J.A. Brentano, sale Amsterdam 13 May 1822, no. 281 (590 guilders)[3]; coll. J. Mensart and others, sale Amsterdam 2 September 1824, no. 146 (430 guilders to Engelberts); and probably coll. O.W.J. Berg, sale Amsterdam 7 July 1825, no. 93 (370 guilders).

2. Oak panel 65.4 × 50 cm (fig. 10). Switzerland, private collection (examined in September 1983). The panel, about 0.5 cm thick, shows irregular bevelling along all four sides. Reproduces the original with a rather free and somewhat coarse brushwork, and with translucent paint used in numerous places. Varies from the original in having the angel seen from the front, and a plant in a pot on the right. In this respect the copy is reminiscent of that in Munich of the Leningrad *Abraham's sacrifice* (no. A 108, copy 2; cf. also copy 1, the associated drawing), where the angel is seen at a different angle and the ram from the biblical story has been added on the left. On the grounds, especially, of an inscription on that painting there can be virtually no doubt that it was done in Rembrandt's workshop, and the same can be readily assumed of this copy of the Paris *Angel leaving Tobit*, which could quite easily be by an artist such as Ferdinand Bol. One gets the impression that paintings like this, altered in one or two respects, were done to Rembrandt's instruction, and formed part of his teaching programme. The painting under discussion was in England in 1765 in the collection of Nathaniel Hone, as may be deduced from the inscription on an engraving made after the painting in that year by Anthony Walker for John Boydell of London (see *6. Graphic reproductions*, 5). In the mid 19th century it was in the Wombwell collection in London, where it was seen by Waagen (G.F. Waagen, *Treasures of Art in Great Britain* II, London 1854, p. 308). E. Michel (*Rembrandt. His life, his work and his time*, London 1895, p. 232, note 1) saw the work around 1890 in Paris.

Fig. 10. Copy 2. Rembrandt workshop, panel 65.4 × 50 cm. Private collection



8. Provenance

Wrongly identified by Rambaud[4] and Foucart[5] with a painting sold from the collection of Victor-Amédée de Savoie, Prince de Carignan, in Paris on 24 December 1729 and described as: 'Rembrandt . . . Tobie qui recouvre la vue'. The description does not fit the subject of no. A 121; it furthermore certainly relates to the same painting that in the Prince de Carignan sale, Paris 30ff July 1742 (Lugt 559), was described as: 'Tobie à qui on guérit la vue' and that can be identified with no. C 86. No. A 121 was also in the Carignan collection; it was sold by the prince in 1740 and purchased for the royal collection (see below).

— Probably coll. Count de Fraula, sale Brussels 21 July 1738 (Lugt 488), no. 282: 'Tobias genesen door den Engel, smyt sigh ter aerde om hem te aanbidden, ende eenighe andere figuren, door Rimbrant, hoogh 2 v. 4d. breet 2v. 2d. [= 65 × 60 cm]' (Tobias cured by the angel, prostrates himself in adoration, and several other figures, by Rimbrant) (300 guilders) (Hoet I, p. 543 no. 281).

— Described as being in the collection of Victor Amédée de Savoie, Prine de Carignan (d. 1741) in 'Etat des Tableaux de la Collection du Prince de Carignan achetés pour le Roi très chrétien par Noêl Araignon, écuyer valet de S.M. la Reine' in 1740 (F. Engerand, *Inventaire des tableaux commandés et achetés par la Direction des Bâtiments du Roi (1709–1792)*, Paris 1900, p. 537): 'Rembrandt. L'ange qui a guéri Tobie 6.000 livres'.

— Described as being in the Palais du Luxembourg in 1750 and measuring '2 pieds 2 pouces de haut sur 2 pieds de large [= 70 × 65 cm], peint sur bois'. Restored and cradled in 1750/51, by François-Louis Colins and the widow Godefroid (Archives Nationales O.[1] 1922[A]; information kindly supplied by Mrs Lizzy Boubli of the Musée du Louvre). *Catalogue des Tableaux du Roy, au Luxembourg*, Paris 1751. p. 19 no. 31: 'Rambrant — Ecole flamande. Un Tableau représentant Tobie prosterné devant l'Ange du Seigneur qui disparoît devant lui, ayant un hauteur de 2 pieds 2 pouces, sur 2 pieds, peint sur bois'. Errata p. 19: 'Rambrant, lisez Renbran'.

9. Summary

The attribution of the painting to Rembrandt can be based first of all on the handling of paint. Large, dark, thin and broadly painted areas are contrasted with lit and opaquely painted passages in which the suggestion of form and materials is achieved in an effective manner quite characteristic of him. From the viewpoint of subject, too, the work fits in well among Rembrandt's work from the latter half of the 1630s. Striking especially for a painting of this size is the economical use of artistic means in large parts of the picture, in particular in the group on the left, which is to a large degree executed thinly in subdued colours. The picture has been simplified by the painting-out of unidentified objects in the lower righthand corner.

In constructing the picture Rembrandt made extensive use of borrowings. The angel is, as has long been recognized, taken from a woodcut by Maerten van Heemskerck; this model was originally followed even more faithfully, in that the left arm was first shown extended towards the left. The prototype for the arrangement and pose and expression of the two women in the doorway was the 'Angel appearing to the shepherds' by Jan Pynas.

REFERENCES

1 C. Vosmaer, *Rembrandt Harmens van Rijn. Sa vie et ses oeuvres*, The Hague 1868, p. 87. Cf. E. Schindler, 'Ein Vorbild Rembrandts von Marten van Heemskerck', *Münchner Jahrbuch der bildenden Kunst* new series 10 (1933), pp. XXXVII–XLII.

2 Ben. 127.

3 HdG 70.

4 M. Rambaud, *Documents du Minutier central concernant l'histoire de l'art* 1700–1750, Paris 1964–1971, vol. I doc. CXVIII and note on p. XXXIX.

5 *Catalogue sommaire illustré des peintures du Musée du Louvre* I, *Écoles flamande et hollandaise*, Paris 1979, p. 110. J. Foucart, *Les peintures de Rembrandt au Louvre*, Paris 1982, p. 90.

A 122 Half-length figure of a man in 'Polish' costume

1637

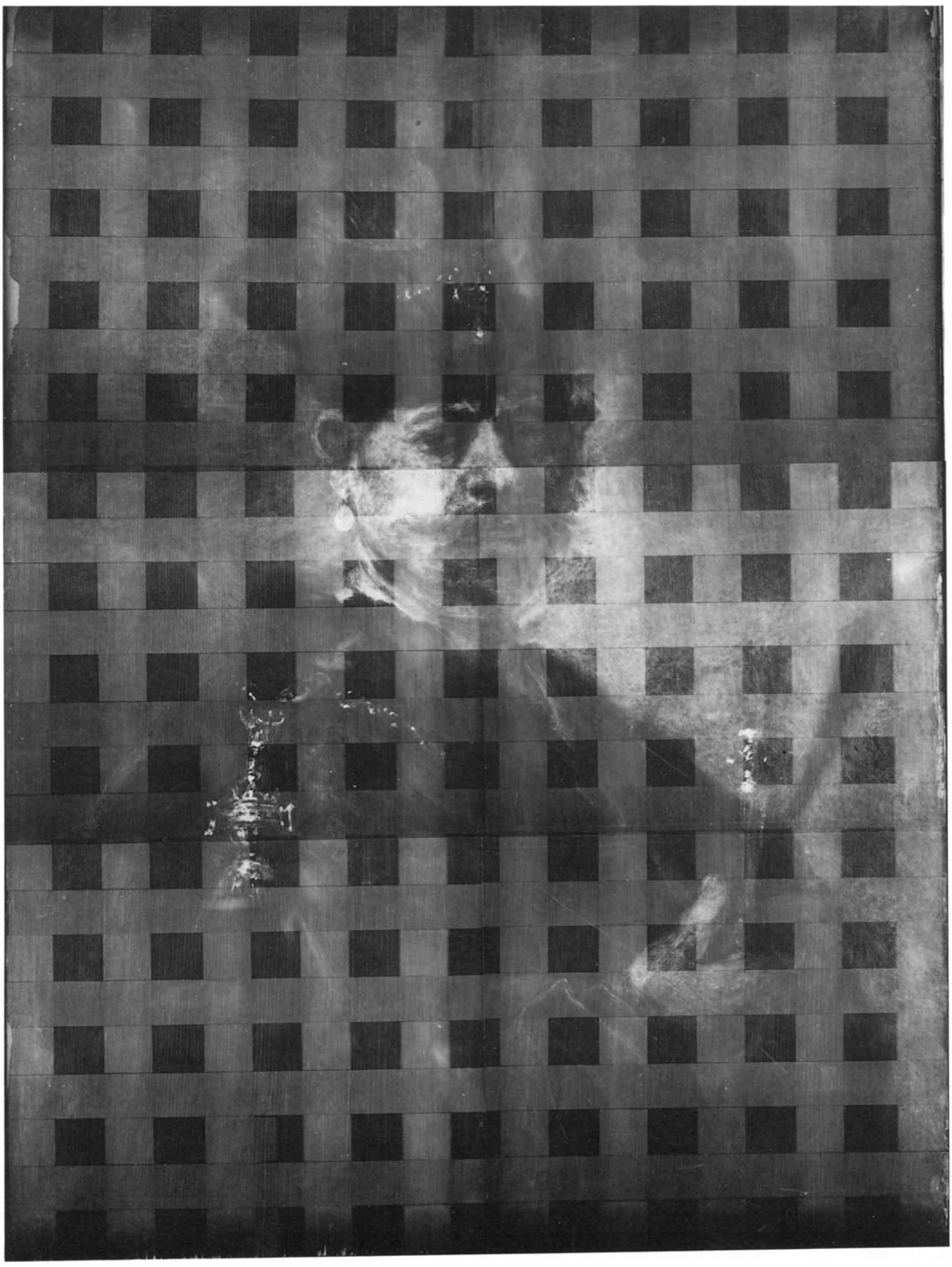
WASHINGTON, D.C., THE NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART, ANDREW W. MELLON COLLECTION 1937, NO. 78

HDG 271; BR. 211; BAUCH 174; GERSON 186

Fig. 1. Panel 96.7 × 66.1 cm



Fig. 2. X-Ray



1. Summarized opinion

A very well preserved and authentic work, reliably signed and dated 1637.

2. Description of subject

A man with a large brown moustache is seen to the waist, the body turned three-quarters to the right and the head slightly towards the viewer, on whom his gaze is fixed. In his right hand he holds in front of him a gold-topped wooden staff. He wears a jacket of dull red, with fur edging at the wide cuff of the visible sleeve and a broad fur collar around his bare neck, where part of a shirt can be seen only at the front. A gold chain with large links lies over the fur collar, and from this dangles at the shoulder on the left a complicated gold pendant jewel enclosing a black tassel. In his ear the man has a pear-shaped pearl eardrop, and he wears a tall black fur hat encircled by a gold chain with, at the front, a shield-shaped jewel; the hat widens above the chain, overhanging it.

The light falls from the left, illuminating part of the rear wall to either side of the head and shoulders; on the right is the cast shadow of the head, intersected by a crack in the wall.

3. Observations and technical information

Working conditions

Examined on 8 April 1970 (J.B., S.H.L.) in satisfactory daylight and out of the frame, with the aid of an X-ray film of the head. A copyfilm (35 × 42 cm) of this, and of the lower righthand corner with the hand and staff, was received later.

Support

DESCRIPTION: Oak panel, grain vertical, 96.7 × 66.1 cm. Single plank. Back planed to a thickness of 0.5–0.6 cm, and cradled.
SCIENTIFIC DATA: Dendrochronology (Prof. Dr J. Bauch, Hamburg) showed the plank to have been sawn radially through the heart of a tree. To either side of the core at the top, there are on the left 153 annual rings heartwood and 1 ring sapwood measured + 2 rings sapwood counted, and on the right 106 annual rings heartwood measured + 50 counted. The wood comes from the same tree as that of the panels for the Kassel *River landscape with a windmill* (no. B 12) and the Rotterdam *Concord of the State* (no. A 135); the first-named has been found to come from a tree that was felled in 1629 at the earliest and has a statistical average felling date of 1635.

Ground

DESCRIPTION: A light layer, appearing brownish-yellow, is exposed to a varying extent in large parts of the clothing, in scratchmarks in the top of the fur hat, and to some degree at the upper right in the background and on the left near the shoulder.
SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

Paint layer

CONDITION: Excellent, apart from some damage along the edges. Craquelure: a magnifying glass shows only a few small cracks in the thickest parts (the nose and pearl eardrop).
DESCRIPTION: The whole paint surface shows a clearly apparent brushstroke, the rhythm of which occasionally contributes to the rendering of form and materials, though there is a great measure of homogeneity. At some points the paint is applied thickly, in particular in and around the face, in the jewels, while elsewhere it is thin and usually broadly brushed.

To either side of the head and fur collar the background is painted in a fairly thick grey; this is thickest on the right where the stroke is a little finer than elsewhere, and is mixed with a little brown and was evidently brushed in at a late stage, following the contour of the figure. To the upper left and to the right the paint becomes a thinner and darker grey, applied with firm straight and curved brushstrokes. The crack in the wall on the right near the shoulder is done with strokes of darker grey.

In the lit part the head is painted with small strokes in a yellowish flesh tint with some pink and pinkish-white on the cheek, the tip of the nose and the ear, and with a thin dark grey that gives modelling to the cheek and chin. The same flesh colour is used in the boldly-brushed lit part of the neck. The part of the head in shadow is executed in relatively thick, opaque grey-brown with strokes that follow the shape of the nose and contour of the cheek; the lit area of cheek is here shown in flesh colour with a little pink. The adjoining background paint is applied carefully along, and partly over, that of the cheek.

The eye on the left is rendered with great plasticity: the upper lid is in browns that stand out against the firmly brushed flesh colour of the lit skin above and merge into the thin brown of the eye-socket, while the pouch beneath the eye has strokes of thin browns and a somewhat thicker flesh colour. The white of the eye on the left almost merges with the flesh colour of the lower edge, which is marked by an extremely thin edging of white that to the right continues in a thin brown. On the right the white of the eye is a light brown, as is a crescent-shaped stroke to the lower right in the iris, otherwise painted in grey; at the edge of an irregular spot of black that indicates the pupil there is a discreet catchlight in light grey. The eyebrow consists of a vaque zone of thin brown with a few strokes of grey-black at the righthand end. The frown-line is drawn with a band of thin translucent grey with, on either side of it, thicker strokes of flesh colour.

The eye in shadow is only vaguely suggested in a quite thick dark grey paint in which a spot of black represents the pupil and a stroke of flesh colour shows the light glancing along the skin above the eyelid. The lit ridge of the nose, the convexity of which is shown by the brushstroke, is executed in a thick flesh colour with pink and white highlights, some pink on the wing, and red along the underside bordering an oval patch of black that suggests the nostril. The moustache is rendered in fairly thick brown-grey, at the lefthand end done wet-in-wet with the flesh colour, with a few strokes of light brown on the left above the upper lip. The lips are suggested with a thin red-brown, on top of which is drawn a broad band of black. The ear on the left is done with bold strokes of a pinkish flesh colour, in part clearly placed over the paint of the background, with red in the hollows and dark grey in the deepest shadows. The pearl eardrop is in grey, white and pure flesh colour (used to show reflected light).

The fur hat is painted broadly in sometimes thick and sometimes thin black; towards the top scratches made with the brush expose the ground, while strokes of black placed over the background paint indicate bristling hairs. The chain and jewel are in reserves left in the black, and are rendered broadly with brown-yellow, grey, yellow and yellow-white. A pearl hanging down from the jewel, now covered over with black paint, is visible in relief. The broad fur collar, which appears to have a brown sheen, is in fact brushed in black with the ground showing through, partly with broad brushstrokes and partly with small touches of the brush; strokes of a thick black give the form, and some grey is used for the highlight. The pendant at the shoulder is drawn, in impasto, with brown-yellow, ochre-yellow and browns with light yellow highlights, and its dangling tassel in fairly flatly brushed black with some dark grey at the top. The chain is done rather more thinly, with strokes of yellow, black and ochre-brown merging to the right into a thin brown-grey. The sleeve is, in the light, painted with long strokes of a dull brick red, which covers on the highest light but is elsewhere translucent over the ground; the fur at the wrist is marked with brushstrokes of grey.

The lit part of the hand is executed with broad strokes of a thin flesh colour, with parallel whitish strokes used as highlights on th thumb and some pink and a white-pink catchlight on the thumbnail. The shadow areas are modelled in brown and a thin

Fig. 3. Detail (1 : 1.5)



translucent grey, overlapping the dark grey of the adjacent clothing, where the ground shows through. The staff is painted with bands of light brown, grey with some grey-white, and grey-brown, and a cast shadow from the thumb shown with a strong stroke of black. The metal cap at the top is done in brown-yellow and ochre-brown with highlights; an initially longer version of the staff can be made out in relief, with the right of it a rather thinner patch of paint that describes the form of a version tilted more to the right.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

X-Rays

The available X-rays confirm the observations made at the paint surface. They show the varying but invariably powerful brushstroke in the background, including the dark area at the lower right where the reserve for the figure and for the first, rightwards-tilted version of the staff show up clearly. The presentday staff seems to have been painted on top of the background (there is however no X-ray available of the earlier extension of the present staff, though it can be noted from the relief that this was done fully in paint before its length was reduced). It seems that originally there was more of the shirt to be seen. The highest lights appear in the jewels (and in the catchlight in the weak image of the discarded pearl drop on the hat), and in the head in which however there are all kinds of halftones to be seen — e.g. in the ear, mouth and chin. The paint that was applied at a late stage up against the righthand contour of the head shows up considerably lighter than the rest of the background; at the extremity of the moustache this paint, evidently still wet, was pushed aside. Even allowing for the addition and alterations in the position and length of the staff, one still gets the impression of a painting executed with great directness.

Signature

At the upper right in dark grey <*Rembrandt.f* (followed by three dots placed as a triangle) / *1637*>. The letters and figures are written very firmly, with strong differentiation of thin and thick strokes of the brush; in part of the bowl of the *R* no paint was laid down. The inscription is wholly convincing as to its authenticity. The configuration of three dots after the *f* occurs mainly in signatures from 1633 (cf. nos A 68, A 73, A 81, A 82 and A 83), and is also seen in, for instance, the equally emphatically placed signature on the Madrid *Sophonisba* of 1634 (no. A 94).

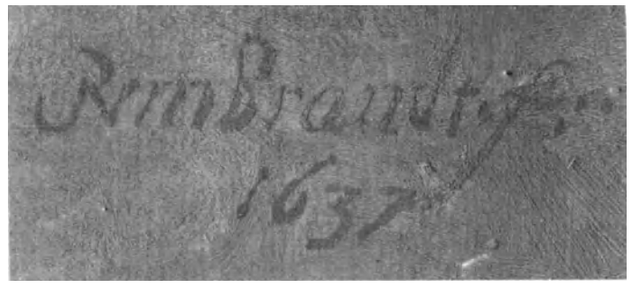
Varnish

No special remarks.

4. Comments

As may already be clear from the description of the paint layer, the whole painting is pervaded by a rhythmic handling of the brush of a kind that, though familiar in parts of Rembrandt's works, here dominates the entire picture and contributes to the suggestion of both plastic form and materials. The whole of the picture is — leaving aside one or two changes or sharpened-up features — done with great directness; the excellent state of preservation allows the immediacy of the execution to be appreciated to the full. This is apparent, for instance, from the bold brushstrokes indicating the ear and neck which are set over the cool grey of the background, while on the right the crisp contour of the cheek and chin in shadow is the outcome of working the head and re-done background against each other, wet-in-wet. In

Fig. 4. Detail with signature (reduced)



the lit half the modelling of the head is carefully defined with undissimulated brushwork, while on the shadow side it is suggested almost exclusively by the direction of the brushstroke and without any appreciable differentiation in colour. The hand is — as so frequently with Rembrandt — painted even more broadly, in thinner paint. The powerful colour effect is, especially in the fur of the wide collar, achieved by allowing the ground to show through, and elsewhere by a carefully-judged use of a very limited palette. The lighting determines both the plastic appearance of form and the way it relates spatially to the rear wall. The painting epitomizes the translation, as Rembrandt made it in the late 1630s, of a sensual experience (both visual and tactile) in a pictorial rendition. In this respect it can best be compared with the Frankfurt *Blinding of Samson* (no. A 116) and the *Standard-bearer* in a private collection, Paris (no. A 120), both dated 1636, i.e. one year before.

The boldness with which the painting is done argues strongly for the view that, it depicts an imaginary character: probably an actual model decked out as an exotic personage, a '*tronie*' not in the usual sense of a head but — by analogy with certain portraits from 1635 onwards — expanded into a waist-length figure with one hand showing. The strongly individual appearance of the figure has however prompted a number of authors to think of it in terms of a portrait, and to try to identify the subject. Vosmaer[1] felt it to be a self-portrait, Bauch[2] saw the sitter as Rembrandt's brother Adriaen, Bode[3] called it a portrait of a Polish notable and also said that it had been wrongly regarded as showing the Polish kings Stefan Batory (1532–1586) or Jan III Sobieski (1629–1696). A more serious attempt at identifying the sitter was made by Odlozilik[4], who stated that it was Andrzej Rej (1584–1641), a Polish nobleman who late in 1637 stayed in The Hague during his return journey from a diplomatic mission to England, and whose son Mikolaj had himself registered as a student at the Amsterdam Athenaeum Illustre. This opinion won support from Broos[5], who referred to a document published by A. Bredius (*Künstler-Inventare* V, 1918, p. 1688) showing that in 1641 Niclaes (= Mikolaj) Rej declared before an Amsterdam notary that he owed 50 guilders to Hendrik Uylenborch (whose father had

Fig. 5 P. Quast, *Man in 'Polish' costume*, 1638. The Hague, dealer S. Nystad (1980)



been cabinetmaker to the king of Poland and must have spent his youth in Krakow and Danzig) 'over conterfytinge van sijn vader' (for portraying his father). This document is evidence that during his stay in Holland Andrzej Rej did indeed have his portrait painted, probably in Amsterdam; Rembrandt certainly had dealings with Uylenburgh, but is not known to have had the latter take care of his financial affairs, and certainly not as late as 1637. Even if one assumes the costume in no. A 122 to be specifically Polish — something that Tümpel[6] expressly denied — the documentary evidence is still insufficient to prove that the painting shows Andrzej Rej. Given the manner of painting and approach it is more likely that this is a '*tronie*', a picturesque type perhaps in the role of an East European potentate, and on the evidence of his staff of authority (like the staff that high army and naval officers, too, carried) a military commander. A painting described in a sale in 1707as 'Een Ambassadeur van Moscovien' (see *8. Provenance*) may have been identical with no. A 122. In late-18th-century Russia however, the figure portrayed was recognized as neither Polish nor Russian, and he was described as 'un Turc ou quelqu' autre Asiatique' (see *8. Provenance*).

Interestingly, a painting by Pieter Quast dated 1638 (fig. 5; panel 92.1 × 73.2 cm, dealer S. Nystad, The Hague, 1980) bears a curious resemblance to Rembrandt's painting. The man it shows wears a similar costume, though braiding across the front of the jacket would appear to form a more evidently Polish element; in his left hand he holds an axe-like object that in a different connexion was identified by Broos (op. cit., p. 200) on the authority of Z. Zygulski jnr (in: *Bulletin du Musée National de Varsovie* 6, 1965, pp. 43–67) as a Polish atttribute: it 'was an officer's weapon, but it could also serve as a scepter, and was in fact called a *buzdygan*'.

5. Documents and sources

None.

6. Graphic reproductions

None.

7. Copies

None.

8. Provenance

— Probably coll. Harman van Swol, postmaster of Amsterdam, sale Amsterdam 20 April 1707 (Lugt 204), no. 15; 'Een Ambassadeur van Moscovien, van Rembrant kragtig geschildert' (An ambassador from Muscovy, vigorously painted by Rembrant) (49 guilders) (Hoet I, p. 98).
— Coll. Catherine II of Russia. 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) under no. 44: 'Rembrant. Portrait d'un Turc. C'est un Turc ou quelqu' autre Asiatique, vu a mi corps, de grandeur naturelle, tenant un bâton dans la main. Ce Tableau est bon, et a beaucoup de force et il est bien fini. Demi figure. Sur bois. Haut 1 A[rchine] 4¼ V[erchokk], large 15¼ V. [= 94.4 × 67.7 cm]'. It is not clear what basis there is for the information that the painting belonged to the coll. J.E. Gotskowsky, Berlin, which was bought for the Empress in its entirety in 1764[7].
— Coll. A.W. Mellon, 1937.

9. Summary

Because of the uncommonly homogeneous rhythm of the brushstroke and the restricted but very effective colour-scheme, no. A 122 occupies a salient position in Rembrandt's work from the later 1630s. The bold manner of painting indicates that it ought to be seen as the depiction of an anonymous figure in exotic, Polish(?) dress rather than as a portrait.

REFERENCES

1 C. Vosmaer, *Rembrandt. Sa vie, ses oeuvres*, The Hague 1877, p. 515.
2 Bauch 174.
3 W. Bode, *Studien zur Geschichte der holländischen Malerei*, Braunschweig 1883, p. 464.
4 O. Odlozilik, 'Rembrandt's Polish nobleman', *The Polish Review* 8 (1963), part 4, pp. 3–32.
5 B.P.J. Broos, 'Rembrandt's portrait of a Pole and his horse', *Simiolus* 7 (1974), pp. 192–218, esp. 210, 213.
6 Tümpel 1986, cat. no. 137.
7 D. Lewis in: exhb. catalogue *Rembrandt in the National Gallery of Art*, Washington D.C. 1969, p. 13.

A 123 The wedding of Samson

1638

DRESDEN, STAATLICHE KUNSTSAMMLUNGEN DRESDEN, GEMÄLDEGALERIE ALTE MEISTER, CAT. NO. 1560

HDG 30; BR. 507; BAUCH 20; GERSON 85

Fig. 1. Canvas 125.6 × 174.7 cm



1. Summarized opinion

A well preserved, authentic work (though slightly tilted and reduced to an extent that cannot be determined), reliably signed and dated 1638.

2. Description of subject

The subject is taken from Judges 14:10–14; at the feast given by Samson on the occasion of his wedding with the daughter of a man of Timnath, a Philistine (neither of whom is named), he set the guests a riddle; 'Out of the eater came forth meat, and out of the strong came forth sweetness'. The riddle derived from an earlier event known only to him — in the carcass of a lion that he had killed on a previous visit to Timnath a swarm of bees had later made their nest, and had gathered together their honey. If his guests solved the riddle within the seven days of the feast, then he would give each of them a sheet and a change of garment; otherwise, each of them would give him the same. On the seventh day they put pressure on the bride to wheedle the solution out of Samson; she did so, and betrayed the answer to them.

In a darkish room, the rear of which is closed off by curtains and a canopy above the bride, a total of 17 persons are gathered around the table. They are richly garbed, some in clothing of 16th-century style and others in oriental dress. At the left rear a servant can also be made out vaguely. The light falls from the left onto the table around which Samson and his bride and some of the guests are grouped. Behind the table, slightly to the right of centre and in the full light, sits the bride dressed in white, with a garland and a bridal crown on her head. Her hands, clasped one over the other, rest on her waist and she looks straight ahead. To the right of her Samson — distinguished from the other men by his long hair crowned by a circlet — turns round on the bench on which he is sprawling. He is putting his riddle to six of the Philistines, who lean forward towards him, listening, as he grasps the middle finger of his left hand in the thumb and forefinger of the other. The man at the back of this group holds a flute, while the one at the front leans over a harp.

Behind the table, to the left of the bride, a woman turns away from a drinking cup her neighbour is urging on her, his arm round her shoulders. A woman at the front of the table is being embraced by a man; she lies with her legs up on a wide bench covered with cushions and a red cloth draped in folds. Both these figures are seen from behind, and in shadow. The sparsely-lit group on the left is made up of five persons: a laughing man with a plumed turban, half-rising, makes a broad gesture towards the left, while alongside him a woman leans forward. Her face is wholly in shadow, contrasting with that of a man sitting to the left of her who, grinning, turns his head towards a man seated in the foreground next to the amorous couple. Only partially visible above his head is the profile of someone raising a glass to his mouth.

On the table, to the left, are a pie and a salt-cellar, with a knife lying alongside them. Before the bride is a golden ornamental jug on a large dish decorated with leaves and flowers. In the

right foreground can be seen part of a richly-worked wine-cooler, with a lidded can inside it. This catches some of the light, while the remainder of the foreground is in shadow.

3. Observations and technical information

Working conditions

Examined in May 1970 (B.H., E.v.d.W.) in good daylight, out of the frame. A radiograph (by Dr M. Meier-Siem, Hamburg) covering the figure of the bride was available, and a copyfilm of this was received later.

Support

DESCRIPTION: Canvas, lined, 125.6 × 174.7 cm. The edges of the lining canvas project slightly beyond the original canvas. The canvas has a horizontal and a vertical seam, so one has to assume that it is made up of four pieces. The horizontal seam is at 27 cm from the bottom edge on the lefthand side and 28.3 cm on the righthand side, and thus slopes down towards the left. The vertical seam is at 77 cm from the lefthand edge at the top and 83 cm at the bottom, thus tilting to the left at the top. As all the verticals in the picture also lean to the left (this is, for instance, evident in the edges of the canopy behind the bride) one may assume that in its present state the canvas is skewed slightly to the left; this means that tapering strips must have been lost along all four edges.
SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

Ground

DESCRIPTION: Shows through in thinly painted passages, and appears there as a yellow-brown.
SCIENTIFIC DATA: Kühn[1] describes a cross-section of a sample taken from the bottom edge. This shows the usual two layers, the lower a brownish red and the upper a grey-brown. In the latter it was possible to detect round grains of white lead and brown iron-oxide pigments. Also identified were white lead, chalk (calcium carbonate) and red and brown ochre (or umber).

Paint layer

CONDITION: A thick layer of yellowed varnish makes it somewhat difficult to gauge the condition. A number of retouches can be seen with the naked eye, especially at the lower right in the dark area between the cooler and the bench on which Samson is sprawling. Craquelure: spread evenly over the entire surface there is crackle of an irregular pattern that can be regarded as normal for a 17th-century canvas.
DESCRIPTION: There is a relatively substantial variety in the nature of the paint and the way it is handled in the rendering of the heads, hands and clothing. Nowhere, however, is the paint applied thickly — a relief can be seen in only a few lit areas — and in thinly painted passages the weave of the canvas is frequently visible. The picture has been very efficiently executed, working from a lay-in in translucent browns that, especially in the surroundings, still determines the appearance of the shadow passages at a number of places, and there is reinforced and varied with darker and lighter accents. Shadowed areas in the figures, including the heads and hands, are on the contrary often done with opaque paint. Though the prime method has been to work from dark to light, a shadow tone has sometimes been achieved by using a glaze over light paint — for example in the bride's pearls, in the reddish shadow on her wrist and fingers, and in the greenish shadows on Samson's left sleeve. Glancing touches of almost dry paint have been used, during the working-up, to show sheens of light on the veil of the woman to the left of the bride, on the red cloth in the left foreground and the jug on the right, and scratchmarks in the wet paint in the fringe hanging down from Samson's bench. The brushwork is lively and varied; the strokes follow the direction of the fall of folds and the shapes of patterns and ornamentation.

The figures of the bride and Samson and their immediate surroundings are marked as the focus of the picture by heightened contrasts of chiaroscuro and colour, as well as by the density of the working-up. In the clothing of the bride and Samson, and in the adjoining tablecloth, the paint is applied relatively thickly in a rich variety of whites; strokes of thick paint run along the edges and folds. The brushwork here is very varied, and frequently done wet-in-wet. The heads of the bride, of the woman to the left of her and of the fluteplayer to the right of her have the greatest detail of all; the same can be said of the bride's hands and those of Samson which, in an eloquent gesture, stand out against a dark area. On this side of Samson's figure the chiaroscuro contrasts are quite stark and the brown underpainting is apparent at numerous places such as the hair, the clothing and the cast shadow thrown by his body onto the bench (occupying a reserve left in the lit part of the latter); this cast shadow was later widened with that of his fingers, placed on top of the light grey-green of the bench. The dish and twist-shaped jug, decorated with leaves and a few red flowers, that stand on the table in front of the bride are rendered with lively detail; the leaves are painted with short strokes and touches in colours that range from brown-yellow to light green and dark blue. Above this to the left the red gown of the woman to the left of the bride forms a colour contrast with the whites adjoining it on the right.

The amount of detail in the remaining figures is in direct relation to the amount of light on them. In the case of the six on the extreme left the shadow parts of the faces are painted with an opaque grey; the lights on the heads of the man looking up and the man turning to the left are applied fairly thickly. In the group of men behind and beside Samson, on the other hand, the flesh tints have a predominantly ruddy tone. Warm tints, and a greater degree of detail, are used here and there to accentuate passages towards the front — for instance, more red is used in the incarnadine of the two men at the front; the cap of the one leaning over a harp has a clear red edging of light painted with small dabs, and his costume is in general fairly well detailed. The flesh tones of the two lovers in the left foreground are reddish and the cloth on the bench on which they are sitting is treated fairly thoroughly, in red tints. Unlike the hands of Samson and his bride, which are placed in the full light and elaborately rendered, those of the remaining characters are for the most part either not seen or left in shadow. In the latter case they are painted quite flatly, and the type of form and pose is based mainly on the outlines. Where clothing is in the shadows the fall of the folds — sometimes long and supple, and at others short and angular — is invariably done with loose and free brushstrokes.

The accessory furniture and other surroundings are treated broadly. The curtain that forms the background is done in opaque browns, while in the canopy the translucent brown of the underpainting is occasionally left visible and the pattern of the material is painted with broad strokes of lighter and darker paint worked up here and there with spots of yellow to show the catchlights. The furniture has alternating cool greys and warm brown tints, matched to the colouring of the garments. The objects standing on the table to the left are executed rather cursorily with strong, raised highlights in white on the knife, salt-cellar and dish, some brown-yellow dots on the pie and light blue-green on the dish. The objects in the right foreground are dealt with rather more thoroughly, the wine-cooler with a variety of brushstrokes that build up the shapes of the metal, in ochrish, brown and dark brown tints. The lidded can is drawn ebulliently in brown, to which various tints of greys have been added on the side facing the light to suggest both the kind of metal and the plastic form of the object. The highlights were then placed, partly in a smooth white paint and partly in a rather dry white and yellow.
SCIENTIFIC DATA: Kühn[1] describes five samples. The white of the jug is white lead containing copper and silver. Red from the folded cloth on the bench contains vermilion, red ochre, white

Fig. 2. Detail (1 : 2)



Fig. 3. X-Ray

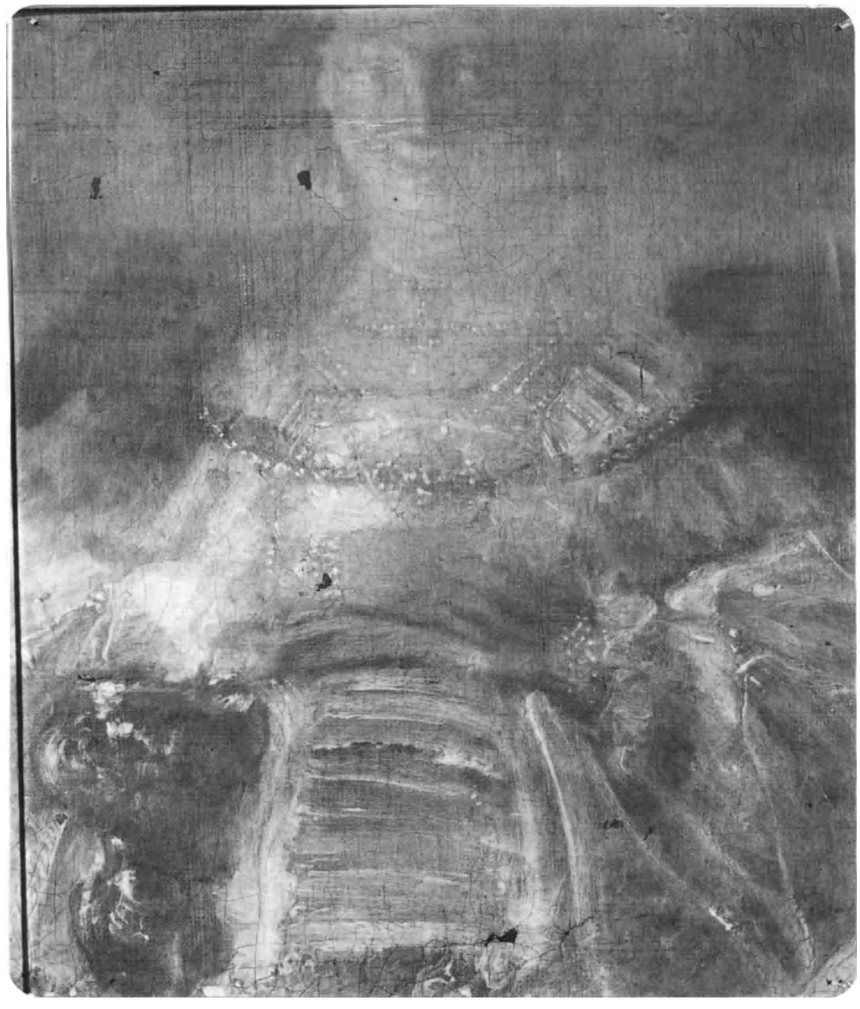


Fig. 4. Detail (1 : 3)



lead and lead tin yellow. The yellow from a cloth consists of yellow ochre (containing quartz and limespar), white lead and lead tin yellow. Blue in the leaves on the dish on the table comprises blue copper pigment (in small, round grains) that was probably made artificially (verditer), smalt, lead tin yellow and white lead. The black-brown at the lower edge consists of bone black and brown ochre or umber.

X-Rays

Despite Gerson's description[2], the available radiograph of a detail — part of the figure of the bride — closely matches what can be seen at the paint surface, and offers no evidence of corrections or repainting; there are even no traces of a more broadly-done light underpainting. On either side of the figure, at neck level, quite wide and more or less horizontal bands show up light; as they are vaguely edged it seems however rather unlikely that they had to do with the handling of paint.

Signature

At the lower centre, in black <*Rembrandt. f. 1638.*>. Though it is not impossible that the inscription — which stands out quite distinctly against the thin paint of its surroundings — has been gone over, the shape of the letters and figures gives no reason to doubt its authenticity.

Varnish

Old and yellowed varnish somewhat hampers observation.

4. Comments

The painting is wholly convincing as to its authenticity because of the approach and execution. The way selective use has been made of the light on some parts to lend clarity of form and colour — wholly (mostly in the case of the bride), largely (in the figure of Samson) or only partially — and the way dark areas describe three-dimensional hollows or silhouettes, are characteristic of Rembrandt, and to a large extent determine the overall effect of the composition. The execution is remarkably direct, and the spontaneous brushwork demonstrates the close connexion between handling of paint and intentions as to form that can be found in other paintings from the later 1630s. There is thus every reason to trust the signature and date of 1638, and there can in view of the practically unique nature of the subject be scarcely any doubt that this painting is the one mentioned by the Leiden painter Philips Angel in a speech on S. Luke's Day 1641, which was published in 1642 (see *5. Documents and sources*).

Fig. 5 Detail (1 : 1)



This is not to deny that the type of composition is somewhat unusual in Rembrandt's work. While the size of the canvas is reminiscent of that of compositions with few lifesize figures, such as the Leningrad *Abraham's sacrifice* (no. A 108) and the Berlin *Samson threatening his father-in-law* (no. A 109) both of 1635, this format has been used for a horizontal composition with a comparatively large number of figures seen at a smaller scale (though still larger than in the small-scale history paintings). This unusual scale for the figures is coupled here with an unusually complicated grouping in differently-spaced clusters to either side of the fully-lit, static seated figure of the bride, and with resultant quite unexpected intersections of partially seen figures of the kind we are familiar with mainly from compositions with smaller figures. Besides the centrally-placed table and the furniture in the foreground, it is mainly the very freely used chiaroscuro that lends order to the composition.

When judging this one has, in addition to a certain degree of darkening of the background in its relation to the canopy, to allow for the probability that the painting has not survived entirely intact. This is already evident from the fact that the seams as well as the vertical features in the picture are slightly askew; in its present form the canvas is tilted slightly to the left, and narrow, tapering edges must have

Fig. 6. J. P. Norblin de la Gourdaine, 1777, pen and wash. Warsaw, Muzeum Narodowe



Fig. 7. Rembrandt School, *The Marriage at Cana*, pen and wash 25 × 41.3 cm. Zurich, Kunsthaus, Graphische Sammlung



been lost. This may be why one can see hardly more than the nose of a man on the extreme left raising a glass to his mouth. On the right one must have seen at least all of the profile head now only partly visible; this is confirmed by a drawing by J.P. Norblin of 1777 in Warsaw (see *7. Copies*, 1; fig. 6), which moreover shows an extra figure. More of the picture can be seen in this drawing, mainly on the right but also along the bottom, though one does not get the impression that essential passages have since been lost. One cannot deduce from Norblin's drawing that the painting originally had more foreground defining clearly the placing of the bench on the left and the wine-cooler on the right, but this would certainly fit in better with what Rembrandt virtually always did in his compositions including full-length figures. The present framing of the scene, which (even if we allow for a few centimetres having been lost) lacks an introductory zone to the space depicted, is strange and at all events unique in Rembrandt's work. A pupil's drawing of the *Marriage at Cana* in the Kunsthaus in Zurich (fig. 7; W.R. Valentiner, *Rembrandt. Des Meisters Handzeichnungen* II, Stuttgart-Berlin (Kl.d.K. 32), p. XXXVII, fig. 41) may perhaps be regarded as reflecting the original arrangement. It does not, it is true, include any recumbent figures, and the poses thus show only a slight resemblance to those in the Dresden painting; but the placing of the sitting and standing figures at and around a long table and on either side of a canopy above the bridal pair makes it not improbable that Rembrandt's composition was the starting point for the artist who made the drawing. In that case the wine-cooler on the right — which in the drawing has, in line with the subject, given way to wine-jars — would not only have been fully visible but would have stood at the top of two steps that formed the extreme foreground. If there was a substantial reduction in size, this must have happened before 1773, in which year the painting was described as having dimensions hardly larger than those seen today (see *8. Provenance*).

Rembrandt had already handled the compositional problems of grouping a number of figures around a table in a variety of poses. Among the paintings it is most of all the composition (with knee-length and half-length figures) of the London *Belshazzar's feast* of *c.* 1635 (no. A 110) and to a lesser extent of the Madrid *Sophonisba* of 1634 (no. A 94) that anticipates the motifs employed here. Yet neither of these two earlier paintings shows to the same degree as the Dresden work a preoccupation with the arrangement of figure groups in a variety of configurations. The artist here solved the problem by employing a number of prototypes. Various authors, including Valentiner[3], Weisbach[4], Clark[5] and, especially, Gantner[6] have referred to the role played by the composition of Leonardo's *Last supper*. The three drawings of this (that is to say, of an early Italian print after it) by Rembrandt (Ben. 443, 444 and 445) make the notion plausible, particularly as regards the pose and position of Samson and his bride, and the canopy behind her. In a drawing in New York (Ben. 443) a first drawing of the composition, possibly already made around 1633, is still visible beneath the bold red-chalk lines that Rembrandt used around 1635 to strengthen and partly alter the figures and to add an off-centre canopy. In the Dresden painting the placing of the bride is unmistakably a reminiscence of this. But the figure of Samson, too, is a rather free version of the third apostle from the right, who turns away from the centre with a broad gesture towards his neighbours; originally his gesture with both arms was directed towards the middle, but in a free paraphrase of the composition in a drawing in Berlin dated 1635 (Ben. 445) the corresponding figure raises an index finger to the two figures beside him to the right, thereby clearly anticipating the pose that Samson was to take up in the matching place in the composition of the Dresden painting. What is more the same drawing has, in the lefthand half, a figure bending forward over the table in a pose somewhat like that of the woman behind the table on the left in the painting. The grouping of apostles — no longer, as in Leonardo's prototype and Rembrandt's two

Fig. 8. O. Vaenius, *A banquet*, panel 38 × 52 cm. Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum



Fig. 9. After M. van Heemskerck, *The Wedding of Samson* (engraving by Ph. Galle)



earlier drawings, arranged in groups of three — can be seen as a point of departure for the arrangement of the figures behind the table in the lefthand half of the painting.

Yet the composition of Leonardo's *Last supper* must not be seen as Rembrandt's only source. As most authors have commented, his composition lacks the symmetry and frontality that is essential to Leonardo, and instead of this he offers two very differently constructed groups on either side of the bride, a clear distinction of planes and a placing of the table in the light that though not entirely clear can best be seen as set diagonally. In this connexion there have been various references to a certain resemblance to Pieter Bruegel's *Peasant wedding* in Vienna or to similar depictions of a subject like the marriage in Cana[7]. Though Rembrandt could not have known Bruegel's painting, it is possible that a tradition of scenes like this portrayed in prints was familiar to him. It is less likely that he found his inspiration in the Jewish marriage ceremony, though it is not impossible that the chalice placed on the table is an allusion to it[8]. More to the point however is a remark by Nordenfalk[9], who pointed out the specific correspondances there are with one of the twelve panels with scenes from the Batavian war of liberation against the Romans by Otto Vaenius, which were bought in 1613 for the States-General in The Hague. One of these paintings (Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum inv. no. A 430; fig. 8) shows a banquet (which cannot be related to the account by Tacitus) with figures in 'Burgundian' costume, among whom a courting couple seen from behind in front of the table bear a striking resemblance to the corresponding figures in Rembrandt's painting. There is also a great similarity in the placing and pose of the main female figure and in the presence of a group of standing figures on the right, and the probability that Rembrandt knew this very composition must indeed be counted as high. Less convincing is a reference to a *Wedding feast* in Utrecht by Jan Lucasz. van Hasselt dated 1636 made by Slatkes[10], who further commented that the feathered headdress depicted on the far right seems to be taken from 14th-century Persian miniatures.

As a final prototype that Rembrandt may have known one may mention the third of a series of six circular engravings by Philip Galle after Maerten van Heemskerck, telling the story of Samson (Hollst. VII, p. 74 nos. 33–38)[11]. This shows in the middle ground, behind the main scene echoing the traditional formula of the betrothal of the Virgin, the wedding feast (fig. 9). Although there are a few similarities of form between this picture and Rembrandt's composition — in a courting couple seen from behind, and a wine-cooler placed in the foreground — this secondary scene is important mainly as an iconographic precedent, and indeed the only one known up to now; the *Wedding* does not appear to have been depicted elsewhere, either on its own or as part of a Samson cycle. Rembrandt plainly chose his subject following what was dubbed by C. Tümpel (inter alia in: Tümpel 1968, pp. 113–114) the 'Herauslösung' principle. At all events he introduced a fresh subject in the same way as he quite often did — one might think, for instance, of the Berlin *Samson threatening his father-in-law* of 1635 (no. A 109) or of an earlier work such as the Melbourne picture of 1628 (no. A 13) that probably depicts *Peter and Paul* — without thereby creating a generally recognized new theme. No imitations by pupils are known of; the only artist who dealt with the subject again seems to have been Gabriel Metsu (cf. Hoet I, p. 22 no. 4), but this apparently did not give rise to any tradition. On the contrary, knowledge of the true meaning of the subject was — just as in the two analogous cases mentioned — fairly quickly lost. In the 18th century

the painting was known in Dresden as 'The feast of Ahasuerus' (see *8. Provenance*); it was still being catalogued as such in 1856, but with the addition of 'D'après le Dr. Mosen: Samson expliquant des énigmes dans un repas'[12]. The subject matter had obviously been once again correctly identified by the poet and writer Julius Mosen (1803–1867), who was a lawyer in Dresden from 1834 to 1844.

The unusual nature of the subject may be what prompted Philips Angel to mention the painting as one example of what he regarded as the eighth requirement in a good artist — a 'knowledge of histories'. In the passage concerned (see *5. Documents and sources*) the writer argues that the artist needs to give close attention to the text on which his picture is based, and may add to this only motifs that are in accord with the text. Rembrandt's *Wedding of Samson* is offered as his first example, because the artist let the figures take their meal in a recumbent pose, in line with the custom in antiquity, and because he made this wedding different from others by means of Samson's long hair and evocative gesture. His next two examples, both by Jan Lievens, were singled out because they enhanced the depiction of wellknown subjects — *Abraham's sacrifice* and *Bathsheba* — with new and appropriate motifs.

The fact that Angel deals with the choice and treatment of the theme exclusively in terms of textual accuracy and suitable amplifications is evidence that for him and those like him the question of moral purpose what not of prime concern. This does not mean that, given the traditional role of Samson as a victim of the power of Woman — usually Delilah — and thus as a type for *Patientia*, this picture too could quite well not have had such a connotation for a 17th-century viewer. Samson's first, Philistine wife (the Bible does not give her a name) was also to betray him, by wheedling the answer to the riddle out of him and telling it to her compatriots, thus being unfaithful to him.

5. Documents and sources

Like the *Judas repentant* of 1629 (no. A 15), the *Wedding of Samson* is one of the very few Rembrandt paintings to which we know the reactions of a contemporary. The painter Phlips (or Philips) Angel (Leiden *c.* 1617/18–Batavia 1664; see L.J. Bol in: *O.H.* 64, 1949, pp. 4–5) commented on it in his speech to the painters of Leiden on S. Luke's Day (18 October) 1641, which was published in the following year under the title *Lof der schilderkonst* (In praise of the art of painting). Unlike Huygens' comment on the *Judas repentant*, Angel's text is directed towards one aspect of the painting alone, 'kennisse der Hystorien' i.e. the 'knowledge of the history'. He gives this as eighth in a series of requirements a good painter must meet, and which he first summarises (on p. 34) and then, basing himself on earlier writers such as Van Mander, expands on. The text of his speech was repeated in C. de Bie's *Het Gulden Cabinet van de edele vrye Schilder const*, Antwerp 1661. The passage that relates to Rembrandt's painting (pp. 46–48) runs:

'[Het] is ten hoochsten prijslick *(Edele Geesten)* dat wy ons ghewennen tot het geene de voor-gheleefde *Geesten* betracht hebben, en noch van vele hedendaechse *Meesters* na ghekomen wert, ons bekomerende met neerstich de oude vermuste Boecken te doorsnuffelen om kennisse van Hystorien te bekomen; nevens welcke kennisse dan, als wy de selve willen door *Teyckeninghe, Plaette,* of *Schilderye* uyt-drucken, onse hooghe naghedachten moeten voeghen, om onse gheorloofde vryheyt daer te beter onder te menghen, sonder krencken van den sin der Hystorien, en meerder vercieringhe van ons werck, ghelijck de *Oude* ghedaen hebben, en vele vande teghenwoordighe vermaerde *Geesten* noch doen; als, daer is dien wijt-beruchten *Rembrant*; dien vermaerden *Ian Lievensz.*; dien groot-geachten *Backer*; den aerdigen *Bliecker*; en veel meer anderen, dien ick (om kortheyts wil) overslaen, van welcke te sijner tijdt meerder van haer verdiende Loff aen den dach ghebracht sal werden. Onder alle heb ick van *Rembrant* eens een *Simsons-Bruyloft* uytghebeelt ghesien, waer van wy lesen by *Indicum* 14.*Cap. vers.* 10. daer kond'-men uyt bemercken hoe die kloecke *Geest*, door sijn hooge naghedachte die hy hier ontrent de eygentlickheyt van 't aensitten, (of om beter te segghen, het aenlegghen) der Gasten aen Tafel waer genomen had: want de Oude ghebruyckte Beddekens daerse op laghen, en fy en facten niet gelijckerwijs wy nu aen Tafel sitten, maer laghen op haer elleboogh, ghelijck sulcx noch in die Landen ghebruycklick is onder de Turcken het welcke hy seer aerdelick verthoont hadd. Nu, om het onderscheyt te maecken tusschen dese Bruyloft, en andere Bruyloften, soo had' hij *Simson* op de voor-gront ghestelt, met lanck hayr, tot een bewijs van datter noyt Scheer-mes op sijn hooft gheweest en was. *Ten anderen:* was *Simson* doende aen eenighe die naerstich toe-luysterde met sijn Raedtsel voor te werpen, sulcx kondmen bespeuren aen sijn handen; want met sijn rechter duym en middelste vinger had' hy de flincke middel-vingher ghevat; een ghewoonlicke doch seer natuyrlicke *acte*, wanneer yemandt aen een ander wat door reden wil voorstellen, en ghelijck alle Gasten niet tot een en de selve saeck gheneghen en sijn, soo had' hy anderen ghemaect die verheucht waren, niet luysterende naer het Raetsel, maer steeckende een Fluyt met Wijn al lachende om hoogh; andere doende met kussen, in somma, het was een vroylicke Bruyloft — en niet te min schoon de beweginge soo ware, als die in onse hedendaechse Feeste ghevonden werden, soo had' hy niet te min onderscheyt genoech gemaect dat mense uyt onse Bruyd-lofs-Feeste wel onderscheyden konden. Siet, dese vrucht der eygen natuerlicke uyt-beeldinge ontstont door de Hystorie wel gelesen en ondertast te hebben door hooge en verre na-ghedachten'. ([It] is most earnestly to be recommended (noble spirits) that we accord what earlier minds have paid heed to and what is still practised by many masters of our own time, that is to say to make the effort eagerly to hunt through old dusty tomes to gain a knowledge of historical texts. And we should then to this knowledge, when we are rendering them in drawings, prints or paintings, add our own reflexions in order, within the bounds of what is permissible, to merge our own ideas, without doing insult to the meaning of the story and to the greater enrichment of our work. Thus the Ancients did, and so do many of the great spirits of today such as the widely-renowned Rembrandt, the famous Jan Lievens, the highly-regarded Backer, the worthy Bliecker and many others whom (for the sake of briefness) I shall pass over here, whose well-merited praise will in due course become manifest. I have, for instance, once seen depicted by Rembrandt a wedding of Samson (such as we read of in Judges 14:10) in which one could see how this great mind has given deep thought to the special way the guests sit (or better, lie) around the table; for the Ancients used couches on which they lay — they did not sit at table as we do now, but rested on their elbow as the Turks are still wont to do in those lands, and this he depicted quite as it should be. To distinguish this wedding from all others he placed Samson in the foreground, with long hair as evidence that no razor had ever touched his head. Secondly Samson was occupied in posing his riddle to those listening

attentively, and this one could see from his hands. For he held his left middle finger between his right thumb and middle finger: a common but quite natural gesture when one seeks by reasoning to make something clear to another. And since not all the guests are paying attention to the same thing, he showed others as making merry, not listening to the riddle but raising a tall glass of wine while others again are kissing — in short, it was a merry wedding feast, and although the motifs depicted were just as they may be found in weddings today he had nonetheless made differences enough to distinguish it clearly from those of our own times. Thus, this result of proper and own natural rendering came about from thoroughly reading the text and pondering deeply on it.)

Where the work of the Leiden painter Angel (not to be confused with his Middelburg namesake) is concerned, little more of it is known than an etching of the *Head of an old man with a beard*, signed and dated *P. Angel 1637*, in the British Museum (cf. G. Isarlov, 'Rembrandt et son entourage', *La Renaissance. Revue d'Art.* July-September 1936, reproduced on p. [41]). This etching, the work of a 19- or 20-year-old, betrays familiarity with the early work of Rembrandt and Lievens. Whether he came to know Rembrandt's *Wedding of Samson* in the master's studio, we cannot tell. The picture may have soon left Rembrandt's workshop — no imitations by pupils are known — to enter a Leiden collection. The fact that Gabriël Metsu (who worked for a long time in Leiden and is not mentioned as being in Amsterdam until 1657) seems to be the only painter who dealt with the theme again would lend some credence to this idea. It is also possible that the painting remained in Amsterdam and, if the misinterpretation of the subject as *Esther's feast* that was common in the eighteenth century (see *8. Provenance*) had already arisen during the seventeenth, it could be identical with pictures that are described as depicting this. Such paintings are (albeit with widely varying prices) mentioned in the estate of the art dealer Johannes de Renialme in 1657 (A. Bredius, *Künstler-Inventare*, The Hague 1915–1922, I, p. 237; cf. Strauss *Doc.*, 1657/2; valued at 350 guilders), in the collection of Jan Jacobsz. Hinlopen around 1660 (Strauss *Doc.*, 1662/19) and in the inventory compiled in 1682 of the property of the widow of captain Aldert Matthijsz. (HdG *Urk.*, no. 355; valued at 30 guilders). It may also be identical with a painting described in 1654 merely as 'a wedding' (see *8. Provenance)*.

6. Graphic reproductions

An etching of 1814, mentioned in the Dresden catalogues, by Anton Heinrich Riedel (Dresden 1763–after 1824), son of Johann Anton Riedel, Inspector of the Dresden gallery, is unknown to us.

1. Engraving inscribed: *Rembrandt van Ryn pinx — A. Carse sculp/ The Feast of Ahasuerus — Das Fest des Ahasverus.* Reproduces the painting in the same direction and in its present skewed state; a little, though not significantly, more can be seen on the left than in the framed painting. Which bearer of this probably Scots name was the author of the engraving is not clear.

7. Copies

1. Pen-and-wash drawing by Jean Pierre Norblin (Misy-Faut-Yonne 1745–Paris 1830), dated 1777, Warsaw, Muzeum Narodowe (fig. 6; cf. I. Jakimowicz in: *Bilutyn Historii Sztuki* 19, 1957, p. 128 and fig. 1; J. Białostocki in: *N.K.J.* 23, 1972, p. 140 fig. 6). A rough rendering of the original, framed rather wider at the right and bottom.

8. Provenance

— Conceivably identical with: 'een bruyloft van Rembrant' (a wedding by Rembrant) mentioned as hanging in the vestibule in the inventory of the estate of Cathalijntje Bastiaens (1607–1654), widow of Cornelis Cornelisz. Cras (later called Smout, d. 1652), that was drawn up in Amsterdam on 7 December 1654 (Strauss *Doc.*, 1654/19; S.A.C. Dudok van Heel in: *Amstelodamum. Maandblad* . . . 69, 1982, pp. 28–31).

— Listed as no. A 1144 in the 1722–28 inventory of the Elector's Gallery at Dresden, acquired through the agency of Jos. Perodi[12]. Described in: *Verzeichniss der Gemälde in der Churfürstl. Gallerie in Dresden*, Leipzig 1771, no. 341: 'Rembrant van Ryn. Das Fest des Ahasverus. Esther sitzt mit einer Krone in einer reichen weiszen Kleidung in der Mitten. Auf Leinwand 6 Fusz 3 Zoll breit, 4 Fusz 5 Zoll hoch [=127.4 × 178.4 cm]'.

9. Summary

In approach and execution the painting is wholly convincing as to its authenticity, and there is every reason to place it in 1638, the date it carries. The original canvas, now tilted a little towards the left, has at all events been slightly reduced, and perhaps more drastically so at the bottom. The scale of the figures is uncommon for Rembrandt's history paintings, and their grouping is unusually complicated. Besides reminiscences of Leonardo's *Last supper* and, possibly, of various traditional representations of wedding feasts, the composition has borrowings from a painting by Otto Vaenius which Rembrandt must have seen in The Hague. The theme is practically unique, and is probably taken from a secondary scene in a 16th-century engraving after Maerten van Heemskerck; it was very soon misunderstood, and was recognized again only around 1840. Phlips Angel's commentary on the painting of 1641/42, in praise of the artist's fidelity to and understanding of his subject is one of the few known reactions of contemporaries to a painting by Rembrandt.

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10 L.J. Slatkes, *Rembrandt and Persia*, New York 1983, pp. 37–41, 17; Cf. Schwartz 1984, p. 179.
11 J. Bruyn, *Rembrandt's keuze van Bijbelse onderwerpen*, Utrecht 1959, p. 17, fig. 22.
12 Jules Hübner, *Catalogue de la Galerie Royale de Dresde* (transl. L. Grangier), Dresden 1856, no. 1152.

A 124 The risen Christ appearing to Mary Magdalene

1638

LONDON, BUCKINGHAM PALACE, H.M. QUEEN ELIZABETH II, INV. NO. 1154

HDG 142; BR. 559; BAUCH 66; GERSON 82

Fig. 1. Panel 61 × 49.5 cm

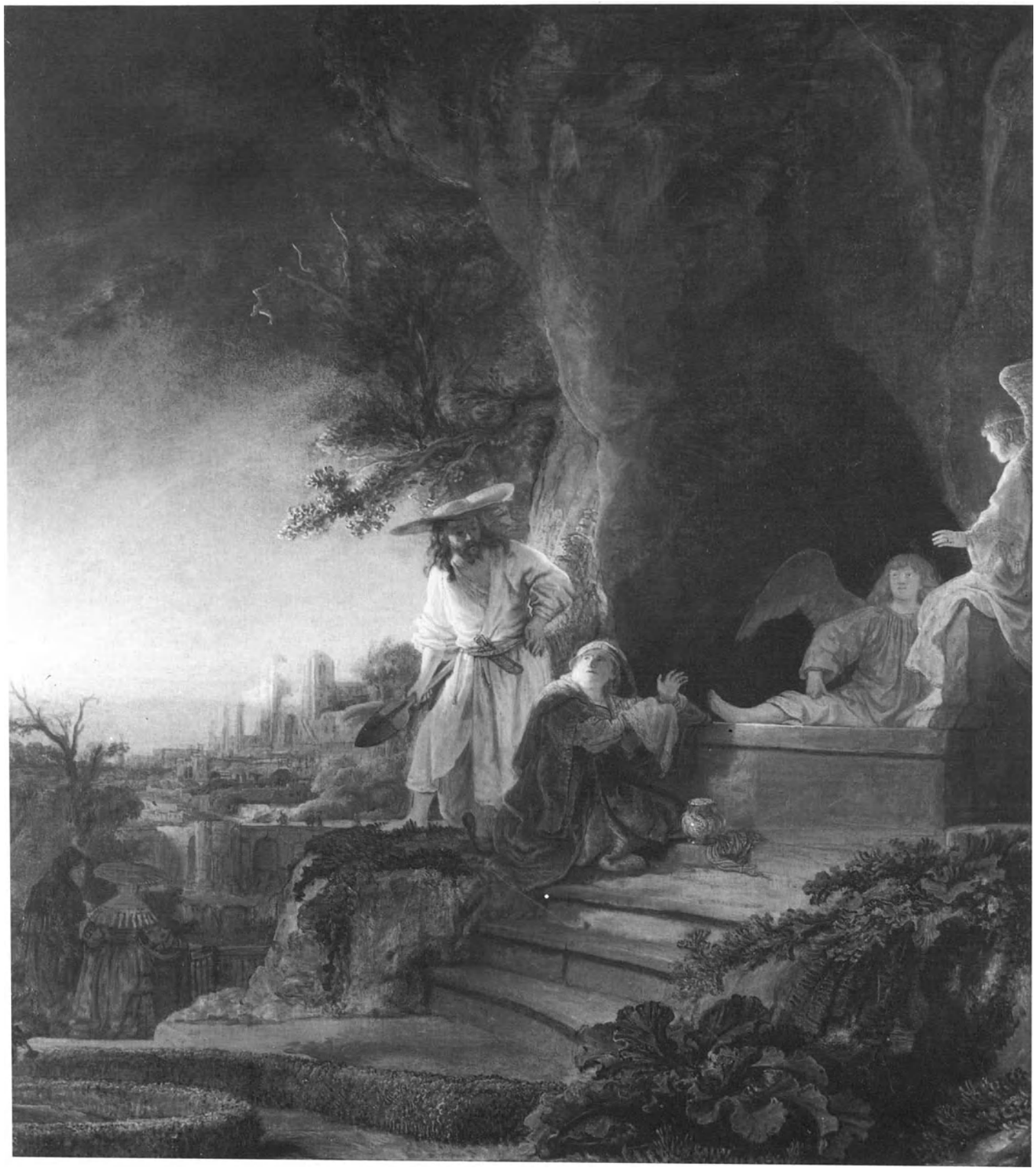


Fig. 2. X-Ray



1. Summarized opinion

A generally well preserved and authentic work, signed and dated 1638.

2. Description of subject

The subject is taken mainly from John 20: 11–17. On the right there is a rock wall with a cave containing a tomb. Two angels are seated on the tomb, one of them on the vertical headstone. On the left before the tomb Mary Magdalene kneels with alongside her on the right a jar of ointment and a cloth, lying on the plinth of the tomb. Her left arm is raised in fright as she turns her head towards Christ, who is standing behind her; her other hand is hidden beneath a cloth with which she had earlier, weeping, been covering her face. Christ is dressed in a loose white garment, belted with a cord into which a knife is tucked. He wears a broad-brimmed straw hat that throws part of the face into shadow; one hand rests on his hip while the other holds a spade. Above his head the boughs of a tree growing against the rock face spread out across the sky. He is standing on a plantcovered ledge of stone at the foot of the rock face; a second, low area of cliff can be seen in the right foreground. Between these, three steps lead down to a flat area with low hedges that occupies the rest of the foreground; a (partly visible) pot with flowers stands in the centre of a circular bed. Further back, two women are seen from behind, going down out of the garden; the one on the right, wearing an exotic, flat hat, holds a gate open. (The Gospel text referred to above does not mention these women — Luke 24:10 speaks of Joanna and Mary the mother of James, while Mark 16:1 names the latter and Salome; Matthew 28:1 mentions, in addition to Mary Magdalene, only 'the other Mary'.) In the distance lies Jerusalem with the Temple, recognizable by the pillars Jachin and Boaz standing free of the facade. The figures of four men are seen on a bridge or viaduct.

The sky above the city is dark at the top, gradually lightening towards the bottom; according to the Bible account the events took place at daybreak. A yellowish morning light falls on the distant buildings, into the branches of the tree above Christ's head and partly lights his upper body, the face of Mary Magdalene and the angel sitting high up on the tomb.

3. Observations and technical information

Working conditions

Examined in October 1972 (J.B., S.H.L.) in moderate daylight and in the frame. Again in November 1987 (E.v.d.W.) in good daylight and out of the frame, with the help of a microscope. Four X-ray films covering the entire picture were received later.

Support

DESCRIPTION: Oak panel, grain vertical, 61 × 49.5 cm. Thickness *c.* 1 cm. Single plank. Unevenly planed on the back; on the right, at 25 cm from the top edge, there is the cross-section of a knot about 10 cm in length that causes a horizontal split at the front surface; the structure of the wood is also irregular at the lower left.
SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

Ground

DESCRIPTION: A light yellow-brown shows through in the rock on which Christ is standing, and at some places in the landscape.
SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

Paint layer

CONDITION: Generally good. In the sky on the left the grain of the panel has become visible, and at some places is covered over with small, vertical darkened retouches. Craquelure: practically none, apart from a fine and mostly horizontal crackle in the white of Christ's garment and in the lit half of Mary Magdalene's face.
DESCRIPTION: The work is executed in predominantly subdued, warm colours with varied brushwork. The latter is broad and summary in passages such as the sky and the rockface, but consists of short, somewhat draughtsmanlike brushstrokes rendering detail in the main figures, the foreground vegetation and the buildings in the background, though a certain freedom of treatment is retained throughout. In light areas the paint is applied for the most part thickly; the vegetation in the foreground, done in tints that offer little contrast to those of the immediate surroundings, also has heavy paint. A sober though nonetheless effective, varied colour-scheme based on browns, black, greys and greens is used for the greater part of the setting, the differentiation of depth and materials being obtained by modest differences in colour and tone, in the brushwork and — as in the vegetation — in the thickness of the paint.

The basis was probably supplied by a brown underpainting that still shows through in the upper part of the sky, in the tree above Christ's head, the two women on the left, the distant city wall, at some places in the rock-face (where an underlying pattern of brushstrokes can still be made out), and in the two areas of rock at the foot of it. A thin brown-black has been placed over this in the cave and at various points in the rocky ground in the right foreground. The somewhat more strongly lit sides of the stone are indicated in a mixture of browns and greys, as is the plateau in the left foreground and the steps, where the paint is applied more flatly. In the tomb underlying brushstrokes slanting slightly downwards to the left suggest a different indication of its shape (with lines running towards a vanishing-point in the horizon). The colour here merges into a grey mixed with a very little brown. A vertical band of lightish paint to the left and a horizontal one along the bottom suggest that further changes to the tomb's shape were made (see also under *X-Rays*). Alongside this the angel sitting in the shadow in the cave is shown mostly in greys, with the flesh areas done broadly in a brownish grey. These colours recur, rather lighter and more pinkish, in the angel sitting higher up, where they are varied with a warm yellow in the fringe of the sleeve, with a somewhat more ruddy tint in the face (seen in profile) and with an edge of light running along the wing and arm. Two drops of bright pink mark the tips of the upper two fingers. The plants in the right foreground are painted with relaxed strokes of quite thick paint in various tints of grey-green, with internal detail and dark edges in brown-black merging into the shadows on the rock. Grey-green and black are used in the low hedges, alternating with small strokes and dabs of a subdued yellow. Compared with these, the tree above Christ's head has warmer tints — ochre brown with darker internal detail in the trunk, a dull pink in one dead branch, and in the other branches (over a brown underlayer) strokes of a thin brown shading to the left into a greenish brown. Spots of light green and white are used to render the play of light on the leaves.

The lower part of the tree forms part of a series of yellowish, pink and light green colour accents that have been used around the two main characters. A pure light blue is placed in the sky immediately to the left of Christ's head; to the right of it the lit edge of the tree trunk shows a ruddy brown, changing downwards into a dull pink and, in a climbing plant to the right of Christ's upper arm, into grey with light green highlights. An earlier contour of the upper arm, running higher up, is seen in relief (and also in the X-rays). A brown tending to orange on the flat area in front of the tomb softens the transition to the warm red of the Magdalene's clothing. The lit half of her face is done in pink and a little yellow, with the lit part of the inner headdress lying next to the cheek in white; dots of red are used on the left in the nostril and mouth, white and black in the eyes, and some blue-green, yellow and ochre-brown in the outer headdress. The shadowed parts of the face, arms and gesturing hand are, in tint and treatment, akin to the angel adjoining them on the right. In

Fig. 3. Detail (1 : 1)



the figure of Christ, too, — treated with equal precision — there are colour accents indicating the effect of the morning light, with light yellow in the hat, orange-brown and some pink in the lit parts of the face, a broken white tending to cream in the garment, and a coarse light yellow on the forearm on the left. In the shadow areas a warm brown predominates in the head, while light browns and greys are used elsewhere; deft drawing in dark paint adds further definition to the head, hand and folds in the garment. A touch of dark lake red, with tiny vertical strokes extending downwards, indicates blood stains coming from his side wound.

In the sky dark greys have been applied, over a brown that shows through, with brushstrokes that are still visible in part, and shade downwards into a (slightly worn and occasionally retouched) lighter grey. In some parts a thin, yellowish white has been brushed over this, forming the transition to the lower zone where thick paint of the same colour has been applied with horizontal strokes. Again in a thick white-yellow, the towers of the temple have been placed on top of the paint of the sky, as has a brown-grey group of trees to the right of them; in general the buildings and vegetation in the distance are indicated very subtly, though nowhere finically, with brushstrokes of greyish paint and small, darker and lighter accents. The middle ground with the women seen from behind is treated similarly.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

X-Rays

In the main the radiographic image matches what one expects from the paint surface. At the tomb there is a lightish band that runs obliquely down to the left, confirming the alteration in the perspective of the tomb that has already been described. Moreover, the vertical light band on the left already observed at the surface suggests that the tomb was at some time seen at an angle with a lit short side to the left. Two horizontal bands showing up light that do not coincide with the present shape — one along the underside and already seen at the paint surface, the other now covered over by the outstretched leg of the seated angel — could perhaps be linked with a subsequent state in which the tomb with the short side on the right in shadow (as now) but with the long side foreshortened a little towards the lower left; paintstrokes observed at the surface might also point to this. The tomb would have been given its present perspective only at a very late stage. The present position of the two angels was probably fixed only at this late stage, and there is no trace of earlier versions to be seen in the X-rays.

The originally higher shape to Christ's left shoulder shows up distinctly in light brushstrokes. The contour and folds of the drapery over his right leg were rendered with animated brushstrokes that were covered over with stiffer and less light forms in the final execution. Mary Magdalene's headdress has a little radioabsorbent paint outside the present upper outline, and microscope examination shows this to be pink and evidently part of an earlier version. The cloth over her right hand, too, is seen to be a second version, and shows up in the X-ray rather smaller and as a more strongly contrasting light image.

The brushstrokes of the sky, appearing light, continue beneath the Temple tower on the left but not under the righthand one, for which a reserve was clearly provided.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

Signature

On the right on the lit wall of the tomb, in reddish brown paint, there are the remains of a signature and a reasonably well preserved date <*Rembrandt ft / 1638*>; so far as could be judged, the signature was written regularly, and the remains give no grounds to doubt its authenticity.

Varnish

A fairly thick layer of varnish somewhat hampers observation.

4. Comments

In approach and execution the painting fits well into the general picture of Rembrandt's work from the latter half of the 1630s, and this is confirmed by the date of 1638 below the badly worn signature. Much as the character of the individual paintings may sometimes differ, a feature shared by the works from this period that distinguishes them from earlier ones in the greater freedom in the manner of painting, irrespective of whether this is broad or more finely detailed. The painting discussed here is a good example of this phase of Rembrandt's development, even though there is no direct and comprehensive parallel with one or more of the other works. The manner of painting shows features that in the general sense can be termed Rembrandtesque, such as the relaxed and sometimes slightly translucent treatment of large parts of the setting contrasting with a denser treatment, a thicker application of paint and a concentration of colour accents in the parts of the picture placed at the centre of interest. Rather more special to this period is the balance between relaxedness and precision that is maintained in often finely detailed passages. In the latter, the painting takes on something of the character of a brush drawing — relatively thin and fluid in the distance and in the figures of the women leaving the garden, thick and solid in the plants in the right foreground, which can be compared with the vegetation in the *Susanna at the bath* in The Hague (no. A 117). Illustrative of the way of working — precisely because of the similarity of the type of composition — is the difference from the Munich *Entombment* (no. A 126) and *Resurrection* (no. A 127), the works that in 1639 finally completed the Passion series painted for Prince Frederik Hendrik and in which, probably for the sake of the pictorial unity of the series, the more dense way of painting from the early 1630s was preserved. More than in those works the setting here plays an important role. The meticulously trimmed, curving low hedges in the foreground are a regular feature of the 17th-century garden, and are here clearly a reference to Christ's role as a gardener. The intention of making the Temple a recognizable motif has led to the detailed rendering of the city of Jerusalem in the background. For the rest, the importance of the surroundings has been reduced by the use of subdued colours and of a narrow range of tonal values; nature is seen lost in the early-morning mist, so that the abrupt spatial transition from the middle ground to the distant areas lower down is veiled. This treatment ensures in particular the effectiveness of the lighting, combining the early light of day with a spiritual meaning; the dawn is pierced by the sun's rays, which light the figure of Christ, Mary Magdalene's raised face and — past the

dark cave-mouth — the angel seated high up on the tomb.

There are traces at the paint surface and in the X-ray of a number of interesting changes. These involve in the first place the positioning of the tomb, which seems originally to have been seen with the lit short side on the left; in its second version the short side was placed in shadow on the right, but then the illuminated long side appears foreshortened in a different (though actually correct) way by lines sloping somewhat downwards to the left, towards the horizon. Probably the resulting three-dimensional effect proved unsatisfactory, and Rembrandt decided on the present (and less correct) answer to his problem. Small alterations in Christ's dress and Mary's headdress and the cloth she holds seem to be intended to simplify the form and soften the tonal character, so as to lend greater relief to the main accents — in particular, the light falling on the Magdalene's face. As one repeatedly finds in Rembrandt's views of Jerusalem, the Temple was initially planned with only one tower.

The moment depicted is, unlike that in Rembrandt's 1651 *Noli me tangere* in Braunschweig (Br. 583), that of Mary Magdalene's first awareness of Christ's presence, before she recognizes him. In line with this the figure of the risen Christ is, as Rotermund has noted for similar drawn depictions, not surrounded by an aura of light (H. Rotermund in: *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 15, 1952, p. 103 note 1). By turning her head in his direction — roughly as Abraham does towards the angel in the 1635 Leningrad *Abraham's sacrifice* (no. A 108) — Mary Magdalene acts as the pivot of the central group round which the composition is built.

As in the 1637 *Angel Raphael leaving Tobit* in Paris (no. A 121) this painting was, it would seem already while in Rembrandt's workshop, copied several times and used as a starting point for similar scenes. Besides a few painted copies (see *7. Copies* below) there are a number of drawings of interest that more or less closely resemble the composition. Two of these, both in Amsterdam (Ben. 537 and 538), were once (e.g. by Lugt[1]) looked on as preliminary studies for the painting. Benesch, however, rightly dated them later than the painting, at around 1643, and Schatborn convincingly attributes one of them to Ferdinand Bol (P. Schatborn in: *Bulletin van het Rijksmuseum* 32, 1984, pp. 94–95). The lastnamed drawing must therefore have preceded a drawing in Darmstadt attributed to Bol by Henkel and Sumowski and depicting *The three Marys at the tomb*, though it has unmistakeable reminiscences of Rembrandt's painting (Sumowski *Drawings* I, no. 173); this drawing was dated by Sumowski (rather early, as it appears) in the late 1630s and probably contains a first idea for Bol's large painting of the subject, dated 1644, in Copenhagen (Blankert *Bol*, no. 17; Sumowski *Gemälde* I, no. 83; cf. also our no. A 121, *Comments*).

Stuck on the back of the panel there is a paper label on which, written in ink, there is a sonnet on the painting, taken from an edition of 1726, composed by Rembrandt's friend Jeremias de Decker (1609–1666) and first published in 1660 (see *5. Documents and sources*). Hofstede de Groot[2] noted that the indication of the support as a panel, and the description of the picture given in the poem, apply not to Rembrandt's painting of 1651 in Braunschweig, but to that of 1638 in Buckingham Palace. He doubted, however, whether De Decker wrote his poem about the latter; he deduced from the text that De Decker had seen the work being painted and that it was intended for the sick-visitor and precentor Herman Frederik Waterloos, and he found this hard to reconcile with the poem appearing only in 1660, while relations between Rembrandt and the circle of De Decker and Waterloos seemed to have existed only in the later years of Rembrandt's life. Hofstede de Groot's doubts do seem however to be unfounded: contrary to what he and also De Raaf[3] and Slive[4] thought, it seems that the title has to be interpreted as meaning that the *poem* was dedicated to H.F. Waterloos, not that the painting was done for him. And the lines '. . .Your masterly strokes,/Friend Rembrant, I first detected in this panel . . .' may be taken to refer to the result rather than to the production of the painting, and one cannot conclude from this that De Decker actually watched the painting being done. One may assume that the sonnet does indeed relate to no A 124, and was probably written well after 1638.

5. Documents and sources

Sonnet by Jeremias de Decker, published in: *De Hollantsche Parnas, of Verscheide Gedichten, . . . door T. van Domselaar verzamelt*, Amsterdam 1660, p. 405 (HdG *Urk.*, no. 221; Strauss *Doc.*, 1660/25). A handwritten copy of this poem stuck to the back of the panel is based on a later publication in: Jeremias de Decker, *Rijmoefeningen*, 1726, vol.II, p. 230, in which in the title the words 'voor H.F. Waterloos' are replaced by the motto 'Micat inter omnes' (he shines among all) (HdG loc. cit.).

'Op d'Afbeeldinge van den Verresen Christus en
Maria Magdalene, Geschildert door den uytnemenden
Mr Rembrant van Rijn, voor H.F. Waterloos

Als ick d'History lese, ons by sint Ian beschreven.
En daer benevens sie dit kunstrijck Tafereel,
Waer (denck ick dan) is pen soo net oyt van pinceel
Gevolgt, of doode verw soo na gebrogt aen't leven ?

't Schynt dat de Christus segt: Marie, en wilt niet beven.
Ick ben't, de dood en heeft aen uwen Heer geen deel :
Sy sulcx geloovende, maer echter nog niet heel,
Schynt tusschen vreugde en druck; en vreese en hoop te sweven.

De graf rots na de kunst hoog in de lucht geleyd.
En rijck van schaduwen, geeft oog en majesteyt
Aen all de rest van 't werck. Uw' meesterlycke streken,
Vriend Rembrant, heb ick eerst sien gaen langs dit paneel;
Dies mocht mijn' Pen wat Rijms van uw begaeft Pinceel
En mijnen Int wat Roems van uwe Verwen spreken.
J. de Decker'

(On the Representation of The Risen Christ and Mary Magdalene, Painted by the excellent Master Rembrant van Rijn, for H.F. Waterloos

When I read the Gospel, as told us by Saint John, and next beside it see this artful scene, Where (I think to myself) did the brush ever come so close to the pen, in bringing lifeless paint so close to life ?

It seems Christ is saying: Mary, tremble not. It is I; Death has no part of your Lord. She, believing this, but not being wholly convinced, appears to vacillate 'twixt joy and grief, and between fear and hope.

The rock depicted high in the air, as art requires, and imbued with shadows, lends beauty and majesty to the entire work. Your masterly strokes, Friend Rembrant, I first detected in this panel. Thus my pen was able to speak of your talented brush and my ink to praise your paints.)

6. Graphic reproductions

None.

7. Copies

What was presumably a copy after no. A 124 was sold with the Henry Hope collection in London (Christie's) on 27–29 June 1816, 2nd day no. 16: 'Rembrandt — Christ appearing to Mary Magdalene' (£2.12s.6d. to Stewart).

1. Oak panel 62 × 51 cm, Rijksdienst Beeldende Kunst, The Hague, no. NK 1648, inv. no. 701; on loan to the Museum Amstelkring, Amsterdam. To judge from the manner of painting and working of the *c.* 1 cm thick panel, a 17th-century copy; unlike the original mostly thickly painted, but otherwise faithful.
2. Canvas 53.5 × 41 cm, with a monogram *Gt.F.*. Present whereabouts unknown. Reproduces the picture radically curtailed on the left, without the view of the city or the women leaving the garden; considerably altered in the upper parts of the rock-face and in the tree above Christ, which is here rendered as a broken-off trunk. Ascribed by Von Moltke to Govaert Flinck (Von Moltke *Flinck*, p. 78 no. 61 with illus.).
3. Panel 62 × 51 cm, Galerie Linz no. 2046. A faithful copy of matching dimensions; Christ is reproduced without the hat. Ascribed by Von Moltke to Govaert Flinck (Von Moltke, op. cit. p. 78, no. 62 with illus.).
4. Canvas 61 × 52 cm, Copenhagen, Statens Museum for Kunst, inv. no. 1523; signed *Heinrich Jansen von Holstein Inven.* [sic!] *et fecit 1649* (Cf. Sumowski *Gemälde* II, no. 933). On Heinrich Jansen and his copies after Rembrandt, see also Vol. II, pp. 627–628. The painting in Copenhagen is such a faithful copy that one wonders how Jansen managed to paint it in Flensburg. Sumowski assumes that he had drawings of the original; one cannot rule out the possibility that Jansen had taken with him a painted copy (done by himself?).

8. Provenance

— Coll. Willem van der Goes, in 1730 collector of taxes in Leiden according to a mention in the inventory of the following owner.
— Coll. Valerius Röver (1686–1739) of Delft; no. 68 in his catalogue of paintings, books, drawings, prints and rarities drawn up in 1730. Mentioned among the works bought in 1721: 'de Here Christus in de gedaante van een Hovenier bij het graf aan Maria Magdalena zig vertoonende door *Rembrandt.* Gloeyend en konstig geschildert A° 1638 . . . (fl)213:10 hoog 23 duym, breet 19 duym [= 60.2 × 49.7 cm] gekogt van de Hr Willem van der Goes tegenwoordig Ontfanger te Leiden-.' (Christ the Lord under the guise of a gardener near the tomb showing himself to Mary Magdalene by *Rembrandt.* Glowing and skilfully painted anno 1638 . . . 213 (guilders) 10 (stuivers) . . . . . bought from Mr Willem van der Goes, present Collector at Leiden.) (Amsterdam, University Library ms. UB II A 18; published by E.W. Moes in: *O.H.* 31, 1913, p. 11).
— Sold in 1750 by Röver's widow to the Landgrave Wilhelm VIII of Hesse-Kassel ('Catalogus van eenige nog in wezen zynde schildery-kabinetten, namentlijk Van Mevrouwe Doärière De Reuver, verkogt aan zyn Doorl. Hoogh. den Heere Prins van Hessen, voor de somma van 40.000 Guldens' — Catalogue of some collections of paintings still in being, namely that of the widow De Reuver, sold to his Serene Highness the Prince of Hesse, for the sum of 40 000 guilders; Hoet II p. 393). Described in the Hauptinventar begun in 1749 under no. 556: 'Rembrant, Christus erscheinet Maria Magdalena als Gärtner h. 1 Schuh 11 Zoll, br. 1 Schuh 7 Zoll [= 60 × 49.6 cm]'.
— Taken to France in 1806 during the French occupation; subsequently in the collection of Joséphine de Beauharnais at Malmaison. Probably sold by her son Eugène Beauharnais to P.J. Lafontaine.
— Acquired in 1819 by the English Prince Regent, later George IV, by barter from the dealer P.J. Lafontaine[5].

9. Summary

Bearing out the date of 1638, the approach and execution fit well into the general picture of Rembrandt's work from the second half of the 1630s. The execution is marked by a greater freedom than in the preceding period, even in fairly small-scale pictures. The manner of painting combines a relaxed style with precision, and can in part be compared with that of the *Susanna at the bath* (no. A 117).

It seems incorrect to interpret a sonnet written by Jeremias de Decker as referring to another painting purportedly painted for H.F. Waterloos in De Decker's presence.

REFERENCES

1 F. Lugt, 'Rembrandt van Rijn (1606–1669) — Christ appearing to the Magdalen — Collection of Mr I. de Bruyn, Spiez . . .', *Old Master Drawings* 9 (1934–35), pp. 16–17.
2 HdG *Urk.*, no. 221.
3 K.H. de Raaf, 'Rembrandt's Christus en Maria Magdalena' in: *O.H.* 30 (1912), pp. 6–8.
4 S. Slive, *Rembrandt and his critics*, The Hague 1953, pp. 46–47.
5 O. Millar, *Dutch pictures from the Royal Collection*, London 1971, p. 29. C. White, *The Dutch pictures in the collection of Her Majesty the Queen*, Cambridge 1982, pp. 105–107.

A 125 Landscape with the Good Samaritan

1638

KRAKOW, MUZEUM NARODOWE, COLL. CZARTORYSKI, INV. NO. V.105

HDG 109; BR. 442; BAUCH 545; GERSON 199

1. Summarized opinion

A well preserved and authentic work, reliably (?) signed and dated 1638.

2. Description of subject

The landscape falls into two distinct sections. On the left a river runs through a low-lying, wide valley. On the right, where the terrain is considerably higher, a road passes between tall trees. At the roadside, seen in the immediate foreground, there are shrubs and plants. Beyond the trees the road curves to the left and runs down over a two-arched stone bridge that spans the river at a point where it forms a waterfall. The road then meanders through the valley towards a town in the distance. A number of windmills stand on the walls of the town; mountains rise behind it to the left.

On the left the valley is lost in shadow; there are farm buildings among trees and a wooden bridge crosses the river. Further back the valley, with fields and meadows, is bathed in bright light. The town and land behind it are again in shadow.

On the road, at the extreme right, the Samaritan is leading a horse carrying the half-naked wounded man, slumped forward and held on the animal's back by the Samaritan's left hand (cf. Luke 10:30–35). A little further along, beneath the tall trees, a hunter stands on the left of the road, aiming a gun upwards and with his servant-boy behind him. Further off still, on the righthand side of the road, there is a woman wearing a large hat and a man with his arm round her; they are looking towards the Samaritan. Where the road bends into the valley, just by the stone bridge, a coach-and-four is going towards the town, and in the bend past the bridge there are more people walking in the same direction. On the left, in the shadows of the valley by the wooden bridge, a man sits fishing; further off by the farm and in the fields there are people and animals.

The greater part of the sky is filled with very dark clouds, and only on the left, by the crown of the tall trees, does a light patch indicate the sun nearly breaking through and lightening the sky above the mountains.

3. Observations and technical information

Working conditions

Examined in March 1969 (B.H., E.v.d.W.) in good daylight and out of the frame. Four X-ray films, covering the whole painting, were received later from the museum, together with an infrared photograph.

Support

DESCRIPTION: Oak panel, grain horizontal, 46.1 × 65.5 cm, *c.* 1 cm thick. Single plank. Back slightly bevelled on all four sides.
SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

Ground

DESCRIPTION: A light yellow-brown shows through in thinly-painted areas.
SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

Paint layer

CONDITION: Good. In the thinly-painted areas the grain of the panel is clearly visible, expecially in the sky where the protruding grain has been retouched. These retouches have darkened, and are somewhat obtrusive especially on the left. Craquelure: slight cracking in the more thickly applied paint.
DESCRIPTION: The overall structure of the trees on the right has been painted with wide and varied brushwork in tints of dark brown, green-brown and an ochre colour, over a reddish-brown translucent paint through which the underlying ground may be sensed. Here and there the brushstrokes are very clearly apparent. One, palm-like tree is shown with virtually opaque paint applied with fluid, curved strokes. At some points there is more precise detail — leaves are depicted with small spots of green-brown and yellow-brown paint, and the branches and twigs have been given edgings of light. The structure of the twisted trunk of the tree nearest to the front has been accentuated with scratchmarks. The vegetation in the extreme foreground is defined in thick yellow-green, ochre yellow and black paint, and has been given edgings of light. The surrounding terrain has been depicted partly with strokes of olive green placed over the translucent brown, and the marks made in the road by carriage-wheels have been drawn in a similar way, with olive green over a translucent brown. The figures on the road are done fairly cursorily, mostly in partly opaque browns and greys with a few accents in very dark paint and a few touches of light paint for the highest lights. Traces in the paint surface suggest that there is an earlier and largely overpainted version of the Samaritan and his horse to the left of his present position, beneath the two figures standing alongside the road. In the IR photograph (fig. 5) his legs appear dark, and a less distinct light patch could be the head of the horse.

In the valley the shaded part in the foreground is sketched quite fluently in brown and green-brown, with the ground showing through everywhere. The lit part is done with fairly thick and opaque paint, in variations of greyish-green and yellow-green. These variations in colour, and also to some extent differences in thickness, are used to define the fields, with a touch of blue here and there showing the course of the river. The stone bridge is a mixture of ochre yellow and white, sometimes tending towards a pink. Precisely-placed, crisp dabs of paint are used for the figures staffing this area, including the coach and horses. The hilly landscape nearer to the town, is again painted in green-brown over brown, with here and there a little yellow. The mountains on the left are in predominantly grey tones.

The very dark clouds on the right, against which the tips of the trees stand out light, are done in quite thin paint in brownish and lead-grey coulours, merging to the left into even thinner paint of a somewhat lighter grey. The lightest parts of the sky, on the left, are painted with clearly-visible brushstrokes in greys and a little blue.
SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

X-Rays

As might be expected, only the lightest passages show up clearly in the radiographic image — mainly the valley and bridge, and the thickly-painted foreground vegetation. The sky contains just enough white lead for the brushstrokes to be apparent; they are, especially on the left, quite bold and run in various directions.

Signature

At the bottom right, in dark and opaque paint <*Rembrandt. f. 1638*>. The letters are quite thin and carefully written and suffer from a certain lack of fluency and homogeneity. It is hard to tell whether the unusual script is due to the inscription's small scale or to its not being authentic.

Varnish

No special remarks.

4. Comments

This painting is, on account of the rhythm of the assured and often brilliant brushwork and of its pictorial richness, convincingly from Rembrandt's hand; also because of the date of 1638 mentioned in the (admittedly problematic) inscription, it must be seen as one of the few solid points of departure for

Fig. 1. Panel 46.1 × 65.5 cm

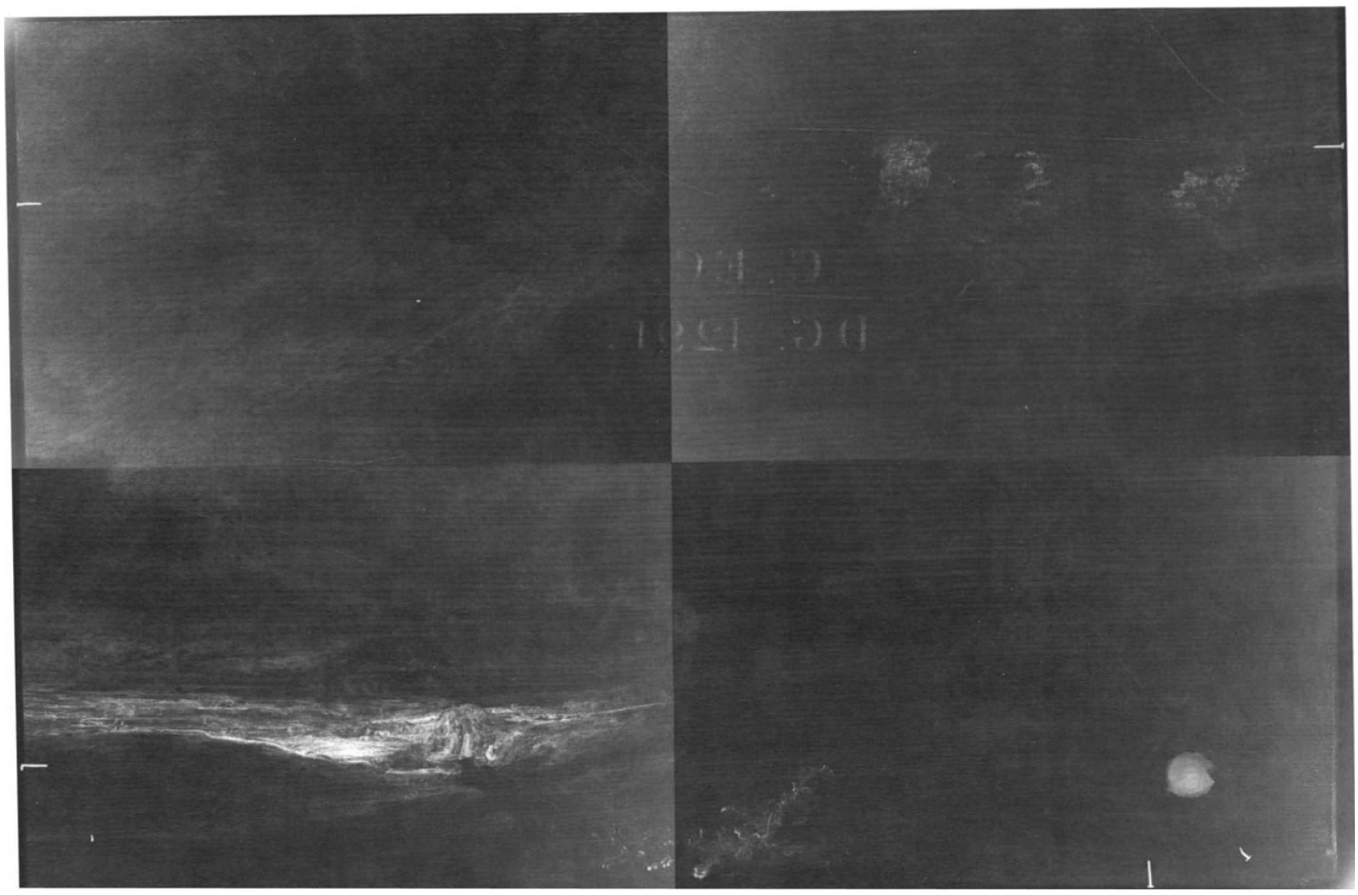


making a study of his painted landscapes.

The manner of painting is straightforward, yet richly varied. The sky is for the most part brushed thinly, while the other dark areas consist of an underpainting in translucent brown on top of which there are brushstrokes of darker and more opaque paint that give lively detail of the shapes of the terrain and vegetation, with thicker and lighter highlights defining the foliage. In the shadowed valley on the left the shapes are indicated comparatively broadly; on the high ground to the right, where more light falls, an animated, graphic rendering of form predominates, with a richly variegated picture of shadows and half-shadows alternating with lighter patches. The lit plane of the middle ground on the left is executed in opaque light paint in which subtle differences in tint and thickness suggest a wealth of detail — fields and hedges, the coach and the bridge, men and animals. On both right and left a strong impression of depth has been achieved in different ways; the contrasts of light contribute greatly to creating a varied yet homogeneous spatial image in which the group of trees in the centre forms the axis. The use of widely varying pictorial means to create an imaginary landscape is not to be found in the landscape backgrounds of Rembrandt's work of earlier date, where the attention is of course focused elsewhere.

The tonal relationship between sky and land that is characteristic of Rembrandt's landscapes, with the sky belonging to the darkest part of the painting, was it is true foreshadowed in parts of earlier works like the Berlin *Abduction of Proserpina* datable in 1631 (no. A 39) or the 1632 *Rape of Europa* (no. A 47), but in this work it has become a very dominant feature. Here it is combined with a wealth of detail partly sketched graphically and partly modelled in thick paint — features that to a greater or lesser degree are typical of all three of the landscapes from around 1638/40 that can be attributed to Rembrandt. It is not easy to say whether the differences in motif and approach between these works point to a significant difference in date, or in which direction Rembrandt's landscape style was developing. It has indeed been assumed that the more 'realistic' landscape — the Amsterdam *Landscape with a stone bridge* (no. A 136) — preceded the more 'imaginary' one in Krakow of 1638 (see the comments under that entry). The same assumption has also been made for the Braunschweig *Landscape with a thunderstorm*

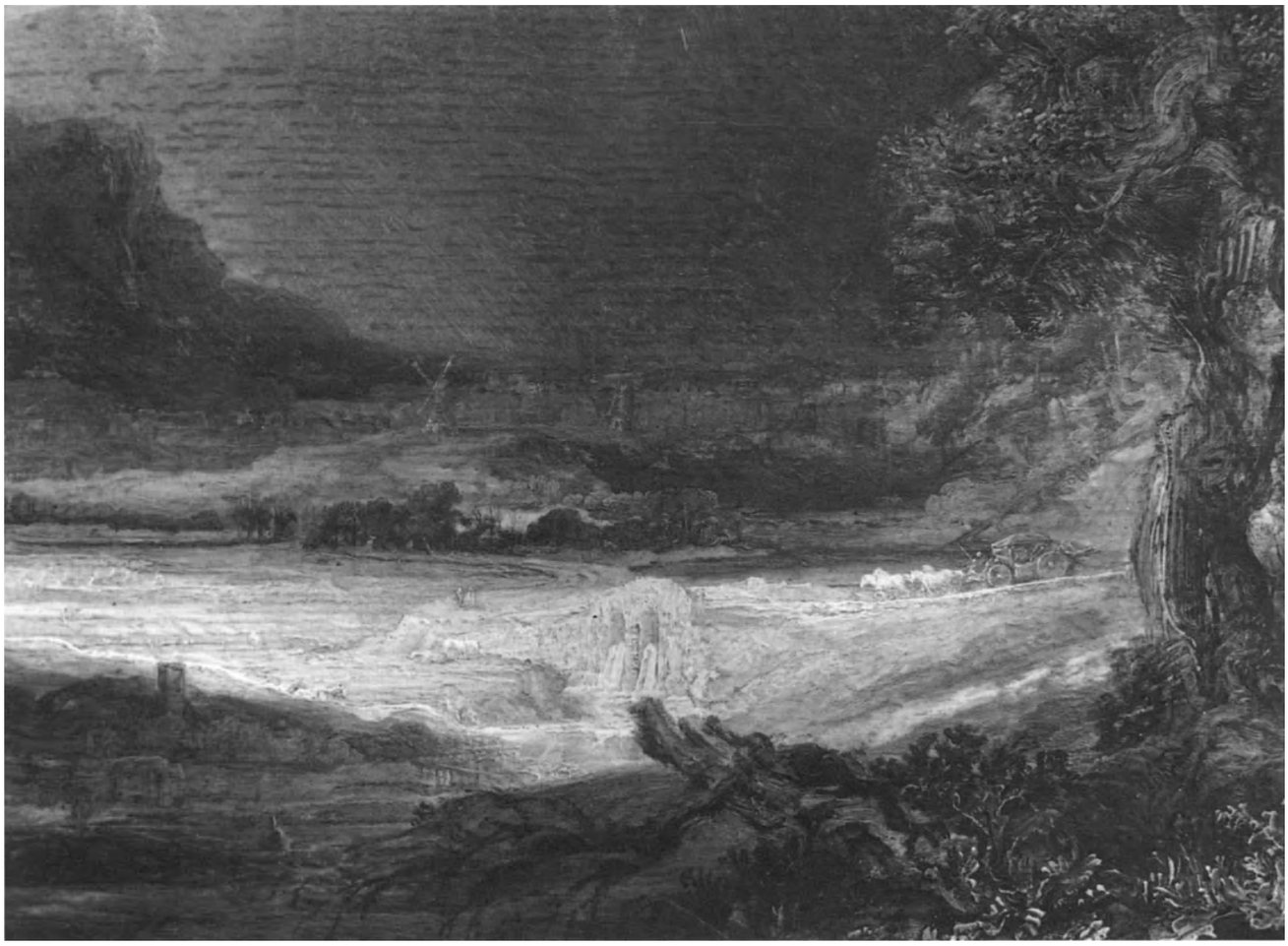
Fig. 2. X-Ray



(no. A 137)[1]. We believe that no appreciable number of years can separate these three paintings, but that most probably the Krakow work of 1638, which in its structure clearly stems from a 16th-century tradition, should be put before the others. The Braunschweig painting, where one sees a comparable wealth of detail in a composition organised with greater unity, would then have been done last of the three (around 1640?). It remains unclear, however, what significance should be attached to these landscapes among Rembrandt's other work from the late 1630s, to which they bear hardly any relation. Nor is it clear to what extent his landscapes of these years are related to comparable works by artists like Pieter de Molijn (cf. no. A 137), Adriaen and Isaack van Ostade (cf. B. Haak in: *Bulletin van het Rijksmuseum* 12, 1964, pp. 5–11). What is certain is that the Krakow landscape in particular had an influence on Rembrandt's pupils, especially Govaert Flinck (cf. no. C 117 and Introduction, Chapter II).

It is noteworthy how closely Rembrandt follows a 16th-century Flemish scheme in his landscape composition, with a higher part with trees on the right, and a valley on the left bounded in the distance by a town and mountains. This type occurs frequently from Pieter Bruegel onwards (cf. for instance, two etchings by Hieronymus Cock dated 1551, Hollst.IV, p.175, nos. 1 and 2, the latter after a drawing by Bruegel in Prague with the addition of biblical figures). In the 17th century this scheme was still being used by painters like Gillis van Coninxloo (1544–1607), Jacob van Geel (*c.* 1585–after 1638) and Alexander Keirincx (*c.* 1600–1652). The biblical episode is, as a subordinate though significant feature, also in line with this tradition, and in this context the parable of the Good Samaritan was a not uncommon motif. The dramatic lighting that Rembrandt applied to this compositional scheme seems to heighten the meaning that landscape must often have had, in the 16th and well into the 17th century, as an image of a sinful and dangerous world[3]. Thus, in Rembrandt the Good Samaritan — as an image of love for one's fellow man — is shown in an ominous world bustling with human activity various examples of which are recognizable as illustrations of man's sinfulness and vanity. The hunter firing his gun upwards (i.e. at a bird) represents the game of love (see E. de Jongh in: *Simiolus* 3, 1968–69, pp.22–74, esp. 35ff), and the

Fig. 3. Detail (1 : 1.5)



couple (the woman wearing a large cap like that often used with a Vanitas connotation, cf. nos. A 76 and A 85) seen here at the roadside but in, for example, the etching of *The three trees* (B.212) hidden in the undergrowth stand of course for the lust that results from idleness. The fisherman sitting to the left of centre, in the valley, likewise represents idleness (cf. the material compiled in the catalogue for the exhibition *Tot lering en vermaak*, Amsterdam 1976, pp.219–221); the motif occurs again, clearly with the same meaning, in the Berlin *Landscape with a seven-arched bridge* (no. C 118) and in a number of landscape etchings by Rembrandt. Battered trees in the foreground and the river with its waterfall signify the transience of life. The Samaritan must therefore be seen in this context as the Christian soul who has to traverse a world of sin and vanity in order to achieve ultimate salvation. The latter we recognize in the distant city, the 'future city' sought by man (cf. Hebrews 13: 14; this text is quoted, among many others, in connexion with the image of the pilgrimage of life in, for instance, a print of 1599 by Jacob Matham after Karel van Mander, Hollst. X, p.233 no. 344). This interpretation is supported by the windmills that form part of the city and which may be taken to signify the Christian's hope of salvation (cf. H.-J. Raupp in: *Jahrbuch der Staatlichen Kunstsammlungen in Baden-Wurttemberg* 17, 1980, pp. 85–110, esp. 89–90, 94–95, 97). The bridge one has to cross before reaching the city may be seen as in the words of Jan Luyken an 'overgang van dezer aarde,/Tot in het zalig Hemelrijk' (a crossing-over from this world to the blessed realm of heaven), and by the same metaphor, the coach approaching the bridge would, provided it be driven carefully, carry the soul to eternity (J. Luyken, *De Bykorf des Gemoeds*, Amsterdam 1711, pp. 10 and 82 respectively). Not only the compositional type but also the symbolism of Rembrandt's picture is closely linked with the landscape type practised in Flanders during the 16th century and by Flemish emigrants in Holland in the late 16th and early 17th centuries.

One notices that Rembrandt did not use the motif of the priest and Levite who 'passed by on the other

Fig. 4. Detail (1 : 1.5)



side' (Luke, 10: 31–32), which in the iconographic tradition often reinforces the narrative.

5. Documents and sources

None.

6. Graphic reproductions

None.

7. Copies

None.

8. Provenance

– Coll. M.D. van Eversdijck, sale The Hague 28 May 1766 (Lugt 1546), no. 81: 'Rembrant van Ryn. Een Landschap, en daar in de Barmhartige Samaritaan. P. Breet 2 V. 1 D. Hoog 1 V. 6 D. [= 47 × 65.4 cm] (gemeten naar Rhynlandsche voetmaat, binnen de Lysten)' (. . .A Landscape with the Good Samaritan . . . measured in Rhineland feet, inside the frame) (39 guilders to De Cros) (Terw. p.533 no. 75).
– Coll. de Vassal de St. Hubert, sale Paris 17–21 January 1774 (Lugt 2224), no. 22: 'Rembrandt Van Ryn. Un paysage orné de figures & d'animaux sur différens plans; ce tableau a l'empâtement & l'intelligence parfaite du clair obscure que l'on trouve toujours dans les véritables ouvrages sortis des mains de ce célèbre artiste; il est sur bois & porte 16 pouces 6 lignes de haut, sur 23 pouces 3 lignes de large [= 44.6 × 62.8 cm]. Il est daté de 1638, par conséquent Rembrandt avoit 32 ans' (851 livres to Norblin). Since Jean Pierre Norblin (1745–1830) entered the service of Prince Adam Czartoryski in 1772/74, it may be assumed that the painting was bought at this sale for the Czartoryski collection.
– Coll. Czartoryski, where it was first mentioned between about 1809 and 1828[2].

Fig. 5. Detail with signature (infrared photograph, 1 : 1.5)



9. Summary

The painting is wholly convincing as to its authenticity through features that can be regarded typical of Rembrandt — a sure and intense manner of painting that achieves great pictorial richness with relatively modest means, dramatic lighting that suggests great spaceousness. A highly individual use has been made of a compositional scheme of Flemish origin. A somewhat problematic inscription points to 1638 as the year of production, and the work may be looked on as one of the few firm points of departure in the series of landscapes painted by Rembrandt. The landscape, in which Christian love of one's fellow man is depicted in the form of a parable, may be read as an image of the road to salvation that passes through a sinful world.

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2 J. Białostocki and M. Walicki, *Europäische Malerei in Polnischen Sammlungen, 1300–1800*, Warsaw 1957, p. 527 no. 236–37. Cf. M. Rostworowski, *Rembrandta przypowieść o miłosiernym Samarytaninie*, Warsaw 1980.

3 J. Bruyn, 'Toward a scriptural reading of seventeenth-century Dutch landscape paintings', in: P.C. Sutton et al., cat. exhibn. *Masters of 17th-century Dutch landscape painting*, Amsterdam-Boston-Philadelphia 1987/88, pp. 84–103, esp. 96–97. Id., 'Op zoek naar een bijbelse interpretatie van zeventiende-eeuwse Nederlandse landschapsschilderijen', in: *Platenalbum. Onze meesters van het landschap*, Amsterdam-Zwolle 1987/88, pp. 28–64, esp. 52–54.

A 126 The Entombment

[c. 1635/1639]

MUNICH, BAYERISCHE STAATSGEMÄLDESAMMLUNGEN, ALTE PINAKOTHEK, INV. NO. 396

HDG 140; BR. 560; BAUCH 68; GERSON 87

1. Summarized opinion

A poorly preserved and substantially overpainted, authentic work that was begun before February 1636 and delivered in January 1639.

2. Description of subject

Because of the poor state of preservation many details of the picture, and indeed a whole group of persons by the entrance to the sepulchre, can now hardly be made out. There is however reason to suppose that originally the picture was more like a number of painted copies (some apparently from Rembrandt's circle) that largely agree and on which this description is partly based.

In a dark sepulchre the body of Christ is being laid in a tomb, surrounded by a group of ten persons. This scene is lit from the left by the light of two torches held by an old, white-bearded man who leans over the high headstone of the tomb and by an old woman seen contre-jour in front of the tomb. Christ's body is being supported under the armpits by a young man standing inside the tomb, whose hands are hidden inside the shroud while he takes the weight of the corpse on his upper leg. A man standing over the tomb, with his knees bent and leaning backwards to counteract the load, holds Christ's body hanging in the shroud. Close to the left of him a richly-clad man (perhaps Joseph of Arimathea) leans forward with a hand resting on the rocky wall.

At the foot of the tomb are five mourners — two men and, below them, three women. In *Copies* 1–4 one can also see, in the darkness above the men, a further huddled figure of a weeping woman. (The text of the Gospels mention a total of four women — Mary the mother of Jesus, Mary the mother of James, Mary Magdalene and Salome.) The lower of the two men (possibly Nicodemus) holds Christ's legs in the shroud. The woman in front of him tilts her head back, with the face turned to the left. Lost in grief, she stares ahead of her, as does Mary the mother of Jesus who is seen seated further forward and to the left, wrapped in a dark garment and with her hands folded; she is being addressed by a richly-clothed young woman (perhaps Mary Magdalene) who kneels to her right. A lantern hanging on a peg casts a weak light over the headdress, shoulder and gesturing hand of the lastnamed and on Mary's face, headdress and hands. In the painted copies already mentioned one also sees, in the bottom righthand corner, a metal jug and dish and a cloth; they do not, on the other hand, show the figures of two men looming out of the darkness above the lantern. To the left of Mary, against the tomb, there was according to a number of copies a windlass, lying on the lid of the tomb which rested on a ledge forming the base of the latter. Because of extensive paint loss this can no longer be seen.

Above the main group, to the right, there is a second group gathered at the entrance to the sepulchre. Above the two men shown standing over the tomb there are two figures, the one to the front a man with a dark beard who leans forward to catch a glimpse of what is happening. To the right of this figure can be seen the head of a man with a cap who looks towards the viewer, a detail that can still be clearly discerned. There are (now) three figures to his right, seen above an area of rock; behind them is the bent figure of a mourning woman wrapped in dark clothing, and speaking to her is a woman wearing a white neckcloth and tall headdress. The painted copies show further to the right and almost full-length the figure of an old man leaning on a stick, with standing next to him on the left a young man who faces him. In *Copy* 2 both of them are standing on a carved stone platform, while in all other cases this passage is illegible.

To the left above the tomb there are heavy curtains, with between them an ornament probably consisting of a cloth richly embroidered with gold thread, from which hang two tassels. The motif in the centre of this may be read as a pedestal with an arched opening in the centre, and on this a column(?) surrounded by a vertical ellipse and outside this two sets of six stars, and at the top a sun and a crescent moon. Further down, between the curtains, a stone object projects forward, with a vertical ridge running over it. The hill of Golgotha can be seen through the plant-edged entrance to the sepulchre. As in the biblical account, it is evening; a setting sun lights the hill, on which crosses, stakes and a wheel stand out against a clouded sky. Small human figures can be seen on the slope and among the crosses.

3. Observations and technical information

Working conditions

Examined in January 1969 (S.H.L., P.v.Th.), out of the frame. Seven X-ray films, together covering almost the whole of the picture, were available, and prints of these were received later. A restoration carried out in the early 1980s unfortunately could not be taken fully into account.

Support

DESCRIPTION: Canvas, lined, 92.6 × 68.9 cm, measured along the stretcher. At the sides and bottom the trimmed-off edges of the fairly coarse original canvas reach to the edges of the stretcher; it is cut to a semicircle at the top, and the top of the curve is wrapped over the edge of the stretcher to a width of about 1 cm. Clear cusping along the top runs mainly horizontal, indicating that the original canvas was rectangular.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: Cusping along the top edge varies in pitch from 8.5 to 13 cm, extending 10–12 cm into the surface. There is no cusping on the right, and the bottom edge has vague undulations extending some 8 cm into the canvas. The left has very marked cusping, varying in pitch from 10 to 13.5 cm and with a depth of *c.* 15 cm. Threadcount: 8.5 horizontal threads/cm (8–9), 8.7 vertical threads cm (8–10). From the numerous short thicknesses in the vertical threads it may be assumed that the warp runs horizontally. The nature and pitch of the cusping along the top and bottom edges and the absence of any along one of the vertical sides might mean that the canvas was an end-piece from a longer strip of prepared canvas with the most common width of 1½ ells (*c.* 107 cm) from which — on the evidence of the vague cusping along the bottom as well — about 10 cm have been trimmed.

Ground

DESCRIPTION: Not observed.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: Kühn[1] found a grey-brown ground layer containing white lead and ochre in an oil- (or resin-)like medium. On the possibility that his investigation ignored the presence of a double layer of ground and analysed two layers together, see Vol. I, pp. 17–18 and Vol. II, pp. 42–43.

Paint layer

CONDITION: The painting has suffered badly. The paint has been severely flattened, worn and damaged over the whole surface; at the bottom especially there has been substantial paint loss, clearly apparent in the X-rays. Extensive overpaintings, some of which have been removed in the meantime, are often so enmeshed with the original painting that it is hard to make out where one ends and the other begins. Craquelure: where it has not been painted-in, there is an irregular craquelure that can be regarded as normal for a 17th-century painting on canvas.

DESCRIPTION: Despite the damage that has been described, enough still remains of the group comprising the figure of Christ and the figures gathered round the tomb to show that they were worked-up in great detail, often using thick paint and a varied palette. Warm tints predominate in the figure on the far left of the old man holding a torch and wrapped in a pinkish grey garment; the shadow on the accurately-modelled hands is

Fig. 1. Canvas 92.6 × 68.9 cm



Fig. 2. X-Ray



Fig. 3. Detail (1 : 1.5)



reddish in tone, and the thickly-painted edges of light along the fingers are pinkish yellow and pink. Thick yellow catchlights have been placed on the candlestick, and a soft yellow is used for the vertical edge of the tomb over which he is leaning. The shirt of the young man holding the body of Christ under the armpits is a light blue; in his head, where the paint relief has been flattened, the modelling is accentuated with dabs of light paint; his headgear has a greyish tint, worked up with spots of yellow. The paint in the figure of Christ and in the shroud has been badly flattened; the shroud is painted thickest on either side of Christ's dangling arm. In the part held by the man standing over the tomb, the shadowed folds have been overpainted in grey. This man wears grey-green trousers, and his tunic shows lit folds done with strokes of green. The presumed Joseph of Arimathea standing to the left of him, and the two men shown on the right at the foot of the tomb, now offer no more than traces of the delicate treatment these figures must once have shown. The same is true of the three women seen lower down; in the face and hands of Mary the paint has disintegrated. The clothing of the two other women forms, in its colour, a counterbalance to that of the figures at the head end of the tomb — light greens and an ochre colour dominate in the cloak and headdress of the woman above Mary, while greens and white have been used in the clothing of the woman at the bottom right, and red and ochre colour in her turban. The light in the (poorly preserved) lantern is indicated with a fairly thick ochre colour and white.

Among the dark areas surrounding the lit main group, the foreground shows, as we have already mentioned, extensive paint loss and overpaintings. The silhouette of the old woman standing on the left is a solid black; her face has been entirely lost, as have the hands. The appearance of the passage to the left above the tomb is murky; the ornament stands out, painted thinly with the edgings of light rather thicker in ochre colour and the catchlights in yellow. The curtain closing off the picture to the left is rendered with relatively thick grey paint the relief of which in the edgings of light has been flattened.

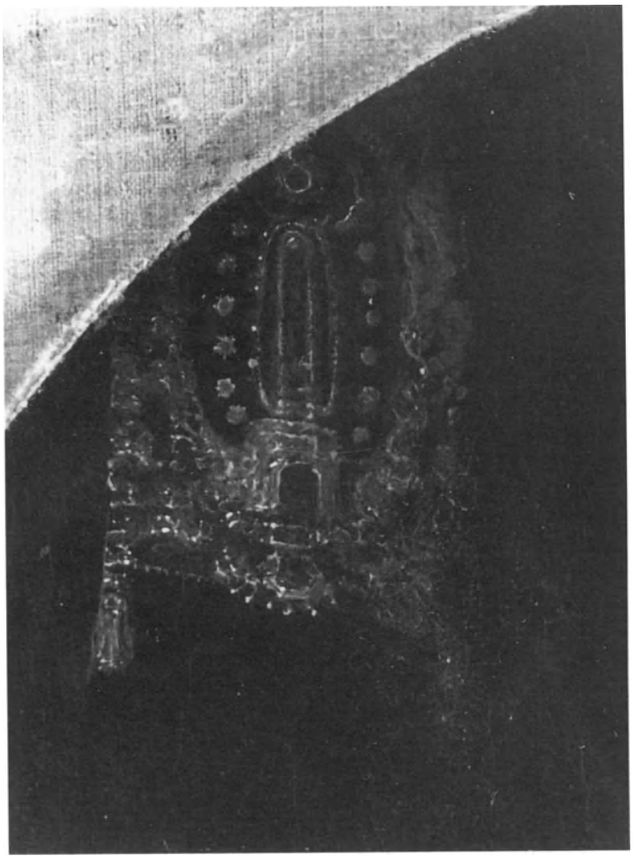
In the landscape seen through the entrance to the sepulchre the sky shows a progression of colours from dark greys at the top to a light area at the lower left in which white has been used. Masses of cloud rimmed with light grey are pierced at the right by a patch of blue sky. The edgings of light on the crosses and stakes have been drawn in an ochre colour, and those on the fluently painted vegetation by the entrance in a mixture of ochre colour and grey.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

X-Rays

The radiograph is difficult to read because of the very light image of the stretcher and of the difference in tone between the available prints. A very apparent feature is the extensive paint loss that has occurred in the lower part, starting at the level of the man holding Christ's legs, where a sizeable gap in the paint layer can be seen to the left of the head. The part of the scene at the head of the tomb appears most distinctly, in particular the radioabsorbent pigment in the shroud to each side of Christ's dangling arm and the dark reserves left for his hair and in the silhouette of the woman standing in front of the tomb on the left, for whose headdress a more regular oval reserve appears to have been left. It is striking that the vertical wall of the tomb shows a light patch of considerable size, even lighter than the lit

Fig. 4. Detail (1 : 1.5)



edge of the tomb. Paint loss in this passage must have led to overpainting using paint in a warm brown tint that hides the vestiges of the original paint layer from sight. This light patch shows no shape or structure; to the left, its border is formed by the contour of the woman standing before the tomb, and to the right by a vague straight line running roughly parallel to the lefthand outline of Mary's clothing. This line should perhaps be seen as evidence of the presence here of the tomb lid and windlass that appear in the painted copies at this point; in fact, however, this linear transition from light to dark does not coincide with the light righthand edge of the tomb lid.

Signature

Vosmaer[2] and Bode[3] report the presence of a signature, described by the latter as 'Rembrandt f'; since then no signature has been mentioned in the Rembrandt literature. None was seen by us.

Varnish

No special remarks.

4. Comments

Among the works that together make up the Munich Passion series (see also nos. A 65, A 69, A 118 and A 127), this painting is one of the most directly appealing, and at the same time one of the most badly damaged. Affected by paint loss, wearing and flattening of the relief of the paint surface and obscured by overpainting, the rendering of modelling in the heads and hands and of texture in the materials has lost a great deal of the subtle quality that can still be seen at some places. This can be most clearly read in the main group on the left; the impenetrable areas around this, where on the right a second group of figures is now hardly visible if at all, must originally have shown a differentiation that has since disappeared. As has already been commented (see *2. Description of subject*) it is very likely that a number of copies give a truer picture of the original appearance of the composition than the original painting does in its present state. It is especially in these areas around the main group that the picture has more detail in the copies — in front of the tomb its lid is shown with a windlass lying on it, and there are metal vessels in the righthand corner; above the group at the foot of the tomb there is a further female figure, providing an effective link to the group in the middle ground. The latter group, finally, attracts more attention through an old man seen full-length on the right, supported by a younger man. One result of this more even distribution of accents is that the main group is less isolated within the composition as a whole. Possibly one of these copies, or another that is no longer known, was the model for the other after the original had been delivered to The Hague in 1639.

For all this, the attribution of the Munich Passion painting to Rembrandt is not in doubt. The work is, not only in terms of the pictorial quality still evident in it but also in terms of approach and type of composition, in harmony with the other works in the Munich Passion series, which are among the best-documented works in the Rembrandt oeuvre. So far as can be gathered from Rembrandt's letters to Constantijn Huygens[4], it was produced side-by-side with the *Resurrection* (no. A 127). According to the first letter dated in February 1636, these paintings — described as being 'more than half done' — must have been begun well before that date; the third letter dated 12 January 1639 says that both works are ready to be delivered. In the case of the *Resurrection* one can, on the grounds of an early copy ascribed to Ferdinand Bol, hazard a guess as to the changes that were made to the composition of that work, roughly between 1636 and 1639. In the case of the *Entombment* there is in fact a similar comparative work in the Glasgow oil-sketch (no. A 105) from Rembrandt's own hand, but it is questionable whether comparison with this can yield any insight into what changes may have been made to the *Entombment*. The two works show great similarity in a number of figures in the main group, such as those of Christ, the two men standing above the tomb and the man holding Christ's legs. In the Munich work the upper part of Christ's body is supported by a young man in a somewhat different pose from the old man in the

Fig. 5. Rembrandt, *Sketches of a Mater dolorosa and other figures*, pen and red chalk, 20 × 14 cm. (Ben. 152). Amsterdam, Rijksprentenkabinet



oil sketch. Differences in the composition and disposition of the group of figures gathered around the tomb can be seen as an outcome of the difference in format between the two works, and of the more ambitious scheme of the Munich Passion painting where, for instance, there is in the figures of Mary and the woman in colourful dress speaking to her a secondary action. The fact that in the oil sketch an old man in a wide tabard dominates the group in the background is perhaps further evidence that the painted copies of the *Entombment* may provide a more faithful picture of this passage than the restored original does. Nonetheless the difference in format — horizontal in the oil-sketch and vertical in the Munich painting — forms an obstacle to confidently accepting the former as a preliminary study. Moreover, the X-ray image of the Passion painting offers no further indication that the composition of the work was in the first instance any closer to that of the oil sketch.

If one accepts nevertheless that the Glasgow sketch is connected with the genesis of the Munich *Entombment*, then it is perhaps no coincidence that the only other document that bears a definite similarity to the composition of the latter relates to motifs that do not occur in the sketch; this is a page of sketches in Amsterdam (fig. 5; Ben. 152), which has two pen-and-ink sketches of a weeping Mary and some scribbles in red chalk of a huddled and seated figure. The first, a heavily draped figure with the arms crossed across the chest which as Colin Campbell remarked[5] was borrowed by Rembrandt from a woodcut of the *Lamentation* from a Passion series by Lucas Cranach the Elder (F.W.H. Hollstein, *German engravings* . . . VI, no. 21) was first connected by Frerichs[6] with the uppermost of the three Marys in the painting, who close to Christ's feet tilts her head back in a somewhat similar fashion (though she has her hands clasped in her lap). It is hard to tell whether, as Schatborn[5] thought possible, the small figures sketched cursorily in red chalk also relate to Mary the mother of Jesus, who sits in the foreground to the right of centre.

The care that was devoted to the painting is plain to see in the use of a great range of types, clothing, actions and lighting, carefully weighed against keeping unity in the picture, where the fall of light is utilized as the major linking factor. The reasonably well preserved head of the man with a cap in the group in the background has prompted associations with self-portraits of Rembrandt[7]; his gaze spans the depth of the picture and makes contact with the viewer. It is further noteworthy that Rembrandt has given Golgotha the appearance of a place of execution with stakes and a wheel. He did so earlier — a drawing of *Calvary* in Berlin (Ben. 108) has, immediately behind the cross on which Christ is hanging, a wheel with a skull and behind this another with a corpse.

One detail that has so far attracted scant attention in discussions of the work is the ornament hanging above the tomb which, together with the curtains to either side of it, gives the appearance of a stately canopy. The ornament, sometimes described as a shield[8], is presumably a cloth embroidered with gold thread, the motif of which is too unusual for it not to have a specific meaning (see *2. Description of subject*); we have however, been unable to discover this.

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 Düsseldorf* . . ., Basle 1778. At the centre bottom there is a recumbent lion with a wreathed shield bearing the *CT* monogram of the Elector Carl Theodor (d. 1799). The picture very largely matches that of the (restored) painting, and makes a number of details of this more distinct; features that differ include the figure of the white-bearded man at the upper left (who in the painting is a woman with a white neckcloth) and, to some extent, the head of the old woman at the lower right, shown with hair hanging loose and apparently understood as an old man. There is also a greater number of crosses on Golgotha. A drawing made by Hess in preparation for the etching is in the Louvre (F. Lugt, *École hollandaise* III, Paris 1933, Musée du Louvre, Inventaire général des dessins des écoles du nord, no. 1278).

Fig. 6 Copy 2. Rembrandt School, canvas 144 × 128 cm. Rotterdam, Museum Boymans-van Beuningen



7. Copies

A copy on canvas, 89.1 × 92.9 cm (identical with no. 1 below?) was described in the J.B. Horion sale, Brussels 1ff September 1788 (Lugt 4346), no. 89: 'Rembrant, Un Tableau représentant le Seigneur, qu'on met au Sépulchre, sur T. H. 33 pouc. L. 27 pouc.' (185 guilders to Van der Pot), and in the coll. Gerrit van der Pot van Groeneveld in Rotterdam, who sold the painting to the dealer Bryan in 1800 for 500 guilders (E. Wiersum in: *O.H.* 48, 1931, p.211).

1. Coll. E. Brandt, Wiesbaden (photo R.K.D. no. L54011). Almost entirely matches copies 2 and 3.

2. Canvas, lined, 144 × 128 cm (fig. 6); the original canvas is trimmed off on all four sides, and a fair amount of the picture has been lost as a result, especially at the top. Rotterdam, Museum Boymans-van Beuningen, cat. no. 2513 (as: 'School of Rembrandt'). Almost wholly matches copies 1 and 3, though there are few differences — the metal vessels in the right foreground are placed on a ledge instead of on the ground and a cloth is not in front of them but more to the centre.

3. Canvas 105 × 73 cm, semicircle at the top, Braunschweig, Herzog Anton-Ulrich Museum, cat. 1897 no. 240. The front face of the windlass has a signature (Rembrandt) (facsimile in: H. Riegel, *Beiträge zur niederländischen Kunstgeschichte* II, Berlin 1883, p.238). Almost wholly matches copies 1 and 2. First mentioned in the inventory compiled in 1710 by T. Querfurt, court painter and curator of the picture gallery at Salzdahlem. The work probably, together with a copy after Rembrandt's *Circumcision* mentioned in the same inventory, came from the coll. Isaac van der Blooken, sale Amsterdam 11 May 1707 (Lugt 205), nos. 1 and 2 — the latter described as: 'De Graflegging van dezelfde [Rembrandt], ongemeen fraei' (The Entombment by the same, uncommonly fine) (290 guilders).

4. Canvas 97.5 × 68.5 cm, semicircular at the top (figs. 7 and 8); Dresden, Gemäldegalerie cat. 1908 no. 1566. HdG 138, Bauch A 11 (as: 'Bol (?) and Rembrandt'). At the front centre of the tomb, just below the lit edge, there is a signature *Rembrandt f. 1653*; in view of the slack shaping of the letters unauthentic, and according to Bauch 'nachgezogen'. Identical with 'Rembrand van Ryn. De Graftlegging Christi, vol Figuuren. D. Breet 2 V. 2½ D. Hoog 3 V. 1 D. [= 96.8 × 65.4 cm]' (2300 guilders to Voet), coll. Willem Lormier, sale The Hague 4ff July 1763 (Lugt 1307), no. 219.

Fig. 7. Copy 4. Rembrandt workshop, 1653, canvas 97.5 × 68.5 cm. Dresden, Staatliche Kunstsammlungen Dresden, Gemäldegalerie Alte Meister



Acquired at this sale for Augustus III of Saxony by the legation counsellor Von Kauderbach (Jules Hübner, *Catalogue de la Galerie Royale de Dresde*, Dresden [1856], no. 1155). The origin from the coll. Isaac van der Blooken sale in Amsterdam in 1707 mentioned by Hofstede de Groot (HdG 138) presumably relates to copy 3 above. This copy comes closest to the original in size. It differs from it, and from copies 1–3 above, in not having the ornament at the upper left, the profiles at the top end of the tomb and the hand holding the torch of the woman standing on the left in front of the tomb. The foreground in front of the tomb contains neither the basket and spade now seen in the original at that point, nor the tomb lid with the windlass as in copies 1–3. This has attracted the most attention of all the copies because, starting with Bode, it was assumed that Rembrandt himself overpainted the figures of Christ and Mary and the shroud (W. Bode, 'Zur Rembrandt-Literatur', in: *Zeitschr. f. b. K.* 5, 1870, pp.240–248, esp. 240–241). It must be said that the firm, sure manner of painting in these passages is quite different from the treatment typical of the painting as a whole, which though accurate to a certain extent is nowhere inspired. As Bode too had already remarked (W. Bode, 'Ein Einblick in Rembrandts Schüler-Atelier', in: *Jb. d. Pr. Kunsts.* 2, 1881, pp.191–192) the

Fig. 8. Copy 4, detail (1 : 2.5)



passages concerned seem, in their manner of painting, to resemble Rembrandt's way of working in the mid-1650s; the date 1653, though hardly convincing in its shaping, may therefore indicate the year when the copy was executed, probably in the workshop.

5. Canvas 101 × 73 cm, semicircular at the top, Dresden Gemäldegalerie cat. 1908, no. 1572, inv. of 1722–'28 no. A 1145 (as original).

8. Provenance

See no. A 65.

9. Summary

The painting is in poor condition and extensively restored, and copies probably give a better impression of the original picture than the painting does in its present state. The attribution to Rembrandt is based on the pictorial quality of the passages that have survived best, and on the fact that the work has, on the grounds of its execution and pedigree, to be reckoned to belong to the Munich Passion series, the attribution of which is, thanks to documentary evidence, virtually certain. From letters written by Rembrandt to Constantijn Huygens it is known that the painting was begun before February 1636, and was delivered to Prince Frederik Hendrik in January 1639.

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3 W. Bode, *Studien zur Geschichte der holländischen Malerei*, Braunschweig 1883, p.572, no. 108.
4 H. Gerson, *Seven letters by Rembrandt*, The Hague 1961, pp.18–23 and pp.34–40; Strauss *Doc.*, 1636/1, 1639/2.
5 P. Schatborn, *Tekeningen van/Drawings by Rembrandt, zijn onbekende leerlingen en navolgers/his anonymous pupils and followers*, The Hague 1985 (Catalogus van de Nederlandse tekeningen in het Rijksprentenkabinet, Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam IV), no.7.
6 I.Q. van Regteren Altena and L.C.J. Frerichs, *Selected drawings from the Printroom*, Amsterdam 1965, p.44.
7 G. Lengl, 'Beiträge zu den Bildern Rembrandts in der Alten Pinakothek in München', *Das Münster* 20 (1967), pp.52–58, esp. 53.
8 W. Weisbach, *Rembrandt*, Berlin/Leipzig 1926, p.137.

A 127 The Resurrection

[*c.* 1635/1639]

MUNICH, BAYERISCHE STAATSGEMÄLDESAMMLUNGEN, ALTE PINAKOTHEK, INV. NO. 397

HDG 141; BR. 561; BAUCH 67; GERSON 88

Fig. 1. Canvas 91.9 × 67 cm



Fig. 2. X-Ray



1. Summarized opinion

A poorly preserved, authentic work that was begun before February 1636 and delivered in January 1639.

2. Description of subject

A tomb is seen on the right in the dark space of the sepulchre. An angel in a flowing white robe, with wings outspread, is lifting a wide stone slab from the tomb. The radiance surrounding him is the sole source of illumination; it has lightning-like excrescences edged with sparks. Towards the right the light falls onto the rising figure of Christ, wrapped in a white shroud, onto the wall behind him and onto grey clouds that fill the space between the stone lid and the upper edge of the tomb.

On the left is a group of guards, shrinking away in consternation, at the top of a flight of steps that leads downwards alongside the tomb to the right. The soldier at the top, in helmet and cuirass, raises in defence a shield on which is embossed a crescent moon with a human profile; his sword is slipping out of its scabbard. To the left of him is a figure seen from behind, a guard armed with a dagger, and on the right another with a spear. Further to the front, on the left, a guard with an ornate helmet leans forward; in front of him another guard is still fast asleep, his head and arms resting on the rail of the steps. One guard tumbles head-over-heels from the stone lid of the tomb, with over his lower arm a banner striped with green and yellow. Another, his head covered with a grey-green turban, lies on the steps. In front of the latter a soldier clad in red, with hands outstretched, stumbles downwards, dropping his sword in his flight. In the right foreground there are two women (Mary Magdalene and the other Mary, according to Matthew 28:1); the one to the rear, clad in a loose grey garment and a black cloak, raises her clasped hands, while the other, with her face seen in lost profile and clothed in a red garment, drops the ointment jar that identifies her as Mary Magdalene.

A dark curtain hangs on the right, with the end covering the tomb. Behind this there is vague indication of clouds.

3. Observations and technical information

Working conditions

Examined in January 1969 (P.v.Th., S.H.L.), out of the frame. Seven X-ray films, together covering the whole of the painting, were available, and prints of these were received later.

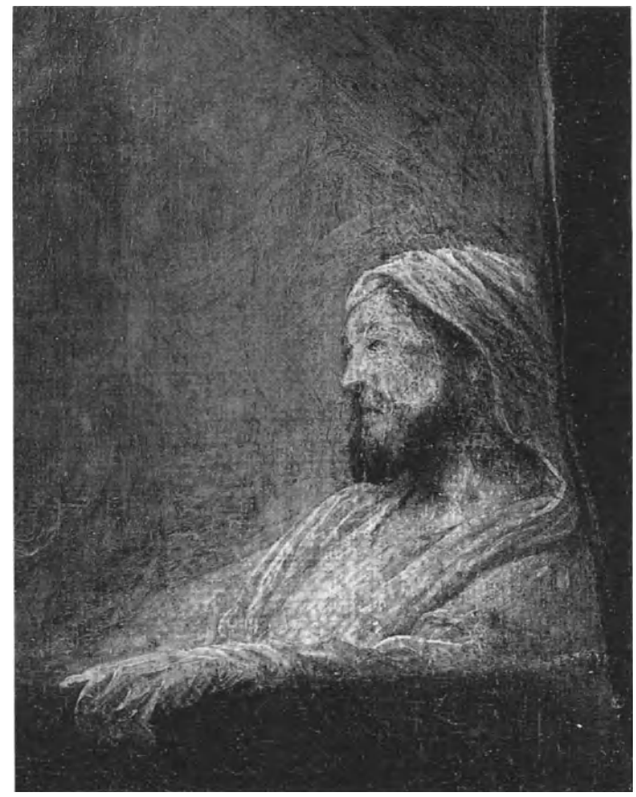
Support

DESCRIPTION: Canvas, lined, 91.9 × 67 cm, trimmed to a semicircle at the top and stuck to an oak panel measuring 93.7 × 68.9 cm. Over the full width of the back of the panel there is an inscription in black paint, reading *Rimbrand Creavit me / P.H. Brinckmann* (PHB in monogram) *resuscitavit Te / 1755*; as appears from a comment in a letter written by Brinckmann, the painting was stuck on panel at that time (see *5. Documents and sources*). At the top left there is a red wax seal with an unrecognizable effigy.
SCIENTIFIC DATA: Cusping along the top varies in pitch from 6.8 to 9.5 cm and extends some 9 cm into the canvas; along the bottom there is a slight undulation reaching about 5 cm into the surface. No cusping to right or left. Threadcount: 12.8 horizontal threads/cm (12.5–13), 12.4 vertical threads/cm (11.5–13.5). Given the greater range in the vertical threadcount, these might be identified as the weft threads, meaning that the warp runs horizontally. The nature and pitch of the cusping along the top and bottom, and the absence of any to right and left, could indicate that the canvas was cut from a prepared strip with the most common width of 1½ ells (*c.* 107 cm).

Ground

DESCRIPTION: None seen.

Fig. 3. Detail (1 : 1)



SCIENTIFIC DATA: Kühn[1] found a bright red ground layer containing white lead and ochre in an oil-(resin-)like medium. For a discussion of the possibility that the existence of a double-layered ground was neglected during his investigation, and that the components of two layers were analysed together, see Vol. I, pp. 17–18 and Vol. II, pp. 42–43.

Paint layer

CONDITION: The painting has suffered badly. The dark areas have been gone over and inpainted virtually everywhere. In thickly-painted, lit passages the paint has sometimes survived reasonably well but is severely flattened. It may be seen from the X-ray that paint loss has occurred at numerous places, especially in the lower half of the painting and there mainly at the centre and along the edges. The wall of the tomb shows wearing and has been entirely gone over with paint in a chocolate-brown tint; stoppings and overpaintings have made the foreground a confused, incomprehensible whole, the original and more detailed treatment of which is hard to guess at. Very little of the craquelure on the original paint layer can be made out, because of the numerous overpaintings which show rather coarse cracking; yet in some parts one can still see a fine and irregular craquelure that may be regarded as normal. Many of these overpaintings, and certainly the flattening of the relief of the original paint layer, must date from the restoration recorded on the back of the panel, carried out in the mid-18th century by Philipp Hieronymus Brinckmann (1709–1761), court painter to the Elector Palatine and 'Oberaufseher' of the picture gallery at Mannheim, where Rembrandt's Passion series then was.
DESCRIPTION: The angel is executed mainly in whites and greys, with the head in flesh tints and the hair in brown; dangling cords from a belt done in blue-green and ochre colour can be made out below the wide sleeve on the left. The fuzzy appearance of the face seems partly due to wearing; the paint of the impasto

Fig. 4. Detail (1 : 1.5)



white garment has been flattened. The wings, in shades of grey, have been worked over here and there, and the hands are damaged. A thickly-applied white has also been used for the aura of light around the angel, mixed towards the outer edges with yellow and then with grey that forms the transition to the thin dark grey of the background. The sparks are depicted with thick dots of white (which appears yellow because of the varnish). Around the angel's head there are still the traces of a lively pattern of radial strokes. Eight or nine centimetres above the angel's head a dark shape can be seen inside a lighter radiance.

The edges of the stone slab the angel is lifting from the tomb have been refreshed with dark paint. The fall of light on the wall behind the figure of Christ is painted quite thickly; the brushstrokes partly follow the outline of the figure. The shroud, in a dingy white, shows a pattern of flattened, free brushstrokes. The paint image offers no confirmation of the theory, discussed below, that the figure of Christ was added by a later hand. The same may be said of the curtain done in grey-black, with edges of light in grey, that closes off the picture on the right. The slack depiction of form prompts the thought of a later addition; this is however not very likely in view of the fact that the craquelure pattern in this area shows no interruption from that of the contiguous background to the left.

The group of guards, where paint loss has been more severe than elsewhere, is furthermore worn, damaged and worked over in the faces and hands and in dark passages. Yet it is still possible to tell, in this part of the painting, that it was executed with great care; the best preserved parts are marked by a refined treatment. They include the soldier standing at the top with raised shield, with highlights in white, yellow and ochre colour. Elsewhere in this group, too, it is mainly the items of armour and weapons, invariably done with meticulous catchlights, that most clearly reveal the original quality of treatment. The banner too, must have been executed carefully with a fine brush.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

X-Rays

The radiographic image of the painting, like the paint surface, is dominated by the figure of the angel and the light radiating around him. This area shows up more or less uniformly light, interrupted by the darker shapes of the wings, in their present position and form. In the angel's robe one can see lively brushwork that has to some extent disappeared at the paint surface, presumably in part due to the flattening of the relief. The group of guards shows a fairly broad treatment, corresponding to an underlying layer of paint from an early stage. Rather shapeless radioabsorbent areas occur on either side of the upper hand of the man toppling from the stone slab, directly to the left of him at the position of the tunic of the topmost guard, and slightly lower down to the left against the edge of the picture. As Brochhagen[2] has already reported, the X-ray confirms the existence of a number of pentimenti (which may be seen as autograph) that Kauffmann earlier noted from the paint surface — the man falling from the lid of the tomb originally wore a sword of which only the hilt finally remains, and the lid extended further to the right and downwards in an earlier phase.

The figure of Christ yields an even and only moderately light radiographic image; one might see in this confirmation of the theory, discussed below, that this figure was not originally present, and thus had no reserve left for it in its darker surroundings, and no light underpainting.

Signature

Low down, and left of centre <*Rembr.*[.]*t 163*[.]>. What survives makes a reliable impression.

Varnish

A slightly yellowed layer of varnish.

4. Comments

Like the other works on canvas in the Passion series (nos. A 69, A 118 and A 126), the painting discussed here is in a poor state of preservation. There is nonetheless sufficient guarantee of autograph execution in the delicate and effective treatment seen in the passages (like the figure of the topmost soldier on the left) that have survived best. The reliable-seeming remains of the signature, too, support the traditional view that this is a painting by Rembrandt. Undoubtedly, and quite rightly, the image presented by the Passion series as a whole plays some part in an assessment of the individual works in this series. The homogeneous nature of the whole, both in its concept in the general sense and in what remains of the original treatment, partially compensates for the fact that case-by-case the homogeneity of appearance has been marred by damages and by restorations the extent of which cannot be clearly gauged. The link between the works thus established via the appearance of the series is further confirmed by documentary evidence, both contemporaneous in the form of Rembrandt's letters to Constantijn Huygens[3], and subsequent in the common pedigree of the paintings.

The *Resurrection* is mentioned in Rembrandt's first letter of February 1636[3] in which the work is described, like the *Entombment*, as being 'more than half done', and both works are said to be executed so as to fit in with the *Descent from the Cross* (no. A 65) and *Raising of the Cross* (no. A 69) delivered some years earlier. This is something that may also be seen from the paintings themselves — in the Passion-series works delivered in 1636 and 1639 Rembrandt has, for the sake of uniformity, kept to a way of working he developed in the early 1630s, with the result that they stand stylistically somewhat apart from works produced in the same period. The question of why the series should have taken until 1639 to be completed with the *Resurrection* and *Entombment* has been addressed a number of times in the Rembrandt literature. It can be said with certainty that in the *Resurrection* there are no more than minor alterations to be detected — the overpainting of part of the sword of the man falling from the lid of the tomb, and the reduction in the size of the lid. There are also in the X-ray within the group of guards a few light patches that cannot be related to the picture as it exists today; their unarticulated form suggests however that at most they may have to do with a sketchy lay-in.

For some time other works have been mentioned in attempts to reconstruct the history of the painting's production. The discussion was started by Van Puyvelde[4], who drew attention to a drawing signed by Lambert Doomer, at Windsor Castle (fig. 6; see also *7. Copies*, 2). This is evidently derived from Rembrandt's composition but shows, as one of the discrepancies, fewer figures and, strikingly, no figure of Christ. Working from the fact that Doomer 'could scarcely have entered Rembrandt's studio before 1640 so that it is almost certain that he could only have seen the picture in its finished state', Van Puyvelde assumed (though with some hesitation) that the points on which the scene in Rembrandt's painting differs from that in Doomer's drawing must be seen as the work of P.H. Brinckmann, who restored the painting in the mid-1700s (see *5. Documents and sources*). To this drawing Sumowski[5] added a painting then in Augsburg (fig. 5; see *7. Copies*, 2) that shows remarkable resemblances to the drawing; here again, the figure of Christ is missing. Like Sumowski, Bauch[6] based himself initially on Van Puyvelde's reasoning, adding that Rembrandt would then have been keeping strictly to the text of Matthew 28: 1–5, which mentions only the angel rolling the stone back from the door of the sepulchre. This depiction of the event, highly unusual in the visual arts, is also represented in a number of paintings by Benjamin Gerritsz. Cuyp mentioned by Bauch; Cuyp's work frequently shows Rembrandt's influence even though he cannot be regarded as belonging to the Rembrandt school in the strict sense.

A warning against the possibility of the figure of Christ in the Passion painting having been added only in the 18th century was voiced by Brochhagen[2]. He was basing himself on historical sources — the letter by Brinckmann mentioned earlier (see *5. Documents and sources*) which speaks of the restoration of the Passion series but says nothing about additions, and an inventory compiled in 1719 (i.e. before the restoration) of paintings in the gallery at Düsseldorf (see *5. Documents and sources*) in which the number of figures staffing the *Resurrection* is put at thirteen, which would coincide with the present situation. Finally, Brochhagen pointed out that Rembrandt's picture was described, at the time of delivery, with the words 'daer Chrisstus van den doode opstaet dat met grooten verschrickinge des wachters' (where Christ rises from the dead to the great consternation of the guards)[3]. According to this author it may be assumed that the figure of Christ was added only at a later stage by Rembrandt himself; the reduction in the size of the stone slab (a change that can be verified in the painting) would then have been done to make more room for the figure of Christ. The drawing, and the painting matching it would record an earlier version of Rembrandt's composition. Bauch[7] adopted Brochhagen's view, and postulated that under outside pressure — possibly from Prince Frederik Hendrik, who was commissioning the work, or from his secretary Constantijn Huygens — Rembrandt ended

Fig. 5. Copy 2. Ascr. to F. Bol, canvas 80 × 68 cm. Munich, Bayerische Staatsgemäldesammlungen



Fig. 6. L. Doomer after Copy 2, pen and wash 46.3 × 32.5 cm. Windsor Castle, Royal Library



up by providing a more orthodox rendering of the subject by incorporating the figure of Christ in the scene.

Since then fresh light has been shed on the relationship between the two works that reproduce a presumed earlier state of Rembrandt's *Resurrection*. When the painted copy was cleaned, a signature *F. bol f.* came to light. If one accepts this as an authentic signature, then this would in view of the mediocre quality of execution be an early work, which might have been done in the years 1636/37. This fresh evidence enhances the value of the painting as documentary evidence for the genesis of Rembrandt's painting and diminishes that of Doomer's drawing. It can now with rather more confidence be assumed, as Schulz[8] has done, that the specific similarities in the composition of the two works indicate that the drawing was done after the painting ascribed to Bol. This interpretation also ties in better with the general belief that Doomer came to work in Rembrandt's studio — if at all — only in the early 1640s (i.e. later than Van Puyvelde assumed), by which time the painting had already been in The Hague for several years. Schulz dates the drawing only in the 1670s or 1680s, and points out that in 1677 there was a 'Verrijsenis van Rembrant' (Resurrection by Rembrant), which he identifies with Bol's work, in the possession of Doomer's wife Metje Harmens (Th. Wortel in: *O.H.* 46, 1929, p. 175). The fact that the inventory distinguishes between works by Rembrandt himself and those by followers, and that the work in question was put in the former category, would however seem to argue against this identification — unless the Rembrandt signature that until recently covered over the present Bol signature had by then already been added.

If the work ascribed to Bol is compared to Rembrandt's *Resurrection* one finds that, apart from the presence of the figure of Christ, the scene in the former work offers a whole range of differences some of which have already been mentioned by several of the authors quoted above. In Bol's painting the tip of the banner reaches further to the left, over the lower body of the topmost guard, and the right hand of the guard falling from the tomb-lid is hidden by the banner. The turbanned guard falling on the steps is missing, as are the steps themselves. Connected with the latter is the fact that no more than the uppermost part of the balustrade is shown, looking more like a low fence; the appearance of this object in Rembrandt's painting suggests that it may originally have had the same form. A final difference is in the headdress of the guard running away down the steps — a helmet, and not a plumed cap as in the Rembrandt. So it is not just the presence of Christ (though that is the most conspicuous element) that makes the difference between the two pictures, but a relatively large

Fig. 7. P. Lastman, The Resurrection, 1610, panel 81 × 58.5 cm. Formerly on loan to the Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam



number of points of discrepancy most of which relate to parts of the Rembrandt painting that are among the better preserved areas and that cause little doubt as to authenticity of execution. Even of the appearance of the Christ figure it can be said that neither the handling of paint nor the X-ray image gives any reason to assume a non-autograph addition (see *3. Paint layer*, DESCRIPTION and *X-Rays*). Every point on which Rembrandt's picture differs from Bol's must consequently be attributed to Rembrandt himself. The only explanation would seem to be the possibility already suggested by Brochhagen that Bol's painting is based on an interim stage of Rembrandt's work. Indeed there are a few indications that in his work Bol was not producing a free variant of Rembrandt's, but was following his prototype faithfully. First of all, the stone slab extends further downwards, as was once the case in the Rembrandt painting as well. A further confirmation could be found in the automatic taking-over of the hilt of the sword of the guard falling from the tomb-lid, a detail that has its raison d'être in Rembrandt's initial intention to give this guard a sword — the painting-over of the sword-blade (which never formed part of Bol's version) must then have taken place before Bol made his copy and before the other changes were made. These changes, which as we have said can be looked on as autograph, must thus have included the addition of the figure of Christ. It seems unlikely that a beginner pupil who shows himself punctilious in repeating minor details would take the liberty of leaving out a figure that was in Rembrandt's painting from the outset — and was moreover the main character. The most likely answer is thus that on this point as well Bol's work is a faithful reflexion of Rembrandt's original intentions, and that Rembrandt ultimately, for whatever reason, undid his thematic innovation. The fact that the position and appearance of Christ is very like earlier depictions of Lazarus (as in the Los Angeles *Raising of Lazarus*, no. A 30, and in etching B. 73) therefore need not be put down to a restorer's dependence on Rembrandt's Lazarus figure (as Van Puyvelde suggests), but rather to Rembrandt's own mental image of a man rising from the dead, which is manifest again in the 1642 etching of the *Raising of Lazarus* (B. 72).

Even though these arguments are based mainly on a comparison of Rembrandt's painting with that by Bol, Brochhagen's conclusions reached by other paths thus seem to be right — the differences between the two works do appear to give an impression of the alterations Rembrandt made to his work between about 1636 and 1639. (With regard to Brochhagen's argument that the figure of Christ cannot have been added during the 1755 restoration because the number of figures now seen in the picture is the same as that mentioned in the 1719 inventory, i.e. thirteen, it must be commented that the number comes to no more than 12. The passage in the inventory can thus rather be taken as evidence that since then one figure has disappeared.) The fact that little can be seen in the radiograph of the changes made in the painting does not tell us a great deal; to judge from Bol's copy, a lighter area (containing more radioabsorbent pigment) would invariably have been placed over a darker one.

Study of the alterations made to the picture has led to the view[6] that Rembrandt initially kept strictly to the text of Matthew 28: 1–6. This makes no mention of the risen Christ — any more than the other Gospels do — but it does describe the angel who appeared to the two Marys, with the words 'His countenance was like lightning, and his raiment white as snow' (features that have been reproduced to the letter in the painting), the rolling aside of the stone, and the consternation of the guards. The agitated gestures of the latter were at first interpreted as a straightforward illustration of a comment made by Rembrandt in his third letter to Constantijn Huygens, dated 12 January 1639[3] and dealing with the *Entombment* and *Resurrection*. He writes: 'deesen twe sijnt daer die meeste ende die naetuereelste beweechgelickheijt in geopserveert is', which on this interpretation would mean 'in these two pictures the greatest and most natural

Fig. 8. Copy 3. Rembrandt workshop (?), panel 81 × 55 cm. Grundlsee (Austria), Roman Catholic Church



movement has been observed'. Drawing on parallels in 17th-century texts, H.E. van Gelder[9] argued that the term 'beweechgelickheijt' should be taken not in the sense of physical mobility, but as inward emotion; this interpretation was contested by Rosenberg[10], supported in this by Stechow (W. Stechow in: *Art Bull.* 32, 1950, p. 253, note 1). The comprehensive discussion of the problem was finally provided by Lydia de Pauw-de Veen[11] in an article devoted wholly to the meaning of the word, which ultimately concludes, it would seem correctly, that both meanings are valid and even indissoluble. Seventeenth-century theory of art makes a close link between bodily posture and spiritual state (the author refers inter alia to a comment by Rembrandt's pupil Samuel van Hoogstraten about '. . . het hooft, . . . waer mede men de beweegingen des gemoeds met een uiterlijke beweging te kennen geeft' (. . . the head, . . . whereby one can reveal the movements of the spirit through an outward movement — *Inleyding tot de hooge schoole der schilderkunst*, Rotterdam 1678, pp. 116–17), which in turn affects the onlooker emotionally. In other words, a successful work of art can move the viewer through the unity between the emotions and their externalization.

Broos[12] has rightly pointed out that the type of the composition, and hence the approach to the theme, is based on a painting by Lastman dated 1610 (fig. 7; on loan to the Amsterdam Rijksmuseum for several years from 1911, *Catalogus der schilderijen*, 1918, suppl. p. 389, no. 1425a; loaned by Mr J. Allard of Geertruidenberg; K. Freise, *Pieter Lastman*, Leipzig 1911, pp. 277–278, no. 81). The relationship with precisely this prototype is unmistakably apparent in the emphasis on the angel lifting up the tomb-lid and the way the alarm of the guards is depicted in the figures scrambling and falling over each other. In Lastman's picture the risen Christ, moved away to the upper lefthand corner, plays a minor role. It is noteworthy that in this case too — another is Lastman's prototype for Rembrandt's *Abraham's sacrifice* of 1635 (no. A 108) — Lastman's work is based on a Roman prototype, this time not by Caravaggio but certainly by one of his close followers. The composition built up in a tall and narrow format, with the angel lifting the slab and the fearful or sleeping guards, is quite obviously borrowed from the large painting that R. Longhi (in: *Proporzioni* 1, 1943, pp. 26–27) attributed to 'Francesco detto Cecco del Caravaggio' (Chicago, The Art Institute of Chicago, acc. no. 34.390), and that consequently must have been done before Lastman left Rome (in 1607 at the latest).

5. Documents and sources

— For a discussion of Rembrandt's letters to Constantijn Huygens and the history of Rembrandt's Passion series in general, see under no. A 65, under *5. Documents and sources.*
— Inscription on the back of the panel: 'Rimbrand Creavit me/ PHBrinckmann resuscitavit Te/1755'.
— Letter from the Palatinate court painter and director of the picture gallery at Mannheim, Philipp Hieronymus Brinckmann (1709–1761) to Carl Heinrich von Heinecken at Dresden dated 30 March 1756, Dresden, Kupferstichkabinett, Sign.cat. 140, p. 43ff, quoted by Brochhagen[2]: 'Ich möchte wünschen Sie seheten unsere Rimbrand wie sie jetzt Seindt ich habe sie 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 . . .'.

6. Graphic reproductions

1. Etching in reverse by Carl Ernst Christoph Hess (Darmstadt 1755–Munich 1828) for *La Galerie électorale de Düsseldorf* . . ., Basle 1778. Inscribed *Rembrandt p: . . . Hess fecit a.f.*. Matches the painting in its present state. A preparatory drawing is in the Louvre (F. Lugt, *École hollandaise* III, Paris 1933, (*Musée du Louvre. Inventaire générale des dessins des écoles du Nord*), no. 1279.

7. Copies

1. The inventory of Rembrandt's possessions drawn up on 25/26 July 1656 lists 'De verreijsenisse Cristi van Rembrant' (The resurrection of Christ by Rembrant; Strauss *Doc.*, 1656/12, no. 113). This mention cannot relate to no. A 127, and probably refers to a replica or copy from Rembrandt's hand or that of a studio assistant; in the latter case, copies 2 or 3 below might be identical with copy 1.

None of the copies listed below is a faithful rendering of the painting in its completed state. Copy 2 seems to reproduce an interim stage in Rembrandt's work, while the remainder are more of less free variants.

2. Canvas 80 × 68 cm, signed at lower centre *F. bol. f.* (fig. 5). Munich, Bayerische Staatsgemäldesammlungen, inv.no. 4894. Prior to recent cleaning, the inscription *Rembrandt F. 1647* was at the place of the signature now visible. If the newly-discovered signature is regarded as authentic, the painting must belong among the earliest works by Bol so far known. Blankert makes no mention of it in his book on Bol. The painting probably renders Rembrandt's work as it may have appeared in 1636/37. For differences from that work in its finished state, see *4. Comments*. According to Schulz[8], identical with 'Een verrijsenis van Rembrant' in the inventory of the possessions of Lambert Doomer's wife Metje Harmens made at Alkmaar on 3 January 1677 (Th. Wortel in: *O.H.* 46, 1929, p. 175). There was still 'Een [schilderije] van de Opstandinge Christi door Rembrandt' in the inventory of the estate of Lambert Doomer, made after his death on 2 July 1700, that was drawn up on 4 May (1701?; A. Bredius, *Künstler-Inventare* I, The Hague 1915, p. 75 [7]).

Lambert Doomer made a drawing after the painting: 46.3 × 32.5 cm, pen in brown ink with dark-brown, dark-grey and red-brown wash; inscribed at lower left *Rembran Pinx. L Doomer f.*; Windsor Castle, Royal Collections 6518 (fig. 6; see Van Puyvelde[4] and Schulz[8]).

3. Panel 81 × 55 cm, rounded at top. Grundlsee (Austria), Roman Catholic church (fig. 8). The figures of Christ, the angels and the two guards shown at the bottom right are taken in reverse from Rembrandt's painting; some of the figures occurring in the latter are omitted and partly replaced with others. The guard shown at the top right is borrowed from Rembrandt's etching of *The raising of Lazarus* (B.73). Sumowski[5] called this painting 18th century. We know it only from a photograph (RKD); an attribution to a very individualistic pupil (Carel Fabritius?) is worth considering.

4. Limewood panel 37.2 × 28.7 cm. Bayerische Staatsgemäldesammlungen inv.no. 6320, Galerie Aschaffenburg. A free copy, to judge by the wood and execution probably done in Germany in the 18th century. The rounded top of the picture is shown with paint on the rectangular panel. In view of the presence of the figure of Christ, this variant must have been inspired by Rembrandt's finished painting, which has also been followed to a large extent in the appearance of the group of guards; one exception is the lowermost guard, who is here a helmeted figure sitting on the steps. Other differences are the replacement of the two Marys by an old, bearded man with his hands raised, and the addition of two cherubs high up in the picture and of a curtain on the left.

Hofstede de Groot reports:

— Coll. G. Braamcamp, sale Amsterdam 31 July 1771 (Lugt 1950), added: 'N.B. Volgen 5 Stukken, door een voornaam Hof aan wylen den Heere G. Braamcamp gezonden om publiecq te doen verkoopen; waar van de eerste 4 gehouden worden van P.P. Rubbens in Spanje geschilderdt te zyn, en het laatste door Rembrand. 5 De Opstanding van Christus' (N.B. There follow 5 items, sent by a leading Court to the late Mr G. Braamcamp to be sold publicly; of these the first 4 are held to have been painted by P.P. Rubbens in Spain, and the last by Rembrand. 5 The Resurrection of Christ) (180 guilders to John Greenwood) (HdG 141b).

— According to HdG 141c: coll. Borremans, sale Brussels 5 June 1781 (Lugt 3278), no. 206: a sketch, 10 francs; cannot be found in the printed catalogue in the library of the Musée des Beaux-Arts, Brussels, which contains only 105 items but mentions 'plusieurs Tableaux omis dans ce Catalogue'. — Sale Ghent, 26ff April 1841 (Lugt 16184), no. 123: 'L'Ange levant la pierre de la tombe de notre Sauveur; la garde épouvantée se jette pêle-mêle; cette grande composition, d'une vérité frappante d'expressions, est traitée avec une rare vigueur de coloris. H. 25, L.33 [centimetres, or pouces = 62.5 × 82.5 cm], B.' (HdG 141d).

8. Provenance

See under no. A 65.

9. Summary

Although the painting is in a poor state and underwent restoration in the 18th century, it can on the grounds of reasonably well-preserved passages and a signature that, where surviving, appears reliable be regarded as an autograph Rembrandt work. The resemblances to the other works in the Munich Passion series, and documentary evidence, support this attribution. From letters from Rembrandt to Constantijn Huygens it is known that his painting — like the *Entombment* — remained unfinished for a long time; Rembrandt must already have been working on it before 1636, but the two works were ready for delivery only in January 1639.

A copy in Munich with the inscription *F. bol. f.* seems to have been made after the painting in a previous stage, before Rembrandt made a number of changes and, in particular, added the figure of Christ.

The term 'beweechgelickheijt' used by Rembrandt in one of the letters to Constantijn Huygens to describe a quality he had tried to achieve in the *Resurrection* and *Entombment* related in the terminology of the time to bodily posture as a manifestation of emotional state.

REFERENCES

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3 H. Gerson, *Seven letters by Rembrandt*, The Hague 1961, pp. 18–24 and 34–40; Strauss *Doc.*, 1636/1 and 1639/2.
4 L. van Puyvelde, *The Dutch drawings ... at Windsor Castle*, London/New York 1944, pp. 28–29, no. 117.
5 Sumowski 1957/58, p. 225.
6 Bauch 1966, 67.
7 K. Bauch, 'Ikonographischer Stil', *Studien zur Kunstgeschichte*, Berlin 1967, pp. 129–131.
8 W. Schulz, *Lambert Doomer, sämtliche Zeichnungen*, Berlin/New York 1974, pp. 37–38, no. 41.
9 H.E. van Gelder, 'Marginalia bij Rembrandt', *O.H.* 60 (1943), pp. 148–151.
10 J. Rosenberg, *Rembrandt*, Cambridge, Mass. 1948, pp. 116 and 226 note 29.
11 L. de Pauw-de Veen, 'Over de betekenis van het woord *beweeglijkheid* in de zeventiende eeuw', *O.H.* 74 (1959), pp. 202–212.
12 B.P.J. Broos, 'Rembrandt en zijn eeuwige leermeester Lastman', *De kroniek van het Rembrandthuis* 26 (1972), pp. 76–96, esp. 84–90.

A 128 Man in oriental costume (King Uzziah stricken with leprosy?) [c. 1639]

CHATSWORTH, THE DUKE OF DEVONSHIRE AND TRUSTEES OF THE CHATSWORTH SETTLEMENT

HDG 346; BR. 179; BAUCH 164; GERSON 70

1. Summarized opinion

A fairly well preserved and undoubtedly authentic painting from *c.* 1639, the subject of which cannot be determined with certainty.

2. Description of subject

A bearded man in oriental costume is seen half-length, with the body turned slightly to the right and the head practically square-on and tilted a little to the right, with the gaze fixed on the viewer. The skin of his face has greyish blotches. His hands are held clasped in front of his waist. He wears a white turban with yellow stripes, at the front of which there is a jewel with a stone; at the back a tail of the turban hangs down over his right shoulder. A black, fur-trimmed and fur-lined cloak is held together across the chest by a very large and richly-worked gold clasp; at its centre this jewel has a medallion showing a man in a turban, in left profile. The wide fur collar of the coat stretches over his shoulders. Beneath the cloak he wears an embroidered tunic that exposes a white shirt at the throat; the wide white sleeves of the latter have decorative stripes.

The figure is in a space a few structural features of which can just be made out in the dark. To the left of the figure there is a broad shape of a pillar with a three-level capital, apparently topped by an architrave. Curved lines towards the upper right suggest an arch or vault.

On the right one can see through into an interior at some distance, lit from the left through a window that is largely hidden from view by a grey curtain, though its lit cheek is still visible. A round table stands against the rear wall, covered with a cloth and with a folding chair to the left of it. On the table an open book leans against a pedestal, with an unidentifiable object to the right of it. A gold-coloured fluted column topped by a capital stands on the pedestal; a gold snake winds around it, while the capital has a mask with an animal's head between two irregular convex shapes. The head is lion-like and has long horns, two fangs and flaring nostrils. At the foot of the column, on the pedestal, there is a skull. Behind the column a wall candelabra with a long candle is set in a niche; to the left of this a satchel hangs from a long, tasselled (?) strap.

Various components of the objects and their meaning have been interpreted somewhat differently from the above description by copyists and engravers. All the reproduction prints, for instance, have the column and skull in the niche (and not in front of the pedestal).

3. Observations and technical information

Working conditions

Examined on 12 June 1971 (B.H., P.v.Th.), in moderate daylight and artificial light and out of the frame, with the aid of a UV lamp; again on 27 November 1987 (E.v.d.W.) under similar circumstances. Nine X-ray films covering the entire picture were received later.

Support

DESCRIPTION: Panel of a quite soft, fine-grained and comparatively lightweight type of wood (poplar or, as Mr Peter Day, keeper of the Chatsworth Collections, kindly suggested in a letter of 20 December 1985, limewood); grain vertical, 102.8 × 78.8 cm, with rounded upper corners adjoining right-angled 'steps' some 1–1.5 cm deep at the top and sides. Single plank. Thickness *c.* 1.4–1.6 cm, with a large knot at about 50 cm from the bottom and 18 cm in from the lefthand side. The back shows very long, wide plane furrows. No bevelling at the edges.
SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

Ground

DESCRIPTION: A light brownish ground is apparent at thin places in the face on the right, in the beard (mostly on the right) and here and there in the turban. It shows through somewhat in the dark background to the right of the head.
SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

Paint layer

CONDITION: The painting is on the whole in sound condition. The face appears to have suffered somewhat in the shadows, and in those around the man's right eye and forehead there are overpaintings. The fur collar on the left has been overpainted, especially at the knot in the panel. UV light shows the black of the cloak to have been substantially strengthened, and there is some overpainting in the shadow below the beard. Craquelure: in the darkest passages, which are painted rather thickly, there is everywhere a coarse cracking that dwindles to a fine netlike craquelure in the more thinly-done adjacent areas. A fine pattern of craquelure can also be seen in the shadows of the man's left hand. Some of the cracking in the dark areas, such as the beard and the eye on the right, are connected with later overpaintings.
DESCRIPTION: The face is, in the light, painted mainly in ochrish tints with here and there some grey and a little flesh colour. The paint is applied with brushstrokes that are apparent everywhere; these run in various directions and overlap, with little modelling function. On the left, by the outline of the face, there is a heavy greyish stroke with ragged edges. Further down there are shorter strokes of ochre-coloured paint, running haphazardly over a thin brown. On the cheek there are three even greyish patches, considerably darker than the surroundings, the uppermost of which seems to have been applied on top of the lighter paint of the face while the middle and lower are overlaid by the surrounding brushstrokes. The nose, too, is painted in the light in such a way that the relief of the strokes produces a markedly uneven surface. One notices that in the flesh colour streaks of a very light grey are used with here and there small white splodges some of which lie in the shadow of the eye-pouch and around the eye. This gives the skin a diseased and somewhat mouldy appearance. A few patches of a dark grey-brown are placed on the ridge of the nose. The fold in the cheek by the nose is a ruddy brown; the nose shadow is in a very dark grey with a rather lighter and thinner grey for the reflexions of light on the wing of the nose and nostril. The shadow side of the face has a variety of strokes of greys through which the underlying ground can be occasionally glimpsed.

The lips are painted thinly in a reddish brown with brick-red strokes on the lower lip. The subtly curving mouth-line consists of a single dark grey line that indens a little to the right and helps to give an effective suggestion of the plasticity of the mouth.

The eye on the left has a brownish iris with a darker and not very distinct edging, in which the pupil is a fairly thick black. The white of the eye on the left is a somewhat ochrish grey; the border of the lower edge of the eye is made up, inter alia, of small strokes of white and red set over a flesh-coloured paint and suggesting the moisture. The eye-pouch is marked heavily with a reddish-brown vee-shaped stroke. The upper lid also has a reddish brown, and is bordered by a dark brown shadow at the bottom edge. The corner of the eye, in shadow, has like the man's forehead strokes of a dark to very dark grey, which most probably have to do with later overpaintings; these passages have a quite coarse craquelure.

The eye on the right is painted very thinly in the shadows, with vague forms in greys over a reddish underlayer. The pupil lies, dark, in surroundings that show patchy stripes, and the contours of the eye have wrongly placed restorations. In the righthand corner of the eye there are the remains of a red dot. The eyebrows are shown with small strokes of grey, while the beard is done in the light areas with thin lines of grey and white over darker lines and some red at the chin. In the shadow parts

Fig. 1. Panel 102.8 × 78.8 cm



Fig. 2. X-Ray



of the beard there are greyish lines set over black, with the colour of the ground contributing to the effect.

The complicated structure of the turban is shown clearly with an effective interplay of shadows and light, with fairly strong reflexions of light on the right, and a crisp pattern of lines; the folds are shown with long strokes of grey, white and a little brown. The underlying ground contributes not only to the shadow passages but especially also to the area on the left above the jewel, where the bands of cloth meet; the brushstrokes spread out from this point, more or less radially. The adjoining white is partly thick and partly applied dry with scuffed brushstrokes. The pattern of the cloth is rendered with dots of white and yellow, and the jewel is in a thin black and ochre colour, given thick accents of light in yellow and white. The tail of the turban hanging down over the back is a greyish white, and the spiky hairs of the fur collar extend over this.

In and below the (slightly retouched) zone of shadow under the beard, the edge of the shirt is shown with strokes of a thick grey alternating with dark grey for the folds, and crosswise lines are used for the neckband; the clasp has three strokes of an ochre colour. The jewel on the chest is modelled deeply in the paint, mostly in ochre and yellow with a few thick white highlights; the whole is glazed in brown and brown-grey. Two hanging, pear-shaped pearls are done in grey with somewhat blurred thick white lights. The tunic between this jewel and the hands is dark grey. Ornamentation consisting of triangular shapes is painted in strokes of grey and an ochre colour. The hands stand out through the very effective treatment of light and shade that, together with the thorough drawing, provides a very marked three-dimensional effect. The mainly short brushstrokes give a convincing suggestion of the wrinkled skin. The flesh colour tends towards a yellow, though rather more to a pink in the light. A few strokes of red are used at the base of the thumb, whose shadow is in brown while the shadows between the fingers are in a thick dark grey.

The sleeves are built up with long brushstrokes, alternating between a thick white and grey, with very dark grey used for the shadows in the folds. The pattern is indicated in ochre and a little white and a light green-blue. The sleeves, too, offer a strong effect of depth, achieved by cleverly-placed lights. The narrow fur edging to the sleeves is painted in browns and greys.

The black of the cloak has, on the left, internal detail in light grey, but is in general opaque and to a large extent reinforced by a later hand. The fur on the shoulder part cannot now be judged, due to the overpaintings.

The background is painted in very dark grey, which becomes virtually black towards the top. The paint covers fully apart from that above the fur collar on the right, where the ground shows through a little. On the left the smooth opaque grey, lightens somewhat towards the bottom. A slightly lighter grey is used for the architectural forms. Occasionally the white and grey of the turban lie, done with grazing strokes, over the grey of the background. The view through on the right is shown mainly in yellowish and greyish tints with yellow highlights, using fairly opaque paint.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

X-Rays

A number of features stemming from the condition of the panel produce a confused radiographic image.

The knot at the lefthand edge (see *Support*, DESCRIPTION) shows up very strongly as a straggling white patch, due to the cracks and indentations on the front surface having been filled up with radioabsorbent material. At the upper right, about 20 cm from the top edge and some 10 cm from the righthand side, one sees the image of a smaller knot and associated quite deep grooves caused by the plane. Especially on the right along the edge the curving grain structure is made visible by the priming; further up and to the right there are traces of a knot, with ground.

The X-ray shows substantial differences from what is apparent at the paint surface in the area below the gold clasp, where one can see strong, wide brushstrokes of a radioabsorbent paint, perhaps an underpainting. Immediately above the jewel, too, there are light brushstrokes; evidently there was in the first lay-in a white garment where there is today a dark tunic and the cloak extending further to the right. At the very bottom some 10 cm below the clasped hands there are a few curved brushstrokes in slightly radioabsorbent paint, the significance of which is not clear.

To the right next to the head and level with the shoulder a broad reserve was left for the figure in an area of noticeably light paint. Later, when the contour was given its final form, the light paint too was covered over by that of the darker background.

In the head the relationships of light and dark match to some extent what one would expect from the present paint surface. The greyish patches in the skin are recognized in the radiograph as somewhat darker spots. At the tip of the nose and in the upper lip, however, there is a confused X-ray image, with the light accents not entirely coinciding with the presentday picture.

Details in the turban and its jewel, the clasp, the hands and folds of sleeve that catch the light are quite clearly evident.

Signature

On the far left some 14.5 cm from the lower edge, in a brownish grey paint that scarcely stands out against the background *<Rembran / f 1639>*. The final digit has also been read[1] as a *3* and a *5*. The signature is quite large in relation to the space available for it — the placing itself seems strange, as it provided insufficient room from the outset. The poor visibility of the signature makes its authenticity hard to judge.

Varnish

No special remarks.

4. Comments

The wood used for the panel, which cannot be identified with certainty (lime or poplar?), is unusual for Northern Netherlandish paintings, but poplar does, like mahogany, occur several times in Rembrandt and his school (cf. J. Bauch and D. Eckstein in: *Wood science and technology* 15, 1981, pp. 252–255). Though the manner of painting of the face does differ somewhat from that of Rembrandt in the 1630s, no. A128 otherwise exhibits the features of Rembrandt's approach and technique from those years to such a degree that there can be no doubt as to its authenticity. The X-rays too exhibit sufficient familiar features to support the attribution. No great reliance can be placed on the signature and date itself from the authenticity viewpoint, though the most likely reading of 1639 fits in reasonably well with the style of the painting.

As a composition the painting is of course strongly reminiscent of the group of half-length figures that Rembrandt painted from 1634 onwards — the Madrid *Sophonisba* (no. A 94) and the Leningrad *Flora* (no. A 93) of 1634, the London *Flora* (no. A 112) and the *Minerva* (no. A 114) of 1635, the *Standard-bearer* (no. A 120) of 1636 and the *Man in 'Polish' costume* (no. A 122) of 1637. In these works the dynamic of the brushwork plays an increasing part in suggesting form and plasticity, and detail is gradually given less prominence. The Chatsworth painting cannot be

Fig. 3. Detail (1 : 1.5)



fitted readily into this sequence. The great thoroughness in rendering the skin in the face and the wrinkled hands, and the clothing (especially the turban and jewels) and even the interior in the background shows an approach to form different from that typifying the mid-1630s. One is even, in the background, reminded of work from the end of the Leiden period (see, for instance, the *Christian scholar*, no. C 17). The figure is however remarkable in particular through the great intensity with which material and volume are observed and translated in a handling of paint that is refined and controlled though never smooth, and in fact often free. Thus a strong illusion of form is achieved, for example in the hands and sleeves, using quite simple means, and the subtle management of light values — with a great deal of attention to reflexions of light on the turban — results in a convincing suggestion of the atmosphere surrounding the figure. With regard to this refined illusionism the painting comes closest to work like the Amsterdam *Portrait of a young woman (Maria Trip?)* (no. A 131), probably dating from 1639 — the same year as is shown on the present work. One can, in the shared features of style in the two paintings, find evidence of a tendency towards a more atmospheric approach to form which was — for example in the London *Self-portrait* of 1640 (no. A 139) — to be taken further. Some confirmation of the date of 1639 can perhaps also be seen in the fact that beneath the top layer of the Dresden *Dead bittern held high by a hunter* (no. A 133), which bears the date 1639, there must, to judge by the relief, be a figure similar to the *Man in oriental costume*.

Identification of the subject still presents something of a problem. In the 18th century the painting was looked on as that of a rabbi, a title that was later replaced by the more neutral description of 'an oriental'. Valentiner[2] included the column and snake in his interpretation and thought this could be an aesculapius, and that the man was Paracelsus. Others have believed the column and snake to be the brass serpent set up on a pole by Moses (Numbers 21:8–9), and saw the man portrayed as Moses[3] or Aaron[4], although both of these are normally shown in quite different dress. The only interpretation that takes account not only of the pillar and snake but also of the old man's diseased skin was provided by Dr Robert Eisler in 1948 (information supplied to the owner). This relates to the account in the Bible of how Hezekiah, king of Judah, did that which was right in the sight of the Lord and 'removed the high places, brake the images, and cut down the groves, and brake in pieces the brasen serpent that Moses had made: for unto those days the children of Israel did burn incense to it . . .' (2 Kings 18:4). Eisler coupled this with the account of a much later event related in 2 Chronicles 26:16–20 of how Uzziah the king, emboldened by his victories, entered the part of the Temple reserved to the priests and sought to burn incense at the altar of incense; he threatened the priests who called on him to stop, and was immediately struck with leprosy — according to Flavius Josephus (Book IX) by a shaft of sunlight shining through a crack in the roof of the Temple. This interpretation provides a satisfactory explanation of the diseased skin of the sitter, and his rich garb. The applicability of the texts cited is however open to argument, for a number of reasons. First, Hezekiah had had the brazen serpent broken up. Secondly, the interior seen in the background with the table and chair cannot be identified unequivocally as the Temple in Jerusalem as Rembrandt depicted this on a number of occasions (cf., for example, the *Simeon in the Temple* in The Hague, no. A 34, or the drawing of the *Idolatry of Solomon* in Paris, Ben. 136), and the chair and table with a book and satchel give absolutely no impression of being meant as an altar of incense; one is inclined to deduce that this was not in fact so from a *Philosopher in his study* ascribed to Ferdinand Bol (sale London, Christie's, 13 December 1985, no. 79 with illus.), where on the right behind a seated man in eastern dress one sees exactly the same interior, though filled in on the right with two globes that could not have had any function inside a temple. The brass serpent was in fact traditionally depicted, by Rembrandt and his school as well as others, as wound round a tau-cross and not round a column (cf. the painting of *The prophetess Hannah in the temple* in Edinburgh, Br. 577, and the painting shown in the etched *Portrait of Jan Uytenbogaert*, B. 281). Eisler's interpretation, adopted by Gerson[5] and Schwartz[6], is thus more satisfying than those given earlier, but still not wholly convincing. Moreover, there is no iconographic tradition at all for the Uzziah theme.

The same cannot be said of an interpretation offered by Tümpel[7]. On the basis of a picture of one of the sons of Jacob, the judge Dan, with the snake as his attribute, in a series of prints by Jacques de Gheyn II after Karel van Mander showing the twelve patriarchs (Hollst. VII, nos. 366–377; see also I. M. Veldman in: *Simiolus* 15, 1985, pp. 176–196), Tümpel supposed Dan to be the subject for Rembrandt's painting. But this ingenious answer to the problem, too, is not entirely convincing — it does not account for the man's blotchy skin, nor does it explain the presence of the column around which the snake is winding. Furthermore, the theme would have been quite hard to recognize outside the context of a series of twelve patriarchs; the subject is not even holding a judge's rodd in his hand, as he is in De Gheyn's print. The subject's identity thus continues to present a problem.

The work was, like various others from 1635 and following years, copied in paintings of which at least

Fig. 4. Detail (1 : 1)



one seems to come from Rembrandt's workshop. It is not impossible that a longstanding attribution of this to Bol is correct, especially since there is a mention in 1800 of a *Rabbi* copied from Rembrandt by Bol (see *7. Copies*, 1).

5. Documents and sources

None.

6. Graphic reproductions

A mezzotint by Mac Ardell mentioned in a sales catalogue of 1774 (see *7. Copies*, 3) was neither described by Charrington nor seen by us.

1. Mezzotint by William Pether (Carlisle 1731 — London 1795), inscribed in the second state: *Rembrandt Pinx^t — W^m Pether fecit. / A Jew Rabbi. / From one of the most Capital Pictures ever Painted by Rembrandt. / In the Collection of his Grace the Duke of Devonshire; T. Whom this Plate is most humbly Dedicated, by His Grace's most Obliged & most Obedient Humble Servant, J. Boydell. / Size of the Picture 2 F. 7 I by 3 F. 4 I in height. — Publish'd March 1st 1764, according to Act of Parliament, by J. Boydell, Engraver, in Cheapside London* (Charrington 118). This is the earliest of a number of prints including two others by Pether (Charrington 119, 120), a mezzotint by 'C. Corbut' (R. Purcell) (Charrington 144), a mezzotint by C. Spooner (Charrington 162) and a mezzotint by W. Strange (Charrington 168), all of which seem to derive from Pether's first version.

7. Copies

Hofstede de Groot[3] mentions numerous copies, some from the 17th-century. Apart from those listed below, these were in Dresden (cat. 1908 no. 1572 A), Emden, Turin (cat. 1909 no. 391) and the Amalienstift, Dessau.

1. Panel, coll. Lord Margadale, Tisbury, Wilts. (examined in May 1968, J.B., B.H., E.v.d.W.). Done in a very rembrandtesque manner, and probably in his studio. The frame carries a small, old plate giving an attribution to Ferdinand Bol; possibly identical with a painting described as a copy by Bol after Rembrandt of a rabbi that was bought in 1788 by the Rotterdam collector Gerrit van der Pot, and transferred by him in 1800 to the dealer Bryan (see E. Wiersum in: *O.H.* 48, 1931, p. 211). Perhaps the same as a copy mentioned by Hofstede de Groot as in the coll. Viscount Powerscourt (exh. London, Royal Academy 1878 no. 167 and 1899 no. 57), sale London 9 July 1904, no. 119.
2. Panel 97 × 79.5 cm (top semicircular), Potsdam, Sanssouci. From 1764 onwards mentioned as in the picture gallery there, and around 1770 described by Andreas Ludwig Krüger (Potsdam 1743 — *c.* 1805) as by Rembrandt. Attributed by Waagen in 1830 to Salomon Koninck. See G. Eckardt, *Die Gemälde in der Bildergalerie von Sanssouci*, Potsdam 1975, p. 54 no. 95.
3. Panel *c.* 100 × 83 cm (identical with no. 1?). Sale coll. C[aulet] d'H[auteville], Paris 25ff. April 1774 (Lugt 2276), no. 55: 'Rembrandt van Ryn. Le Rabbin, dans la premiere manière de ce Maître: ce Ministre est peint de face, sa coëffure est un turban de mousseline artistement arrangé, d'où il pend derrière sa tête un voile blanc jusqu'audessous des épaules (. . .); le fond représente un temple; on y voit un chandelier entouré d'un serpent, une tête de mort, un cierge attaché au mur, & c. Ce Tableau est étonnant pour le caractère, la beauté du coloris & l' effet; il a appartenu à M. Binet, premier Valet de Chambre de feu Mgr. le Dauphin, à qui le Roi l'avoit donné. Marc [sic!] Ardell l'a supérieurement gravé en manière noire, d'après une répétition du même Maître. Hauteur 3 pieds 2 pouces, largeur 2 pieds 8 pouces [= 102.8 × 85.6 cm]. B[ois].' Probably identical with a picture in the sale coll. Van Schorel, Antwerp 7ff. June 1774 (Lugt 2299), no. 46: 'Rembrandt. Un Vieillard de grandeur naturelle, vu de face, a mi-corps, ayant les mains l'une dans l'autre: Il porte sur la tête une espece de Turban: de grandes manches d'une étoffe blanche, rayée de diverses couleurs, lui tombent sur les mains, & un manteau noir, garni d'une agraffe d'or, acheve son habillement (. . .). 38½ po. de haut sur 30¾ de large [pouces de Brabant, dont onze font un pied du pays, & dix pouces & demi de France; = 100.1 × 83 cm] B.' (185 guilders to Schorel). The same picture appears in the sale coll. Dormer, Antwerp 27ff. May 1777 (Lugt 2707), no. 132: 'Un vieux Rabin, portrait à mi-corps peint par Rembrandt. Ce vieillard est vu de face, ayant les mains l'une dans l'autre, & la tête couverte d'un bonnet fait en forme de turban. Ce tableau offre une facilité dans le faire, une vérité dans les draperies, & une vigueur de coloris étonnantes: c'est un des plus beaux monuments du pinceau enchanteur de ce maître. — 38. po. de haut, sur 30. de large [pieds de France; = 102.6 × 81 cm]. B.' (68 guilders to Deroy)
4. Canvas 102.5 × 81 cm, whereabouts unknown (though possibly to be identified with one of the copies mentioned by Hofstede de Groot, see above). Described in coll. François Tronchin des Délices, sale Paris 23/24 March 1801 (Lugt 6220), no. 161: 'Idem [Rembrandt van Ryn]. Le Rabin Ephraïm Bueno' il est vu de face, coëffé d'un turban, les mains jointes. Le fond d'architecture laisse apercevoir une chambre avec divers accessoires. Il vient du cabinet du Maréchal Dysenghien. T[oile]. Haut 38 pouc, larg. 30.'

8. Provenance

— De Piles sale 29 April 1742 (not in Lugt), no. 36 (bought by the 3rd Duke of Devonshire.
— Described as at Devonshire House in 1761: 'An old man in a Turkish dress' (R. and J.P. Dodsley, *London and its Environs described*, 6 vols 1761, II, p. 226).

9. Summary

No. A 128, which is painted on an unusual kind of wood (lime or poplar?) is outstanding through its powerful contrasts of light and shade in which the extensive use of deep black plays a role. There is a strong suggestion of three-dimensionality, both in the figure as a whole and in details. The manner of painting and use of colour match — except in the face — those of works from around the middle 1630s, and there can be no doubt as to the painting's authenticity. No reliance from this aspect can however be placed in the signature as such; the placing of the date, which probably ought to be read as 1639, corresponds with that in Rembrandt's oeuvre. The deviant manner of painting in the face is most probably connected with the identity of the subject who is evidently suffering from a skin disease, possibly leprosy. The identification of the man, based on this, as Uzziah King of Judah must for the time being remain not entirely convincing, and the same can be said for a more recent suggestion that he is Dan, one of the twelve sons of Jacob.

REFERENCES

1 O. Benesch, 'The Rembrandt paintings in the National Gallery of Art', *The Art Quarterly* 6 (1943), pp. 20–23; reprinted in: idem, *Collected writings* I, London-New York 1970, pp. 140–146, esp. 141.
2 W.R. Valentiner, 'Rembrandt's conception of historical portraiture', *The Art Quarterly* 11 (1948), pp. 116–135, esp. 119–122.
3 HdG 346; Bauch 1966, 164.
4 W. Weisbach, *Rembrandt*, Berlin-Leipzig 1926, p. 289; Benesch, loc. cit.
5 Gerson p. 222 and p. 491, no. 70.
6 Schwartz 1984, p. 176.
7 Tümpel 1986, p. 187, cat. no. 77.
8 C. White, D. Alexander, E. D'Oench, *Rembrandt in eighteenth-century England*, New Haven 1983, p. 111 no. 83.

A 129 Portrait of a man, standing (Cornelis Witsen?) [1639]

KASSEL, STAATLICHE KUNSTSAMMLUNGEN KASSEL, SCHLOSS WILHELMSHÖHE, INV. NO. GK 239

HDG 535; BR. 216; BAUCH 384; GERSON 192

1. Summarized opinion

A reasonably well preserved and authentic painting, inscribed with the date of 1639. The identity of the sitter (Cornelis Witsen?) cannot be determined with certainty.

2. Description of subject

The subject, seen full-length, stands in a relaxed pose, facing slightly to the right and with his gaze on the viewer. His weight is on his left leg, and he leans with his right arm on a pedestal, the hand held loosely in front of the body; the left arm hangs straight. He is standing on a raised stone step the edge of which has a ridged profile along the front. To the right a few curving steps lead up to a heavy, studded door with an arched top that stands half-open so that the black and white tiles of the floor behind it can just be glimpsed. Left of the pedestal a balustrade on a plinth, partly let into the wall, is indistinctly visible, with above it a sculpted mask atop a pilaster that tapers towards the bottom.

The man is dressed almost entirely in black. On top of a shiny doublet with braided fastenings, from the middle of which a nestle dangles, he has a cloak hanging open at the front and draped wide over the pedestal on which he is leaning. His white, flat collar has tasselled bandstrings; long, curling hair protrudes from under a broad-brimmed black hat. The left hand is gloved, while the right glove lies beside him on the ground.

The light falls from the left so that the figure casts a strong shadow on the floor while the greater part of the background is in shadow.

3. Observations and technical information

Working conditions

Examined in October 1968 (J.B., B.H.) in moderate daylight and artificial light, in the frame and on the wall, with the aid of two X-ray films of the head and lit hands; 29 X-ray films, together covering the whole of the painting, were received later.

Support

DESCRIPTION: Canvas, single piece, lined, 200 × 124.2 cm (according to the museum catalogues — sight size 196.5 × 120 cm).

SCIENTIFIC DATA: Cusping, some 14 cm in pitch, was seen only along the lefthand side, extending about 12 cm into the canvas. No cusping on the opposite, righthand side. The top and bottom edges do show a slight deformation in the weave, though no distinct cusping can be seen. The observation and measuring of cusping was besides greatly hampered by the fact that the stretcher shows up light in the available radiographs, and by the forms that, as described under *X-Rays*, show up light and are probably connected with the ground. No great significance can therefore be attached to the results of a threadcount; this shows 18.2 vertical threads/cm (17–19.5) and 14.2 horizontal threads/cm (13.3–15). No opinion is possible as to the warp direction. Theoretically the 200 cm high canvas, tilted, — that is to say, with the horizontal threads as the warp — could thus have been cut from a strip 3 ells (*c.* 210 cm) wide. The total absence of cusping along the righthand side could then mean that several canvases, possibly including one for a pendant, were prepared as a single piece and cut up only afterwards. Another possibility is that the warp runs vertically and that the canvas, now 124 cm wide, came from a strip 2 ells (*c.* 140 cm) wide and has some 16 cm missing from the righthand side; this would explain the lack of cusping on that side. The missing strip would however then have had to be removed before the composition was laid in, as it is hard to imagine the painting having been wider to the right.

Ground

DESCRIPTION: A light brown-yellow can be seen in thin parts of the background, and perhaps because of an underpainting or varnish or for some other reason appears warmer than it actually is (see below).

SCIENTIFIC DATA: Kühn[1] reports the usual two layers, the lower of which has a red tint and comprises red ochre, white lead, oil and a small amount of protein. The upper layer is grey, consisting of white lead, vegetable black and oil.

Paint layer

CONDITION: So far as the heavy layer of yellowed varnish allows a judgment, a reasonably well preserved painting that has however suffered somewhat from wear, especially in the thinner areas. The condition of the surface is discussed in minute detail by Brammer[2]. There are retouches in the hair on the left along the hat, at the bridge of the nose, in the shadow areas and fingertips of the hand on the left, and in the thumb of the gloved hand. There are also darkened retouches at various places in the door and elsewhere in the background. Along the bottom edge, below the edge of the step, a band has been restored with grey paint through which a reddish brown — probably the bottom layer of the ground — can be seen; this suggests that the canvas was earlier wrapped round the stretcher at this point. Craquelure: the whole surface has a fairly dense pattern of irregular cracking, somewhat coarser in the white areas than in the dark. There has been marked and rather different cracking in a strip curving vaguely to the right and running upwards from the righthand edge of the contour of the hat-crown. This is probably linked to an extension of the open door over a background that had already been painted. In the upper half of the painting especially the paint is cupped to a marked extent.

DESCRIPTION: The painting has for far the greater part been done with some considerable freedom and evident skill. The yellowish brown and greyish paint in the lit parts of the floor and architectural features is thicker than in the shadows, where predominantly grey and brown tints have been applied thinly. The stone step is worked up with flecks of grey; in the pedestal a vivid surface of flaking stone is suggested with variations in tone and colour.

The black costume is painted broadly but with a strong suggestion of plasticity, using free brushwork in greys and black, with here and there crisp accents such as the sheens of light on the shoes, breeches and sleeves. Subtle sheens of light on the hat and cloak give, together with the taut outlines, a strongly plastic effect. A bow around the man's right leg is painted cursorily, and forms a lively feature with its angular edges contrasting with the lighter background and small strokes of light paint that give the impression of light showing through black lace. The area with the doublet and braid is done with bold strokes in black, light greys and white.

The face is, in the light, painted quite carefully with small brushstrokes in an (apparently) yellowish flesh colour, with some thin light red on the cheek and highlights on the ridge and tip of the nose. A fairly thick brown is used in the shadow along the righthand eyebrow, where it becomes somewhat reddish. The nostril is indicated in a carmine red. The moustache is done with small touches and strokes of yellowish paint in the light and warm brown in the shadows, and the tuft of beard on the chin similarly, plus a few touches of bright red. The lips are modelled carefully in reddish colours, with a touch of pink on the lower one showing a highlight; the line of the mouth is set down with three firm strokes of dark paint. The eyes are convincingly modelled, the lids shown with (subsequently strengthened?) lines of pinkish red; the catchlights are on the border between the accurately-round grey irises and the pupils, that on the left taking the form of a bold, round white spot while the other is roughly square. The shadows are done fairly freely in warm browns, though giving an impression of plasticity; the paint is thickest in the cast shadow from the hat. The man's hair is in a

Fig. 1. Canvas 200 × 124.2 cm

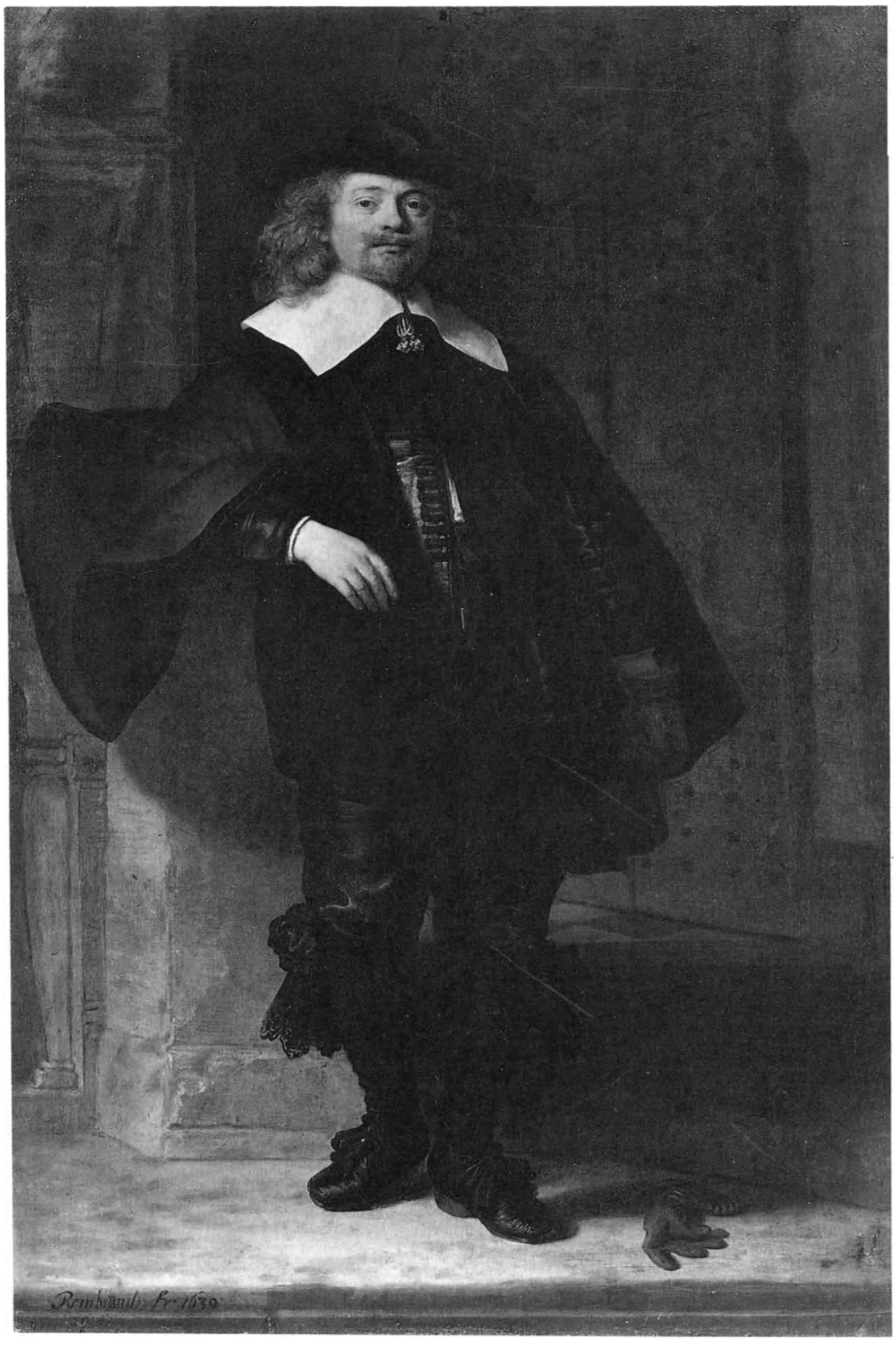


Fig. 2. X-Ray



variety of browns with small strokes of yellow, with a convincing plasticity.

The lit hand is given little modelling in the light, and is in a pale flesh colour, placed up against and partly over the ruddy brown cast shadow of the cuff.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

X-Rays

Some areas of the painting, including the head and parts of the clothing and architecture on the left, match in the radiograph what one would expect from the paint surface. Elsewhere, however, there are cloudy white shapes that are unconnected with the picture and are hard to explain. These occur in different areas of the painting, are irregular in form and are sometimes quite sharply edged.

The first idea that occurs is that these light shapes have to do with the back of the canvas being treated with a radioabsorbent material, as is repeatedly the case with other canvases in Kassel. The assumption would however be wrong — paint losses and craquelure apparent at the front show up clearly inside these light forms. Another possibility — that a quite different picture is concealed beneath the present one — must also be ruled out; in the light forms one can make out neither shapes understandable as such nor associated brushwork. It moreover appears, as Mr Hans Brammer, restorer at the Kassel Gemäldegalerie has been kind enough to inform us, that none of the many paint cross-sections taken shows any paint layer between that of the present painting and the ground. The top layer of the ground, consisting very largely of white lead, does show differences in thickness. This may perhaps account for the uneven absorption of the X-radiation. For the moment this seems the most likely explanation, even though such an uneven application of the top layer of ground would almost have to be termed aberrant. An argument in favour is that at some places in the light forms one can detect dabbing brushmarks that all run in the same direction (towards the upper right). Against this there is the fact that the light forms are at some places quite sharply outlined — for instance, on the chest and by the man's thighs.

Because of these light shapes it is hard to express an opinion as to whether alterations were made in the composition.

Signature

At the bottom left, in dark brown <*Rembrandt f* (followed by a V-shaped abbreviation symbol) . *1639.*>. The writing is hesitant and does not give an impression of being authentic. The inscription may well have been copied from an original one that was either on a lost strip of the canvas or on a companion-piece.

Varnish

A badly yellowed layer of varnish hampers observation.

4. Comments

In both approach and execution the painting fits in well with the whole of Rembrandt's portrait oeuvre from the 1630s, of which — despite its less than perfect state, and being impaired today by a layer of yellowed varnish — it is an important example. A strongly plastic effect has been achieved in the costume by comparatively simple means, with the very varied contour (quite typical of Rembrandt) playing just as much a part as the subdued sheens of light and indication of folds; where there is emphasis on a detail — in the shiny doublet, or the bow on the lefthand knee — the treatment remains broad and the detail is not precisely described. The lit hand and, especially, the head show a careful execution, but here too the continuity of plastic form takes precedence (as it always does in Rembrandt's portraits, and in a way quite typical of him) over the depiction of linear detail. The figure receives the full light from the left, and is in particular anchored in space by the cast shadow of the legs, which merges with the area of shadow occupying most of the righthand part of the picture. On the left the cloak forms a strong spatial accent, lying in folds as it does over the pedestal on which the man is leaning and on which the shadow cast by the cloak tones down the brightness of the light. The architectural features visible behind this are seen in a subdued light, and are moreover only sketchily indicated; the result is that while they provide a cohesive image of a space in which the figure is situated, they do not divert attention from the subject of the portrait or, through too emphatic a chiaroscuro, make his figure stand out too strongly in silhouette. The problems associated with this, which of course arise especially with full-length portraits, had already been solved by Rembrandt in a similar way in the few earlier works there are of this kind. In the *Portrait of Marten Soolmans* of 1634 (no. A 100), for example, and especially in the associated woman's portrait (no. A 101) there is indeed a stronger — and more virtuoso — attention to details of costume, but the function of the (admittedly more generous) lighting, the generally subdued contrast and the merging tonal values in a setting that is hardly more than sketched are in essence already the same as in the Kassel work, which on the basis of an admittedly spurious inscription may confidently be dated to 1639. Basically there are identical features to be found in all Rembrandt's portraits, most clearly so in a number of knee-length portraits such as that of a man, dated 1633, in Kassel (no. A 81) that may originally have been a full-length portrait, where the distribution of light in particular, with a dangling, gloved hand in shadow on the right, is very similar to that in no. A 129.

Alongside these clear stylistic and pictorial similarities with earlier full-length portraits by Rembrandt, no. A 129 differs in the far greater attention paid to what might be called the statuesque qualities of the figure. While Marten Soolmans stands relatively foursquare on his feet without any clear distribution of his weight becoming evident through his posture, the way the man is standing here makes it quite plain — his weight is on his left leg and on his right arm supported by the pedestal, and the swivelled hip and relaxed right leg complete the contrapposto effect. Veth[3] compared this stance with that seen in a man's portrait by Moretto in the National Gallery, London (no. 1025). More justifiably, Gerson[4] spoke in terms of a formula borrowed from Van Dyck — the

Fig. 3. Detail (1 : 2)



Fig. 4. Detail with signature (reduced)



leaning right arm with a drooping hand occurs repeatedly in portraits by that artist — but Van Dyck never uses the Praxiteles contrapposto to such an extent as it is in Rembrandt's last full-length single portrait. To what prototype the structure of the figure owes its markedly classical character is unclear; but for the development of Rembrandt's interest it does seem a symptom of a preoccupation with the motif of the standing figure that was to have an appreciable effect in the *Night watch* (no. A 146).

The indiciation of the room in which the figure is standing is rather more thorough (though no clearer for that) than it is in most of Rembrandt's portraits. Vosmaer[5] thought that the man was leaning against a mantelpiece, as also did Bode[6] who saw the room as an antechamber ('Vorraum seines Hauses') and felt that the subject was on the point of leaving the house. Leaving aside this anecdotal explanation, which is typical of the late 19th century, one hardly gets the impression that Rembrandt was trying, in the decorative items shown on the left, to create any cohesive whole. All that is clear is that a room with a tiled floor can be glimpsed through the half-open door on the right, and one may wonder whether the man is in fact standing outside the front door of a house. Portraits of similar full-length figures show, however, that this is not the intention. In the work of Thomas de Keyser, especially, one meets examples (on a much smaller scale) where this Amsterdam artist, working on a formula from 16th-century North Italian portraiture (in Moretto especially), placed his figures in a similar manner in an architectural setting (cf. R. Oldenbourg, *Thomas de Keysers Tätigkeit als Maler*, Leipzig 1911, nos. 34 from 1633 and 143 from 1643; further works from 1626 in The Hague and from 1634 in Geneva). De Keyser's figures are seen indoors rather than outside, in halls or gallery-like rooms. Rembrandt's Kassel portrait comes very close to this type, introuced into Amsterdam by De Keyser, as does his Amsterdam *Portrait of a young woman (Maria Trip?)* (no. A 131) which is also dated 1639 and in which the subject apparently stands at the foot of a flight of steps in a way comparable to the etched *Portrait of Ephraïm Bueno* of 1647 (B. 278).

The identity of the subject is still an unsolved problem. His age is generally estimated as about 30–35, and one may suppose that he belonged to very well-off, probably Amsterdam circles — a full-length portrait was expensive, and represented far from modest social pretentions. His name was already unknown by the 18th century, and most suggestions from later periods are based on an unconvincing likeness to known persons. Around the middle of the 19th century the painting was regarded as a portrait of Jan Six, an identification that was rejected by Vosmaer[5]. Bode, in 1883[6] and 1900[7], saw the subject as Rembrandt himself, and was followed in this by Hofstede de Groot[8]. Schmidt-Degener[9] thought he could recognize the principal figure of the *Night watch*, Frans Banningh Cocq. Dudok van Heel[10] advanced a better-supported assumption; he thought that the painting might be identified with one around which there was in about 1642 a disagreement between Andries de Graeff (1611–1679) and Rembrandt: 'een stuck schilderije off Conterfytsel, dat de voors. van Rhijn voor den Gemelten Heer [De Graeff] schilderde;' (a painting or likeness that the aforesaid van Rhijn painted for the aforementioned gentleman); a number of 'goede mannen' (arbiters), who included Hendrick Uylenburgh, then decided — as Uylenburgh testified 1659 — that De Graeff should pay Rembrandt 500 guilders (cf. Strauss *Doc.*, 1659/21). This identification, which was supported by Schwartz[11] and Tümpel[12], is an attractive one; Dudok van Heel comments that Andries de Graeff was 28 years old in 1639, which would not conflict with the apparent age of the sitter. The De Graeffs were one of the leading families of Amsterdam — his older brother Cornelis may perhaps have played a more prominent role, but Andries too filled a number of functions and was burgomaster several times between 1657 and 1671. A full-length portrait would fit in well with the price owed to Rembrandt, as well as with the family's social standing; Cornelis de Graeff had himself and his wife painted full-length around 1630 in portraits by Nicolaes Eliasz. Picquenoy (East Berlin, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Gemäldegalerie, cat. 1976 nos. 753 and 754; cf. Vol. II, no. A 81 fig. 5). Moreover, the further history of Rembrandt's portrait of Andries de Graeff as related by Dudok van Heel chimes well with what is known of the history of no. A 129. The inventory of the estate drawn up on 8 March 1700 on the death of Andries's nephew Pieter de Graeff describes, as in

the small side room in his house on the Herengracht, 'Een do: van den Hr: Andries de Graeff door Rembrand — fl 120,-'. On 2 October 1710 Pieter's son Joan de Graeff received from his estate 'Een schilderije van den Heer Andries de Graeff uyt de Zijdelkamer door Rembrand — fl 120.-'. Joan's son Gerrit de Graeff — of whose estate there is no known inventory — died in 1752, the very year in which no. A 129 was acquired from a Hamburg dealer by Wilhelm VIII of Hesse-Kassel (see *8. Provenance*). All of this makes Dudok van Heel's supposition extremely tempting, but there is one insuperable obstacle — Rembrandt's subject does not resemble the sitter in two reliable and, in their mean features, matching portraits of Andries de Graeff. The first of these is a marble bust by Artus Quellinus the Elder in Amsterdam, with on a marble plinth the names of the sitter and the artist, and the date of 1661 (see cat. *Beeldhouwkunst in het Rijksmuseum*, Amsterdam 1973, no. 301), the second a painting by Gerard ter Borch in an English collection, with a non-original but old and reliable inscription that gives the name of the sitter, his age 63 years) and the date (1674) (see exhib. cat., *Gerard ter Borch,* The Hague 1974, no. 56a; Dudok van Heel in: *Essays in Northern European art presented to Egbert Haverkamp-Begemann*, Doornspijk 1983, pp. 66–71, fig. 4). Although Quellinus's treatment lends a more noble appearance to what with Ter Borch is a somewhat plain face, it is clear that Andries de Graeff had slightly slanting, slit eyes and a narrow and quite markedly hooked nose. On both points the man in Rembrandt's portrait seems to differ decisively from the one in these two portraits; his short, fleshy nose in particular cannot be reconciled with that of Andries de Graeff. Even if one makes allowance for the inevitable idiosyncracies of a portrait painter — which Rembrandt too must have had — one has to note that in this instance the differences in facial type are such that they stand in the way of an otherwise inviting identification.

From the facial resemblance standpoint one may venture another suggestion. The fullish face with upwards-curling moustaches reminds one of the head of another rich Amsterdam patrician, Dr Cornelis Jansz. Witsen (1605–1669). We know of two portraits of him by Bartholomeus van der Helst, one as a captain (seated on the right) in the 1648 *Banquet of the Crossbowmen's civic guard* (Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam, inv. no. C2) and the other as one of the four governors (seated on the left) in the 1655 *Governors of the Arquebusiers civic guard* (Amsterdams Historisch Museum, cat. no. 171, A 2101). A set of portraits of him and his wife by Van der Helst previously in the coll. Tronchin, Geneva, can no longer be traced. Furthermore we know, since recently, marble busts of him (fig. 5) and his wife (his figuring in a poem by Vondel) dating from 1658 and

Fig. 5. A. Quellinus the Elder, *Portrait-bust of Cornelis Witsen*, 1658. Paris, Musée du Louvre



done by Artus Quellinus the Elder, in the Louvre (see G. Bresc-Bautier in: *La revue du Louvre et des Musées de France* 22, 1982, pp. 278–283). Allowing for the fact that Rembrandt's portrait would be showing him aged 34, the similarity to this portrait can be described as striking, and close enough to permit an identification. Admittedly there is no documentary evidence for a painted Rembrandt portrait of Cornelis Witsen, but there were contacts between the two men — Witsen lent Rembrandt the quite considerable sum of 4180 guilders on 29 January 1653 (Strauss *Doc.*, 1653/5) in order that the very large debt that Rembrandt still owed on his house could be paid off. Later Witsen was to behave as a hard-hearted creditor, but that has not prevented Schwartz (op. cit, p. 283) from wondering what led him, who had never before had any dealings with Rembrandt, to lend the artist such a large sum, and without interest to boot. A portrait commission could thus have been the occasion for earlier contacts. Cornelis Witsen, who probably gained his doctor's degree at a foreign university, occupied a number of municipal posts from 1636 onwards — he was for example burgomaster in 1653, '58, '62 and '67, and then high sheriff of Amsterdam until his death. Hans Bontemantel, a member of the city council from 1652 to 1672, says of him in his notes (*De*

regeeringe van Amsterdam . . ., ed. G.W. Kernkamp, The Hague 1897, II, p. 495): 'Was een heer, wat te veel geneegen tot groote glaesen; gedurende sijn schoutsampt niet bemint, alsoo wat te veel schraepte onder de gemeente en de substituten en dinaers, daer nochtans in de mont had, dat het hem om geen gelt was te doen, maar het schoutsampt te weesen opgedrongen.' (was a gentle man rather too much given to the cup; during his sheriffship not much liked, since he enriched himself rather too much at the expense of the community and his deputies and catchpoles, while protesting that he was not out for money but that the sheriffship had been thrust upon him.) If the Kassel painting does in fact show Cornelis Witsen, one may assume that there was once a companion-piece portraying Catharina Claesdr. Gaeff, also known as Lambertsdr. Opsy (1619–1698), whom he married in 1634.

5. Documents and sources

None.

6. Graphic reproductions

None.

7. Copies

1. Canvas 67 × 54.3 cm, Vienna, Akademie der bildenden Künste (inv. no. 1399). A bust portrait.

8. Provenance

— Bought in 1752 for Landgrave Wilhelm VIII of Hesse-Kassel from the Hamburg dealer Gerhard Morell; cf. the 'Kabinettrechnungen' of 1752, under 11 March: 'dem Gerhard Morell zu Hamburg vor eine Schilderey von Rembrandt, eines Mannes Porträt Lebensgrosz vorstellend . . . Reichstaler 550'[13]. In the Haupt-Catalogus begun in 1749 (ms. Kassel) it is described under no. 682: 'Rembrant. Ein Portrait in Lebens-Grösse mit einem Hut auf dem Kopf und in schwarzer Kleidung. [Höhe] 6 Schuh 6 Zoll, [Breite] 4 Schuh 1 Zoll [= 198.8 × 128.2 cm]'. Described in the *Verzeichnisz der Hochfürstlich-Hessischen Gemälde-Sammlung in Cassel*, Kassel 1783, as no. 9 in the 'Gallerie auf der Ober-Neustadt': 'Rembrandt van Ryn. Ein Manns-Portrait in Lebensgrösse, in schwarzer Kleidung mit dem Huth auf dem Kopf, und mit einem Arm an ein Postement gelehnt. Auf Leinwand, 6 Fusz 10 Zoll hoch, 3 Fusz 10 Zoll breit [= 214.4 × 120.2 cm]'. Confiscated by Napoleon's brother Jerôme, King of Westphalia; returned to Kassel in 1815[14].

9. Summary

In approach and execution the painting fits in perfectly with the whole of Rembrandt's portraits, and there can be no doubt at all about attribution or about the date of 1639, in line with the inscription it bears. In particular, comparison with earlier full-length portraits shows how similar are the lighting, the function of contour and modelling, and the relationship of the figure to its surroundings. At most one could say of this full-length single portrait that the degree of detail in the clothing is a little less, and that the indication of the setting — which is, in fact, not clearly specified — has been given rather more emphasis, just as one finds in other works from the late 1630s. It differs from previous full-length portraits in that the body-pose has been carefully constructed as a classical contrapposto.

Attempts at identifying the subject have so far yielded no total certainty. Andries de Graeff was painted by Rembrandt and would be the most likely candidate, if the other known portraits of him did not show a quite different facial type. There are marked resemblances to portraits of Cornelis Witsen, who is known to have been (later) in contact with Rembrandt, but there is no documentary evidence that the latter painted his portrait.

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2 H. Brammer, 'Durch Restaurierungsmaßnahmen beschädigte Gemäldeoberflächen, 2 Beispiele aus der Kasseler Gemäldegalerie', *Zeitschrift für Kunsttechnologie und Konservierung* 1 (1987), pp. 95–103.
3 J. Veth, 'Rembrandt en de Italiaansche kunst', *O. H.* 33 (1915), pp. 1–15, esp. 3.
4 Gerson 192; Br.-Gerson 216.
5 C. Vosmaer, *Rembrandt. Sa vie et ses oeuvres*, 2nd edn, The Hague 1877, pp. 169–170.
6 W. Bode, *Studien zur Geschichte der holländischen Malerei*, Braunschweig 1883, pp. 455, 566.
7 W. Bode and C. Hofstede de Groot, *Rembrandt* IV, Paris 1900, no. 254.
8 HdG 535.
9 F. Schmidt-Degener, 'Portretten door Rembrandt', *O.H.* 32 (1914), pp. 217–224, esp. 219–220.
10 S.A.C. Dudok van Heel, 'Het maecenaat De Graeff en Rembrandt', *Amstelodamum. Maandblad . . .* 56 (1969), pp. 150–155.
11 Schwartz 1984, p. 204.
12 Tümpel 1986, pp. 209–212, cat. no. 206.
13 E. Herzog, *Die Gemäldegalerie der Staatlichen Kunstsammlungen Kassel*, Kassel 1969, p. 34.
14 O. Eisenmann, *Katalog der Königlichen Gemälde-Galerie zu Cassel*, Kassel 1888, no. 217.

A 130 Portrait of a man holding a hat

[c. 1639]

LOS ANGELES, CAL., THE ARMAND HAMMER COLLECTION

HDG 751; BR. –; BAUCH 379; GERSON –

1. Summarized opinion

A reasonably well preserved (though perhaps slightly reduced) painting that despite a few unusual features is convincing as to its authenticity, and can be dated around 1639.

2. Description of subject

The sitter is seen to the hips with the body turned to the right and the head towards the viewer, on whom the gaze is fixed. He holds his hat in front of the body with both hands, and wears a costume made (both doublet and cloak) of light grey taffeta with a pinkish-purple lustre; the cloak hangs down his back and is drawn through beneath his right arm. Both garments have golden-yellow braiding along the hems and seams; above them is a white collar with a lace border. On the far left can be seen an olive-green tablecloth. The light, falling from the left, illuminates both the lefthand side of the figure and part of his hands and part of the righthand background, where a crack in the wall can be seen.

3. Observations and technical information

Working conditions

Examined in April 1969 (J.B., B.H.) in good daylight and out of the frame, with the aid of an X-ray of the head; subsequently 16 X-ray films covering the whole surface were received.

Support

DESCRIPTION: Oak panel (according to a restorer's report from William Suhr, New York, dated 19 June 1967) or more likely poplar-wood — for a judgment based on the radiographic evidence, see below under *X-Rays* and *4. Comments*, grain vertical, 81.4 (± 0.1) × 71.4 (± 0.1) cm. Single plank. Back planed to a thickness of 0.6 cm, and stuck to a cradled mahogany panel. Since the original back can no longer be seen, it is impossible to tell from bevelling whether the panel has survived in its complete state. The composition suggests that some width has been lost on the right (and thus also some height). Irregularities in the grain that seem to point to knots can be seen to the right of the head level with the eyes, to the left of the head at ear-level, and to the right of the collar. A vertical crack runs to the right of the figure, just through the hair and the shadowed part of his clothing; a second one runs from the centre of the bottom edge, curving a little towards the left, to the centre of the sleeve.
SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

Ground

DESCRIPTION: A light yellow-brown shows through in thin areas in the background, and lies exposed in scratchmarks in the hair.
SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

Paint layer

CONDITION: Reasonably well preserved. In thin brown areas there are signs of wearing. To judge by the X-rays, there has been some paint-loss in the head (e.g. above the wing of the nose on the left, at the bridge of the nose and in the forehead) as well as to the right of the white collar, in the dark part of the chest, and in the sleeve on the forearm. There are overpaintings especially in the left hand and along the vertical crack. Craquelure: the face and collar have fine and mostly vertical cracking.
DESCRIPTION: At the left and along the top the background is in a dark brown-grey laid with short, straight brushstrokes in various directions over the ground, which shows through. On the right the paint becomes thicker and a lighter grey towards the bottom; strokes of a darker grey represent a crack in the brickwork. At the extreme left an area brushed broadly in an olive green evidently depicts a tablecloth.

The face is painted, in the lit areas, with fine strokes of a yellowish flesh colour, fairly thickly applied especially on the cheekbone and below the eye; a thinner purplish light pink is used on the cheek, and recurs as a highlight halfway up the ridge of the nose and at the nose-tip. The shadows are painted thinly in translucent browns, apart from the thickly done dark cast shadow of the nose; this curves round the nose-tip, which shows a dab of pinkish red in the centre. The lefthand nostril is formed by a fleck of black in the dark red part indicating the underedge of the wing of the nose.

The eye on the left is modelled with care. The lid is painted in shades of flesh colour with a small highlight and bounded by reddish brown strokes the lowest of which suggests the shadow on the eyeball and merges to the right into some bright red in the corner of the eye. In the white of the eye, done in a grey that is a little warmer on the right and cooler and lighter on the left, the iris is a dark grey at the edge and a lighter brown-grey below and to the right of the black pupil; there is a catchlight on the left, on the edge of the pupil. White catchlights at the bottom of the white of the eye suggest the rim of moisture. (The underedge of the eye and eye-pouch show restorations of paint-loss.) The righthand eye is executed similarly, in darker colours. The eyebrows are in a thin brown.

The lips are modelled subtly, with the upper in brown-red with a bright red to show reflected light along the underside, and the lower with strokes of bright red and light pink overlapped from below by strokes of flesh colour; the mouth-line is painted with a few strokes of thin black and becomes vague downwards on the righthand end. The moustache is rendered with small strokes of yellow-brown.

The hair is set down in thin brown with, over it, an indication of curls in dark brown and yellow-brown; a number of scratchmarks expose the ground at the upper centre, and the white of the collar at the lower left. The lock of hair falling over the forehead on the left is in a rather more opaque yellowish and grey-brown paint. The collar is done in a quite thick white, with the lace indicated with curling strokes and spots of brown and grey-brown. The clothing, over which the collar has at its edge evidently been placed, is laid down in a thin grey to which the ground, showing through, lends a warm tone. On top of this, set down with partly smooth and partly coarse brushwork, there is grey, mauve and pinkish paint suggesting the lustre of the fabric. The braiding is shown in an ochre yellow with yellow and yellow-white highlights, set partly over dark paint that provides the cast shadows (and that in the deep shadows of the cloak collar seems to have been overpainted).

The condition of the upper hand is no longer reliable, and it has most probably been substantially overpainted. The bottom hand still shows the original structure, with thin shadows and thicker flesh colour in the lit parts (though also with thin, whitish-pink overpainting). The cuff is very largely done with thick and broadly-brushed grey or — as the X-ray shows — grey toned down with white; the lit, curling edge has, apparently later, been set on top of this in a thick white. The brim of the hat is painted in grey-black, and the crown in black with a dark grey band with a few yellow highlights.
SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

X-Rays

The radiographic image to a great extent matches what one would expect from the paint surface. Radioabsorbent paint is seen in the light parts of the face, the collar and the cuff at the right wrist, as well on the shoulder and upper edge of the sleeve and in the costume below the elbow. The brushstrokes are very often apparent, and occasionally do not coincide with the strokes seen at the surface; they thus probably belong to an underpainting. In the darker parts of the figure and in the background, too, the brushwork can mostly be readily followed. Below the hat the background appears quite light down to a horizontal border level with the presentday table on the left.

Fig. 1. Panel 81.4 × 71.4 cm

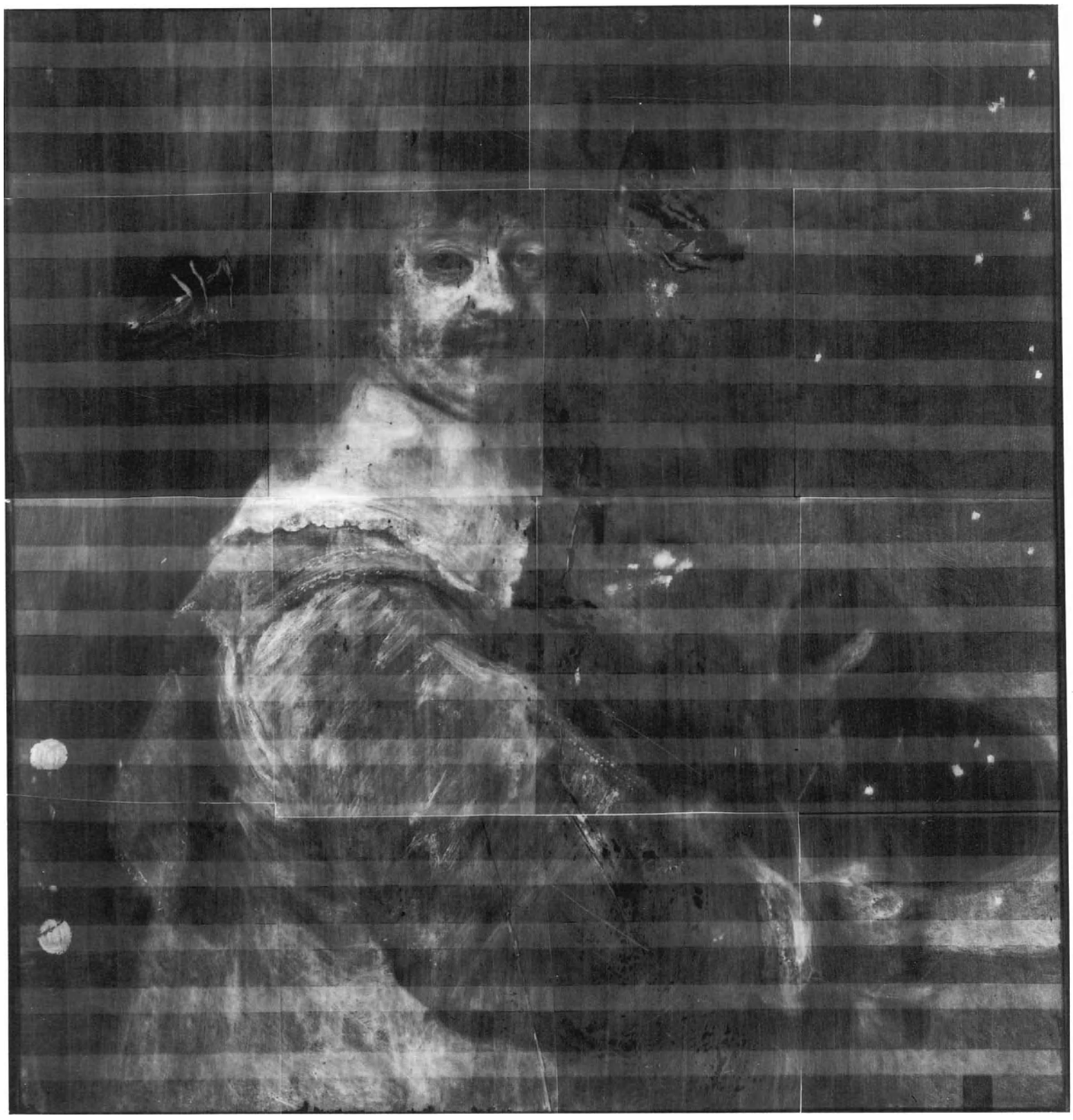


The way the grain of the panel shows up light due to accumulations of the grounding in long and roughly vertical stripes suggests that this is made from poplarwood rather than oak (cf., for instance, nos. A 128 and A 131).

The three knots in the panel (see *Support* above) are quite plainly visible as very dark patches, with white where irregularities in the surface and hairline cracks have been filled in with stopping containing white lead. The cracks described earlier are also clearly evident.

The paint-loss described under *Paint layer* shows up black, and has occurred mainly in a vertical band at and to the right of the centre of the panel. Scattered all over the righthand part of the panel there are white spots that probably come from damages having been stopped with primer containing white lead. Round,

Fig. 2. X-Ray



light patches by the edge of the panel on the left are caused by wax seals on the back of the panel.

Signature

At the bottom right next to the end of the hat-brim, in a fairly thin grey-brown over the dry paint of the background, <*Rembrandt*>. The script is not all that pronounced, and the absence of an *f* for 'fecit' and a date is unusual. The inscription is of doubtful authenticity, and it is possible that the present signature replaces another that was lost when the panel was reduced.

Varnish

No special remarks.

4. Comments

In the literature, opinions about this painting vary widely. Recognized as a Rembrandt by Bode[1], Valentiner[2], Hofstede de Groot[3], Rosenberg[4] and Bauch[5], it was omitted by Bredius, Gerson, Schwartz and Tümpel who apparently disagreed with the attribution. It does, in fact, differ in composition and use of colour from Rembrandt's other portraits from the 1630s, which in general offer a summary modelling of the sitters' black costume and focus attention mainly on the face and to a lesser degree on the hands (when these are visible). If only in the separate existence — not just in volume, but also as a material and in colour — that has been given here to the taffeta costume with its purplish sheen, the painting differs markedly in its appearance, and one can find no analogy among Rembrandt's paintings for the treatment of this passage. Against this there is the fact that the handling of the head — where the surface has not been affected by local paint-loss — points in its lighting and brushstroke image very strongly to Rembrandt, and this is confirmed by the X-rays. The relationship between the relatively firm and very three-dimensional modelling of the eyes and mouth, the well-fleshed quality of the lit part of the face and cursorily rendered form on the shadow side, and the fluffiness of the hair, eyebrows and moustache are closely akin to what we know from other Rembrandt portraits. Even in the dress, unusual for Rembrandt, there is a certain similarity with his work — not so much in treatment as in the structural form he gave such passages, albeit in a different colour. Incisive cast shadows, especially below the revers of the cloak along the back may be compared with the effect achieved in the 1632 *Portrait of Marten Looten* in Los Angeles (no. A 52), and the treatment of the shoulder seam as well as the curling points of the collar and cuff remind one of, for instance, the collar in the 1632 *Portrait of Maurits Huygens* in Hamburg (no. A 57). Taken together with the atmospheric effect produced by the figure's appearing in front of what is shown as a plastered wall, these qualities provide strong evidence for Rembrandt's authorship. Yet one cannot ignore a number of aberrant features, among which must be counted the quite summary treatment of the right hand (the other hand can hardly be judged, because of its condition).

The question of whether this painting can be included among Rembrandt's autograph portraits naturally depends in part on what date it is given. The literature has always adopted the year 1637, on the grounds of a date supposedly seen on the panel. No trace can be found of this, however, and a date somewhat later than that, around 1639, would fit in better with Rembrandt's work from the viewpoint of both the manner of painting and physical appear-ance and the unusual composition. In the close attention paid to rendering the substance not only of the face and hair but of the uncommonly rich apparel as well the work reminds one most of the Amsterdam *Portrait of a young woman (Maria Trip?)* (no. A 131). Though they differ greatly in their range of colours, these two paintings share a kind of illusionism that, while not over-precise, manages to translate the richness of the material being represented into a pictorial richness stemming from the handling of paint itself. This tendency, not found in works from the mid-1630s, seems to be typical of the years around 1639/40, and can for example also be seen in a work such as the Chatsworth *Man in oriental costume (King Uzziah?)* (no. A 128) also from 1639. The painting however also shares a number of physical features with the *Portrait of a young woman*, apparent especially in the X-rays. The way the grounding of the two panels shows up makes one suspect that not only the woman's portrait (and as a matter of fact the Chatsworth painting as well) but also the present work is on a panel of poplarwood; and the radiographic image of the head — built up as it is from quite wide and somewhat blurred brushstrokes in the radioabsorbent passages — is in both cases very much alike. All things considered there can be no reasonable doubt that the man's portrait fits in well among the autograph Rembrandt works from about 1639. The execution of the right hand and cuff, strange at first sight, does it is true offer a remarkable contrast to the extremely careful modelling of the hand holding the fan in the Amsterdam portrait, but an explanation for this can be found in the differing roles these hands play in the spatial composition of the respective portraits. In the woman's the hand, with the fan and silver-armrest, marks the extreme front limit of the picture's depth (the other hand, seen at some distance, has hardly any modelling), while in the man's this function is performed by the taffeta sleeve, which forms a bulky and colourful centre of interest in the composition; the hand is set further back, where the full light only just falls on the curling cuff. Looked at in this way, the distribution of detail and modelling (uncommon in a Rembrandt portrait) may be seen as an outcome of the commission — in that the choice of costume was that of the sitter — and of the spatial composition the artist employed. Bearing in mind that the colour and material of the costume are not in line with Amsterdam fashion of the time, one tends to assume that rather than someone from the Amsterdam burgher class the sitter is a (perhaps foreign) aristocrat; the (otherwise totally unfounded) notion that he is Prince Frederik Hendrik of Orange thus becomes understandable.

The portrait's composition and sitter's pose are not entirely unique among the work of Rembrandt and his followers, and the connexions that can be shown confirm to some extent the dating suggested for the painting. As Schmidt-Degener[6] pointed out, the musketeer on the extreme left in the *Night watch*

Fig. 3. Detail (1 : 1)



Fig. 4. Detail (1 : 1)



(no. A 146) — on a strip now cut off, and known to us only from copies — had a similar pose in right profile, holding a hat in one hand in front of the body. One can assume that Rembrandt was already busy working on the *Night watch* in 1639, and that the present work was produced in the same period. An even closer similarity than that of the figure just mentioned is offered by a *Portrait of a man* dated 1641 by Govaert Flinck in the J. Paul Getty Museum in Malibu (fig. 5; Von Moltke *Flinck* , no. 308; Sumowski *Gemälde* II, no. 697). It is evident that this portrait is based directly on no. A 130 not only from the composition but also from details such as the curling sleeve-cuff and the crack in the plaster of the rear wall. The hint of a table on the left — though according to the X-ray it was originally on the right — in the Rembrandt is not found in the Flinck. This comparison also makes plain how great the difference in quality between the paintings is, and rules out the idea that they come from a single hand. Moreover Finck's panel prompts the thought that the Rembrandt has been reduced at the right and bottom (not at the left and top) — see also *Support* above; this would then have had to occur prior to 1771, when it was described with roughly its present dimensions (see *8. Provenance*). In that case one can well imagine that the present obviously non-autograph inscription was appended to replace a previous signature.

The pose, which must be termed uncommon for Rembrandt, has a variety of antecedents. The prominent role of the colourful sleeve suggests that Titian's '*Ariosto*' in London (The National Gallery no. 1944) served as a source for this motif, especially since as we know the painting in 1639 provided the model for Rembrandt's etched *Self-portrait* B. 21 and in 1640 for the painted *Self-portrait* in London (no. A 139, see also under *Comments* for that entry).

Fig. 5. G. Flinck, *Portrait of a man*, 1641, panel 91.5 × 73.5 cm. Malibu, Cal., The J. Paul Getty Museum



The motif of the hat held in front of the body, usually in one hand (either the left or the right), seems to come from a Haarlem usuage; in the work of Johannes Verspronck (1605/11–1662) it occurs a number of times from 1634 onwards (see R.E.O. Ekkart, *Johannes Cornelisz. Verspronck*, Haarlem 1979, passim).

5. Documents and sources

Two wax seals, transferred from the original back of the panel to the cradle, show a shield supported by two naked women; this ought perhaps to be read as the family arms of the Russian princes Gagarin, described as 'd'or à un arbre terrassé de sinople, à un cerf au naturel brochant sur le fût de l'arbre'.

6. Graphic reproductions

None.

7. Copies

None.

8. Provenance

*– Coll. Gabriel Huquier *père*, sale Paris 1–23 July 1771 (Lugt 1944), no. 1: 'Un Portrait d'homme à mi-corps, vu de trois quarts, tenant à deux mains son chapeau, peint sur bois par Reimbrant; ce Tableau est un des plus fini de ce Maître, il est très-frais & bien conservé: largeur 2 pieds 3 pouces, hauteur 2 pieds & demi [height and width have obviously been transposed: = 81 × 73 cm]'. (599 livres)
*– Coll. Watelet, sale Paris 12ff June 1786 (Lugt 4061), no. 44: 'Rembrandt van Ryn. Le portrait d'un artiste. Il est représenté à mi-corps & vêtu selon l'ancien costume Hollandois, la tête tournée de trois quarts, tenant un chapeau rabattu dans ses mains. On ne peut rien offrir de plus frappant & de plus caractérisé que ce beau morceau, où la richesse de la couleur seconde admirablement la touche hardie & savante admirée dans cet artiste. Hauteur 29 pouces. Largeur 26 [= 78.3 × 70.2 cm]. B[ois].' (3310 livres to Changran).
*– Coll. Marquis de Chamgrand, sale Paris 20–24 March 1787 (Lugt 4162), no. 24: 'Rembrant van Rhim. Le portrait d'un Artiste; il est représenté à mi-corps & vêtu selon l'ancien costume hollandois; la tête tournée de trois quarts tenant un chapeau rabatu dans ses mains. On ne peut rien offrir de plus frappant & de plus caractérisé que ce beau morceau, où la richesse de la couleur feconde admirablement la touche hardie & savante admirée dans cet Artiste. Hauteur 29 pouces, Largeur 26 pouces [= 78.3 × 70.2 cm]. B. No. 44 du Catalogue du feu M. Wattelet.' (3000 livres (in pencil), 300 (in pen) to Paillet). Smith[7], followed by Hofstede de Groot[3], wrongly reported that the painting was in 1787 sold for 3000 francs in the sale of the coll. Proley.
– Coll. Princes Gagarin, Moscow. Probably bought by Prince Sergei Sergevich Gagarin (1784–1852), according to a letter dated 19 June 1966 from Y. Kuznetsov of The Hermitage Museum, Leningrad, to William J. Middendorf II. By descent to Prince Nicolas Gagarine, who sold the picture through Prince Pierre Troubteskoy to the next owner in 1925.[8]
– Coll. Alfred W. Erickson, New York. Sale New York 15 November 1961, no. 14.
– Coll. J. William Middendorf II (on loan to the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York), until 1979.

9. Summary

In spite of a somewhat unusual appearance the overall approach and treatment of the head and hands make the attribution of this painting to Rembrandt entirely acceptable. The unusual appearance is due to the great attention paid to the exceptionally rich colour and material of the costume, which must have had to do with the commission; the customer cannot be looked for among the burgher class circles from which Rembrandt drew most of his clientele. The treatment can best be compared with what is seen in works from 1639, and a date in that year is thus more likely than the traditional one of 1637. Rembrandt's familiarity with Titian's '*Ariosto*' in 1639/40, also evident in other work, seems to have influenced the pose, and this supports a 1639 dating. A portrait by Govaert Flinck showing the same motif and dated 1641 suggests that the panel has been reduced at the right and bottom (before 1771), and an original signature was then probably lost.

REFERENCES

1 W. Bode and C. Hofstede de Groot, *Rembrandt* VIII, Paris 1905, no. 570.
2 W.R. Valentiner, *Rembrandt*, Stuttgart-Leipzig 1909 (*Kl.d.K.*), p. 217.
3 HdG 751.
4 J. Rosenberg, *Rembrandt*, Cambridge, Mass., 1948, p. 248; 2nd edn London 1964, p. 371.
5 Bauch 379.
6 F. Schmidt-Degener, 'Het genetische probleem van de Nachtwacht III, 2', *Onze Kunst* 30 (1916), pp. 29–56, esp. 40.
7 J. Smith, *A catalogue raisonné of the works of the most eminent Dutch, Flemish and French painters* VII, London 1836, no. 263.
8 *The Armand Hammer Collection*, 2 edn, Los Angeles 1987, p. 224.

A 131 Portrait of a young woman, probably Maria Trip [1639]

AMSTERDAM, RIJKSMUSEUM, INV. NO. C 597, ON LOAN FROM THE FAMILIE VAN WEEDE STICHTING

HDG 845; BR. 356; BAUCH 498; GERSON 194

Fig. 1. Panel 107 × 82 cm



Fig. 2. X-Ray



1. Summarized opinion

A generally well preserved, authentic work, reduced either earlier (by Rembrandt himself) or later, which in line with an admittedly unreliable signature and date can be put in 1639.

2. Description of subject

Seen to just above the knees, a young woman stands a little to the right of centre, turned slightly to the left and looking towards the viewer. Her right arm hangs beside the body, while the left hand — holding a fan bound together with a ribbon — rests on the end of a richly ornamented silver banister rail. She wears a high-waisted gown of black shiny stuff that along the belt and in a wide band at the front of the skirt is set off with braiding of black silk and gold embroidery to which are attached three gold-embroidered rosettes. Her wide sleeves have a slash, bordered with black braiding, through which can be glimpsed a cream-coloured material, and lace-trimmed cuffs. Over her shoulders and upper arms lies a wide, flat shawl-collar of a translucent white material, trimmed with a wide lace edging; this is for the most part covered by a double-layered collar with a lace border. Between the panels of the latter her décolleté is covered with white voile and lace, above a lace border running along the top of her bodice. Fluffy blond hair falls over the forehead in a fringe, and is combed back to the top of the head and held together in a bun decorated with a jewel with pearls. She wears long gold jewelled eardrops with three dangling pearls, a pearl necklace and a pendant hanging on a black cord; at the breast there is a gold brooch with black and blue-green stones and three pendant pearls, and both wrists have a bracelet of four rows of pearls.

The figure is lit from high on the left, and stands in front of an archway of which only part is seen at the upper left; on the right, beyond the door-frame, can be seen a vertical, purplish-brown post-like shape the nature of which is unclear (perhaps part of a door opened inwards?). On the extreme left one can see, in the space beyond the door opening, part of a herm carrying a profiled superstructure that disappears into the darkness. Further back a curtain, with a filleted edge and fringe, hangs in folds.

3. Observations and technical information

Working conditions

Examined in July 1972 (B.H., S.H.L.) in good daylight and out of the frame, with the aid of nine radiographs together covering the whole painting that were also available subsequently.

Support

DESCRIPTION: Poplar panel (information from Prof. Dr J. Bauch, University of Hamburg[1], and from Mr B.J.H. ter Welle, University of Utrecht by letter of 27 May 1981), and not Indonesian djati-wood as has been said[2], 107 × 82 cm. Fairly thick, and comprising a single plank. Back bevelled along all four sides. A vertical crack some 15 cm long runs down from the top edge at about 20 cm from the lefthand side. A few areas of unevenness in the surface of the painting apparent under raking light must perhaps be put down to the surface of the panel not being entirely flat, and this not having be entirely overcome by the ground (see *X-Rays*).

SCIENTIFIC DATA: There is some indication that the panel comes from the same tree as that of the *Portrait of Anna Wijmer* (no. C 113) in the Six Collection, Amsterdam[1].

Ground

DESCRIPTION: Ochre-coloured, and vaguely apparent in the extreme top corners.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

Paint layer

CONDITION: Good, apart from an entirely restored patch on the left along the bottom edge, which at the extreme left is *c.* 10 cm high and narrows down towards the right where it terminates under the fan. It may be seen in the X-rays that here and there a slight amount of paint loss has occurred, and that in the woman's left wrist and bracelet there is a scratch in the paint surface that has been restored. Craquelure: in thickly painted light areas in the figure there is a fairly regular network of long and mainly horizontal cracks — in the forehead, the righthand cheek, in the centre of the chest and the white of the clothing below this, and in the hand on the right. In the lefthand panel of the uppermost collar the cracks run mostly vertical. In addition there is at several places a dense, irregular pattern of small cracks that (as is confirmed in a number of cases by the X-rays) is connected with the reworking of these passages. They are found in the shadow of the neck, in an area in the background along the contour of the lefthand shoulder and below the lower edges of the collars on the left (in both latter instances an underlying grey-white can be seen in the fissures), and further down there are others in the rosettes and in the black of the skirt below and to the right of the righthand rosette. Outside the figure this pattern also occurs in part of a grey field bordering the arm on the left, in a band that appears in the X-ray to coincide with a vaguely-bounded zone that yields a weak light radiographic image; and finally it is also seen in thickly painted black in the background where this meets the hair.

DESCRIPTION: The painting is marked by a very careful treatment in which, in the figure at least, the brushwork is scarcely perceptible. The dark surroundings consist to a large extent of large areas of opaque and evenly-brushed paint; only in the herm on the left and in the banister rail in the right foreground is the brushstroke more free and direct. Around the face and along the righthand contour the transitions from the lit figure to the background are soft and gradual — in the first case via the hair, where on the one hand the fringe falling over the forehead breaks up the solid shape of the lit area while on the other, in sheens of light on the head and in the curls along the righthand side of the face, the effect of the light is somewhat scattered; further out, the tint of the hair can hardly be distinguished from that of the background. At the beginning of the shoulders it is the uppermost collar that provides the diffuse transitions; on the right, where the fine hair lies slightly over it, the blurring of form is achieved in the same way as on the forehead. On the lefthand side the figure, from halfway down the shoulder, stands out more sharply against the deep black of the background at the top and the mat grey further down. The perspective of the body is here achieved by a light toning-down of the colour in the collar, cuff and hand, and through a slight diminution of detail. In the light areas in particular the paint is applied thickly, especially so in the axis of the figure where the relief of the paint layer in the lace-trimmed garments and the jewel at the breast contributes to an allusion of reality.

The subtly varied white in the collars and cuffs provide strong light-to-dark contrasts against the black — enlivened with sheens of grey — of the woman's gown. This refined but rather spartan colouring is counterbalanced by the warm tints of the flesh tones, in the mat glow of the gold-thread braiding and in the fan with its gold handle and a bow in which green and yellow have been used. The thickly applied flesh tints in the face, carefully brushed with the form, have quite a lot of pink — on the cheeks, in the eyelids and above the mouth. A warm brown is used in the borders of the upper eyelids, in the opaquely painted irises, below the nose and in the cast shadow under it which provides the strongest shadow accent in the whole figure. There is a vague edging to the greyish eyebrows, the righthand one merging into the shadow by the bridge of the nose; the ridge of the nose is hardly marked at all, apart from a few fine catchlights. Equally vaguely outlined are the lips, albeit in a strikingly bright pink-red, and the mouth-line built up from

Fig. 3. Detail (1 : 1)



small strokes of a grey-brown paint. In the fringe on the forehead there are confused strokes of a thin ochre colour and flesh tints, mixed in with each other; elsewhere the hair is shown in thin browns worked up with fine curving strokes of pink, grey and ochre-brown. The shadows along the chin and in the neck, which contain vague reflexions of light, comprise a mixture of flesh tints, grey and brown; a fine craquelure pattern following the curve of the neck can be seen as evidence that this passage was gone over again before the underlying paint was entirely dry. Downwards it becomes a warm pink, tending towards yellow and flatly brushed. On either side along the black cord with a pendant there is a thin, deeper stroke of yellow-grey that helps create the suggestion of a relief. On the other hand, a strong orange-pink has been used, thickly applied, for the shadows that the pearls, upper collar and lace of the decolleté cast on the skin.

As has already been mentioned, the lace-trimmed garments are painted in thick white and greyish white, into which a greater proportion of flesh colour is mixed as the material is meant to let more of the skin to show through. The successive strips of lace are separated with light grey; a somewhat darker grey suggests, to the right, the shadow of the lace on the underlying cloth. The pattern of the lace is drawn with a fine brush in strokes and spots of black, dark grey and white, with a muddy yellow in the uppermost edge. The paint is thinner in the black gown; here, in the dark grey sheens of light on the folds, the long brushstroke is rather less blurred, as it also is in the cream-coloured material glimpsed through the slashes in the sleeves.

The gold-thread braiding comprises interlacing strokes, flicks and spots of grey, black, orange-brown, light yellow, blue-green and white paint that together create the shiny effect aimed at. A deal of attention has obviously also been devoted to the hand with the fan, modelled firmly with the help of softly merging shadows and carefully drawn contours. The flesh colour is here again rather reddish; the shadow lines between the fingers and the boundary at the cuff at the wrist are done in an orange-brown. Together with the black, brown, yellow and white used for showing the gold handle of the fan, and with the bright green and yellow of the ribbon dangling over the fingers, the hand forms a colour accent hightened further still by the exceptionally dynamic painting of the rail on which it rests. Long, curving strokes of black and brown are here complemented with accents in red-brown and grazing highlights in ochre-yellow and white, the latter suggesting that this is an object made from metal — perhaps silver, or at least silver-plated.

The almost deep black central area of the background, where a fringed curtain can be vaguely made out on the left, is framed by elements further to the front, done in subdued colours. On the left there is a semi-visible herm in an umber colour atop which the figure, seen from the hips up, is shown with long strokes of dark grey; at the top left and right the framing is provided by a door with an arched top done in dark grey-brown, with a profile indicated in a somewhat darker tint; and inside (i.e. behind) this door opening there is on the right a vertical band of purplish brown, the paint surface of which is remarkably rough.

It is evident, from examining the paint relief under a raking light, that at the bottom of the picture there has been a quite extensive change that becomes even clearer in the X-ray. Instead of the banister rail that is today seen only on the right, there was originally, executed in fairly thick paint, a balustrade running across almost the full width of the painting, with the sitter behind it; this balustrade ran out of the picture to the right, while on the left it curved downwards. Equally remarkable is the presence in the background to the left of the head of short brushstrokes running towards the top left (also apparent in the paint relief) and passing half through the curtain now seen at that point and half through a dark vertical band to the left of it. This phenomenon (which cannot be detected in the X-ray) confirms the suspicion that the dark area surrounding the woman's upper body has, wholly or in part, been worked over. Further evidence for this is a marked and somewhat coarse paint relief where this area adjoins the hair, which in comparison is painted thin and smooth. This is clearest to the right of the head, where as already commented (see CONDITION) the background paint is cracked in an irregular pattern. Immediately above the head, running parallel with the curves of the head and bejewelled bun, there is a zone of thinner and smoother paint, perhaps indicating that the top of the head was at first meant to be rather higher up. A number of further alterations to the picture will be mentioned under *X-Rays*.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

X-Rays

As one would expect from examining the paint surface, the light passages appear quite clearly in the X-rays; the head has a gentle pattern of quite broad brushstrokes. Outside the figure the image is dominated by more or less vertical strokes used to apply an unevenly spread ground layer; this appearance of the ground may be due to the unusual kind of wood used for the panel, which has a quite smooth surface. As we have already said under *Support* there are a number of uneven spots in the surface of the painting that probably have to be blamed on dents in the panel. There is one of these to the left of the figure, running in a curved line level with the shoulder and out to the edge of the panel, and another in the skirt, below the righthand rosette; they are seen in the X-ray to coincide with the vague image of concentrations of radioabsorbent pigment that suggest there was clumping of the ground at this point; of several spots showing up stronger still, one in the skirt is evidently a stopping.

The X-ray image indicates a number of changes to the picture that may already be suspected from cracking or relief at the paint surface. On the left the contour of the shoulder was originally more to the left, and the bottom edge of the collars was lower than it is today. The grey-white that can be glimpsed here through cracks in the dark paint of the background and gown (see CONDITION) are found to belong to covered-over parts of the collar. The banister already described in DESCRIPTION as originally running across almost the full width of the foreground (and only part of which remains, on the right) can be made out clearly in the X-ray. Its present appearance, with a rounded end and running out to the righthand edge, has been adapted to suit the new situation: initially the top edge — showing up light in the radiographic image — continued right through, curving downwards only on the extreme left. Brushstrokes showing up light at the bottom centre match in their structure those used for the gold braiding; obviously the original intention was to have this visible through one of the gaps in the banister. Linked to this change in the banister is the fact that, as the X-rays make clear, the hand resting on it has also been altered; in an earlier version the hand was placed rather further to the left with the fingers pointing more nearly straight down apart from the index finger pointing to the left — a fingertip can still be seen, rather more vaguely, below the latter. From the fact that the fingers of the hand in its earlier state show up light in the X-ray, one may assume that this version was taken to a quite advanced stage before it was amended; in the final version the fingers were clearly painted first in their entirety, and the ribbons dangling over them were done only afterwards. If it may be taken that what one sees of the arm and hand on the left corresponds with the original lay-in — and there is nothing to suggest otherwise — then it was initially intended that this hand should be hidden behind the continuous banister.

A shadow at the top centre comes from a wax seal on the back of the panel.

Signature

At the bottom left, in dark grey paint <*Rembrandt f / 1639*>. The letters are spiky in shape and the *R* hardly legible, while the date

Fig. 4. Detail (1 : 1)



is diagonally below the *f* to the right. The script, the unusual placing of the date and the fact that this inscription is on a restored patch (see *Paint layer*, CONDITION) are grounds for denying its authenticity. It was probably copied from an original signature.

Varnish

No special remarks.

4. Comments

The stylistic character and execution of the painting convince one entirely of Rembrant's authorship, with a date in the late 1630s. The extremely careful handling of paint ensures a very detailed rendering of the appearance of the richly-dressed sitter. The choice of an unusual kind of wood for the panel may have come from an attempt to enhance the luxurious appearance through the smoothness of the panel surface, or from the desire to use an unbroken panel. The young woman stands facing the even light, which produces just enough shadow to create an illusion of plasticity. The way the contours of the figure are blurred and offer only a subdued contrast with the dark background helps to give an atmospheric effect, and prevents the figure being isolated through its plasticity. While the balance this provides between illusionism and pictorial homogeneity already to some extent marked Rembrandt's earlier portraits, he never before used an even and intense detailing of the whole figure in this way. Even though the sitter's social status may have been a reason for paying special heed to her costume and jewellery, this degree of detail is still a remarkable stylistic feature. It would seem to anticipate somewhat the equally meticulous — though more reticent — treatment seen in the London *Self-portrait* of 1640 (no. A 139); it is found again, though more broadly executed, in the Brussels *Portrait of Nicolaes Bambeeck* and the *Portrait of Agatha Bas* in Buckingham Palace, both from 1641 (nos. A 144 and A 145). The date 1639 that now appears on the painting may thus be taken as accurate, even though the inscription cannot in its present form be regarded as authentic; it was probably copied from an original one.

Quite unusual, when compared with both earlier and later portraits, is the degree to which in this work the area in the far righthand bottom corner forms a centre of colour and illusionistic intensity, not only through the modelling of the hand and the silvery rail on which it rests, but also — and especially — through the foreshortening of the handle of the fan and the shadow cast by the bright-coloured ribbons on the hand. The fact that an effect like this — which in itself foreshadows the centre of the *Night watch* of 1642 (no. A 146) — is located so close to the edge of the painting in its final state, cannot be explained other than as a change in the artist's concept of the relationship between the figure and the surrounding space, and also (as we shall see below) as the result of a change in format that perhaps had to do with experiments on this.

Rembrandt does seem, in this painting precisely, to have been experimenting with this point of the relationship between figure and setting; one can see this from changes that can only partially be interpreted. It can be said with certainty that initially the figure stood behind a rail running horizontally across virtually the whole width of the composition and curving downwards at the left; the X-rays show that it was ornamented like the present rail, and similarly had catchlights. This marking-out of the extreme foreground is a trait that is totally foreign to Rembrandt's earlier portraits — apart, to a certain extent, from the very first ones, i.e. the *Portrait of Nicolaes Ruts* in the Frick Collection (no. A 43) and the Leningrad *Portrait of a young man at a writing desk* (no. A 44), both dating from 1631. The idea may have come to him from Titian's *Portrait of a man ('Ariosto')*, now in London (National Gallery no. 1944), a painting he certainly knew from an example — probably the original — that was up to 1641 in the possession of Alfonso López in Amsterdam and from which he borrowed a number of elements for his 1640 London *Self-portrait*, including a sill in the foreground. One might even think that the occasionally somewhat sfumato-like treatment of no. A 131 also reveals the influence of the same prototype. It is hard to say for certain how the background of this painting looked in its original state; it is clear however that today's dark paint covers large parts of an earlier painting and, perhaps as a result, gives only a very vague picture of a view through a door-opening with an arched top, in which a herm is partly visible on the left and a curtain hangs down straight to the right behind it. Some evidence of an earlier state might be found in a group of brushstrokes running diagonally up to the left, seen in relief to the left of the head. One cannot tell whether these strokes formed part of a room seen in perspective (such as one sees in a drawing in the British Museum that will be mentioned below) or of a curtain hanging in folds like that seen, combined with a balustrade, in a number of portraits by Flinck, Bol and Van den Eeckhout from the years 1643–44; most of these are however based on Rembrandt's 1640 *Self-portrait*, and can thus shed little light on the original appearance of the present work.

Rembrandt must have decided only at a second stage drastically to shorten the rail in the foreground and to curve it up slightly at the right so that it ended up looking like a chairarm or stair-rail. The drawing in the British Museum (fig. 5; Ben. 442) must come from this stage. It has in the literature always been called a preliminary study, but as is often the case with Rembrandt's drawings linked to painted compositions (cf. for example no. A 15 figs. 7, 8

Fig. 5. Rembrandt, Sketch done in preparation for a change in composition, pen, red chalk, wash 16 × 12.9 cm (Ben. 442). London, The British Museum



and 9) this too must have been made with an eye to changing a painting that was already partly executed, to please either the artist himself or his customer. The drawing shows the painting as Rembrandt pictured it after his second thoughts, and framed. The most immediately obvious change is the aforementioned shortening of the balustrade; the hand resting on it now holds a fan that was not present before. The background is indicated in the drawing as consisting of an arched doorway placed left of centre, with to the right of it a pilaster or section of wall onto which the cast shadow of the figure falls; on the left a room is seen in perspective through the doorway. One cannot tell whether this background matched the one already executed at that time. Comparison with the painting in its present state reveals two things about the drawing: first, the picture area is considerable larger — the sitter is seen knee-length and stands in the central axis; more can be seen of the banister rail towards the bottom and also towards the right, where there is a great deal more distance between the figure and the frame. One may take it that since it was reproduced in the drawing the painting has certainly been cut down at the bottom and righthand side (by *c.* 18 cm and 11 cm respectively) if not indeed on all four sides, as Gerson[2] already inferred from the drawing. And in the second place the figure is reproduced with a number of discrepancies from its presentday appearance that match exactly what can be recognized as changes from either the X-ray evidence or the paint surface or both. Thus, the ends of the uppermost layer of the collar hang lower, and the three rosettes that adorn the costume today are missing; the outline of the hair against the background also seems to have been somewhat higher up. It is unclear from the drawing how the artist saw the position of the woman's right hand.

Since the drawing was made, three things must have happened to the painting, in one order or another: firstly, the background was executed to a design that to some extent echoes that in the drawing — which in turn shows similarities to the background in the Kassel *Portrait of a man standing*, also from 1639 (no. A 129) and yet also differs from it. The arch of the doorway now spans the full width of the (reduced) picture area, and behind it one sees, indistinctly, a shallow view through with on the left the indication of a herm, belonging to a chimneybreast or item of furniture. The rail is, roughly as in the drawing, shortened and altered in shape, and the figure has been filled in where it was hidden by the earlier rail. Secondly, there have been the changes already mentioned to the figure, and perhaps also at this stage (in connexion with the overpainting of the background) those made to the shoulder contour on the left. And thirdly the panel has, at some time, been reduced along the bottom and righthand side so that the figure is now seen only to just above the knees, and stands to the right of centre. One cannot say for sure whether this alteration in format was contemporaneous, intended by Rembrandt as part of his change to the composition, or due to a later intervention. An argument in favour of the latter might be that when seen in a wider framework and down to the knees the figure must have appeared very tall, in line with the obvious intention of Rembrandt's design and with the mise-en-page of the etched *Portrait of Ephraim Buëno* of 1647 (B. 278). Yet one cannot wholly discount the possibility of the painting having been reduced in size before it was finished, at the behest of the artist or of the person commissioning it. It was, to begin with, carried out very carefully — the bevelling on the back is even along all four sides, which was not unusually the case (so far as we know) when a painting was subsequently reduced. In its present composition the strengthened vertical along the righthand side makes it likely that this was indeed intended to close the picture off along that edge. And finally a red chalk drawing from the early 1640s in the British Museum, earlier attributed to Ferdinand Bol but now to Gerbrand van den Eeckhout (Sumowski *Drawings* III, no. 72), gives a strong impression of being directly based on no. A 131, and (besides reminiscences of the 1641 *Portrait of Agatha Bas*, no. A 145) its composition shows the same excentric placing and the same cutting-off

of the figure as the painting does in its present state. It seems not impossible that Rembrandt himself encountered problems in rendering the figure knee-length, without the balustrade that to some extent broke up its rather shapeless appearance, and decided to cut it off higher up; this would then naturally lead to a reduction in the width as well.

All in all one has to conclude that it is not entirely certain that the stylistic character of the painting, where this concerns the placing of strongly plastically developed motifs in the bottom righthand corner, matches what Rembrandt produced. Yet even allowing for this the painting remains on the one hand symptomatic of a plasticity of form in all its parts that was around 1640 growing — though very restrained — and on the other to some extent exceptional in the dwelling on individual details of costume and jewellery. Where the execution of jewels is concerned, a similar place in Rembrandt's development is occupied by the *Half-length figure of a young woman (Saskia)* in Kassel (no. A 85). The end result is, where the setting is concerned and after all the changes made to it, rather unclear, in respect of both the meaning of the background motifs and the nature of the chairarm or handrail in the foreground.

Identification of the sitter is due to I. H. van Eeghen[3], who worked from the assumption that a rich and socially-prominent young woman should be sought among the forebears of the earliest known owner of the portrait, Hendrik Maurits van Weede of Utrecht (1737–1796). The sole candidate was Maria Trip, baptized in the Amsterdam Oude Kerk on 6 January 1619 and thus 20 years of age when no. A 131 was painted; this would chime well with the apparent age of the sitter. It can furthermore be assumed that in the same year 1639 Rembrandt did a portrait of her mother Aletta Adriaens (cf. no. A 132), the widow of Elias Trip (1570–1636). Many years later he was to paint the portraits of Elias's younger brother Jacob Trip and his wife Margaretha de Geer (Br. 314 and 394). Maria Trip was married in 1641 to Balthasar Coymans and, after his death in 1657, remarried in 1661 to Pieter Ruysch, lord of Wayestein, from Utrecht. She died on 14 October 1683, leaving six daughters as her heirs. Of these, Constantia Coymans, wife of Johan Carel Smissaert, must have inherited the painting, which then passed to Constantia Isabella Smissaert, wife of Carel Justus van Arkel. Her daughter Philippina Baltina Elisabeth van Arkel was the mother of Hendrik Maurits van Weede. The pedigree thus constructed from genealogical data is wholly plausible, though it cannot be proven for lack of further evidence.

5. Documents and sources

The back of the panel bears, at the centre top, a wax seal with the arms of the Van Weede family (see *Provenance*).

6. Graphic reproductions

None.

7. Copies

None.

8. Provenance

— Owned by the Van Weede family of Utrecht and known since about 1870 (exhibition *Schilderijen van Oude Meesters* in Arti et Amicitiae, Amsterdam 1872, no. 209); according to Dutuit[4] 'récemment découvert dans une maison hospitalière d'Utrecht, où il était depuis plus de deux siècles'. Identification of the sitter is based on the assumption that the painting has always been owned by the family, in which it is believed to have been inherited through the female line[3] down to Hendrik Maurits van Weede (1737–1796).
— Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum, on loan from the Familie Van Weede Stichting since 1897.

9. Summary

In the execution of this painting the meticulous detailing of the richly-garbed figure and the atmospheric effect of the subdued contrast along the contours balance each other in a way that is characteristic of Rembrandt's portraits from the late 1630s. The signature and date of 1639 that are now seen on the painting cannot admittedly be looked on as authentic, but the year shown for its production is obviously correct.

Changes to the composition must be assumed from observations made at the paint surface, and are to some extent confirmed by the X-rays. A drawing in the British Museum is seen partly to reproduce the figure in an earlier version differing in some details from the present state, and partly to have served as a study for the altered setting. This drawing also shows that the painting was reduced substantially along the bottom and righthand side, either in connexion with Rembrandt's own changes to the composition, or subsequently.

The identification of the sitter as Maria Trip is based on a plausible interpretation of genealogical data.

REFERENCES

1 Cf. J. Bauch and D. Eckstein, 'Woodbiological investigation on panels of Rembrandt paintings', *Wood science and technology* 15 (1981), pp. 251–263, esp. 254.
2 Gerson 194; Br.-Gerson 356.
3 I.H. v[an] E[eghen], 'Maria Trip of een anoniem vrouwsportret van Rembrandt', *Amstelodamum, Maandblad* . . . 43 (1956), pp. 166–169.
4 E. Dutuit, *Tableaux et dessins de Rembrandt*, suppl., Paris 1885, p. 54.

A 132 Portrait of Aletta Adriaensdr. [1639]

ROTTERDAM, MUSEUM BOYMANS-VAN BEUNINGEN, WILLEM VAN DER VORM FOUNDATION, NO. 64

HDG 619; BR. 355; BAUCH 497; GERSON 193

1. Summarized opinion

An authentic work that has however suffered badly. The certainly non-autograph date of 1639 is acceptable as an indication of the year of production.

2. Description of subject

The sitter is seen to just above the waist, with the body and head turned a little to the left and the gaze directed towards the viewer. The figure is in light falling from the left, and stands against a uniformly dark background. She wears a black widow's cap of translucent material, a wide wheel-ruff with the upstanding neckband of a shirt projecting above it at the neck, and black clothing in which the only discernible detail is a lustre on the sleeve on the right, which ends in a white cuff. The fingers of the left hand rest on the horizontal top edge of a red tablecloth in front of the figure; on the extreme left this edge ends in a rounded angle.

3. Observations and technical information

Working conditions

Examined in December 1973 (B.H., E.v.d.W.) in good artificial light and UV light and in the frame. An X-ray film of the head and part of the collar was available. Examined again on 17 December 1984 (E.v.d.W.), out of the frame. Six X-ray films, together covering the whole of the painting, were received later.

Support

DESCRIPTION: Oak panel, grain vertical, 65.5 × 55.5 cm. Single plank. Mr. P.F.J.M. Hermersdorf, who restored the painting in 1971, removed an old cradle (see his report to the museum dated 1 July 1971). Present thickness 0.6 to 0.7 cm. At the left side 4 cm of sapwood has been attacked by woodworm. Priming can be seen along the righthand edge over the entire height of the panel. No traces of bevelling. Along the top edge two small grooves (at 20 cm from the left and 17.5 cm from the right respectively) are evidently traces of nails or pins having been driven into the frame to hold the painting in it (see also the *Concord of the State*, no. A 135).

SCIENTIFIC DATA: Dendrochronology (Dr P. Klein, Hamburg) showed a radial board undatable; the core of the trunk was some 13 cm distant from the panel and about 34.5 cm from the lefthand edge. The panel comes from the same tree as those used for the Berlin *John the Baptist preaching* of *c.* 1634/35 (no. A 106), the New York *Portrait of Herman Doomer* (no. A 140) and the London *Woman taken in adultery* of 1644 (Br. 566).

Ground

DESCRIPTION: A light yellow that may be regarded as belonging to the ground is locally exposed at the contour of the temple and lefthand cheekbone, and shows through in various areas of shadow in the face and neck. The same tint shows through in many patches of wear and in gaping cracks in the craquelure in the area of the shoulder on the right.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

Paint layer

CONDITION: The painting has suffered considerably from wear and overcleaning of the paint layer, and from paint-loss resulting from the working of the panel; overpaints of an extent difficult to judge govern in particular the appearance of the background and the dark clothing which, apart from the sleeve on the right, lacks all suggestion of form and material. In the fingers of the one visible hand the original paint layer has indeed virtually disappeared. According to the restoration report mentioned above, cleaning showed that in the darks a great deal had been overcleaned and patched with thin paint; trial removals of the old varnish, overpaints and discoloured retouches brought so much damage to light that in the background in particular it was decided to attempt no more than a partial removal of the varnish.

The recent restorations are readily apparent under UV light and to the naked eye. In the first case the background has a greenish appearance due to the fact that during the limited treatment given to the painting not all the old varnish was removed. The restored paint-loss matches the vertical line of the grain of the panel and appears to have occurred mostly in the middle of the ruff and a little above it in the face. The fingers and the object covered with a red cloth on which they rest were revealed during restoration in 1947, when later overpainting was removed[1]. The recent treatment of the fingers, starting from a much restored state, was limited to a broad reconstruction of form. Craquelure: in the collar and relatively thickly painted parts of the face there is normal panel craquelure with a horizontal and vertical pattern; the background above the head and the lower parts of the dark costume have a partly very fine shrinkage craquelure. A rather coarser shrinkage craquelure is seen in the top edge of the cap and above the sleeve on the right, and in the latter instance the yellowish ground shows through in the cracks.

DESCRIPTION: In the head and ruff the paint alternates between thin and thick, though never with impasto; the dark areas are relatively thin, and the grain of the panel is visible at many points over the whole surface. The head and collar belong to the better-preserved passages, though the paint in the head is perhaps overcleaned and worn in some places. As mentioned earlier something of the yellowish ground shows through here in the shadows. It is in particular more exposed at various points along the lefthand contour of the face, which is defined by an alternation of such open patches and of black paintstrokes forming part of the cap. The present hard effect of this contour, lacking plasticity, may be partly the result of wearing. Apart from the forehead, where no individual strokes can now be made out, the direction of the brushwork can be followed almost everywhere, though no sequence of application of the paint can be distinguished: it has often been set down wet-in-wet. The brushstrokes are closely geared to the modelling — long, supple strokes follow the form of the cheek on the right, of the chin and the length of the jaw, along which a strong reflexion of light has been placed on the right. Around the eyes, small curved strokes of a flesh colour tinted with a warm pink indicate wrinkles in the skin. The shadow on the temple on the right, indicated with small, flat strokes, appears somewhat patchy, and the rendering of form is not entirely satisfactory. (Slovenly strokes of thin, dark paint used in a vain attempt to suggest a lock of hair falling along the forehead must belong to a non-autograph overpaint.) The painting of the eyes is quite fluent, with small touches of pink and red on the edges of the lids, firm strokes of dark brown marking the shadow of the upper lid on the eyeball, and dots of white indicating the moisture along the lower eyelid. Long brushstrokes on the nose mostly follow the form; on the wing of the nose to the right the lit part is shown with a single stroke of yellowish pink. For the rest, the spatial definition of the underside of the nose depends mainly on a heavy cast shadow in a brownish black that at its edges partially overlaps the surrounding lit areas and must have been added or strengthened at a later stage. In the sensitively handled mouth the upper lip is rendered with a few small touches of brown-red paint, while the lower has, over a thin red, strokes of a bright red partly mixed with strokes of white. The mouth-line is made from a few strokes of red-brown and black, running into a dark grey to the right.

In both the hair and the cap the thin paint layer is locally worn. The black paint in the heavily drawn contours (where the topmost layer has craquelure) seems to be reasonably well preserved, as do the folds in the wings shown with bold, straight

Fig. 1. Panel 65.5 × 55.5 cm



Fig. 2. X-Ray



strokes between which strokes of cool grey with some ochre have been placed to indicate the collar showing through the translucent material. In the tongue of the cap on the forehead, subdued sheens of light are drawn in an opaque grey.

The carefully but somewhat mechanically done ruff reveals at the surface no trace of a broadly-brushed underpainting, but under a microscope one can see vestiges of strokes set crosswise on the pleats that might be evidence of an underpainting (though one done in non-radioabsorbent paint). The representation of shadows from the cap on the collar is highly effective, with the translucency of the latter suggested by means of hazily brushed out strokes of a cool grey. Along the righthand outline of the ruff light paint shows through the dark of the adjoining background, indicating that on this side the collar was initially somewhat wider.

As has already been explained (see CONDITION), it is especially in the remaining areas that later overpaints play a substantial role, and reservations must therefore be expressed as to the authenticity of the paint layer. The background ranges from a very dark brown at the top, through a more translucent brown level with the head, to a gradually more opaque grey-brown; the most opaque paint is used on the left along the contour of the body — probably as part of a change, when this outline was shifted slightly to the right — and around the signature. The brushwork is animated, yet nowhere clear to follow. In the dark clothing there is, in the almost uniform black of the lefthand side, no sign of what the costume is like, partly because of the completely featureless line of the contour on this side. On the right there are muted lights on the folds of the sleeve, shown with an opaque lead-grey, and a band across the sleeve in black and lighter grey. The visible part of the cuff is rendered, ineffectively, in a muddy grey and white. The red tablecloth is painted with free strokes with paint of very varying consistency — thick and covering well on the left, and far thinner and more translucent towards the hand — in various tints of red ranging from vermilion and an ochre colour sometimes glazed with a transparent red in the light parts to a madder-like red in the darks.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

X-Rays

The clear image of brushwork in the head confirms the impression of easy directness given by the paint surface. The ridge of the nose, cheekbones, crease in the righthand cheek by the nose and the pronounced reflexions of light along the jaw and chin show up especially light, while the warm pink-tinted areas below the eyes appear to contain little radioabsorbent pigment. The image of the temple on the right is just as patchy and indeterminate as it is at the surface. There has been a small alteration to the line of the cast shadow from the chin on the upstanding neckband of the shirt where a light area was evidently later covered over. The shadows from the cap on the collar show up rather darker than their lit surroundings, so they appear to have been given a reserve at least in the stage where the collar was being worked up. There is no sign in the X-ray of any preparation for the collar using brushstrokes placed crosswise to the pleats. The paint-loss in the ruff and head, along the grain of the panel, is very evident.

The background shows, especially on the left, long bands showing up a little lighter than their surroundings, and at the extreme top right and to a lesser degree at the far bottom right radioabsorbent material has been used along the edge of the panel. Most probably this is connected with the grounding of the latter.

In the sleeve on the right the light edges of the folds show up clearly in the radiographic image, though there is no trace of internal detail in the clothing on the left. On the left and right the contours of the black clothing are bounded by narrow strips in the background that give a lightish X-ray image.

At the tablecloth the radiographic image is darker, ending on the right above an edging of light. The folds in the sleeve terminate at this strip, as does the cuff which shows up very light. The fingers are only vaguely seen, probably because they have been almost entirely abraded by an earlier overpainting. Immediately to the left of the fingers there are very vague, unidentifiable patches giving a lightish image. Further to the left the upper contour of the red band becomes increasingly vague the further it stretches.

Signature

At the bottom left in brownish paint <*Rembrandt / f 1639*>, in a round hand lacking all continuity. This signature and date certainly cannot be seen as being from Rembrandt's own hand, and may even be of much later date given the uneven state of preservation of the patch in which they are set and where the degree of wear in the signature does not match the traces of wear in the underlying paint.

Varnish

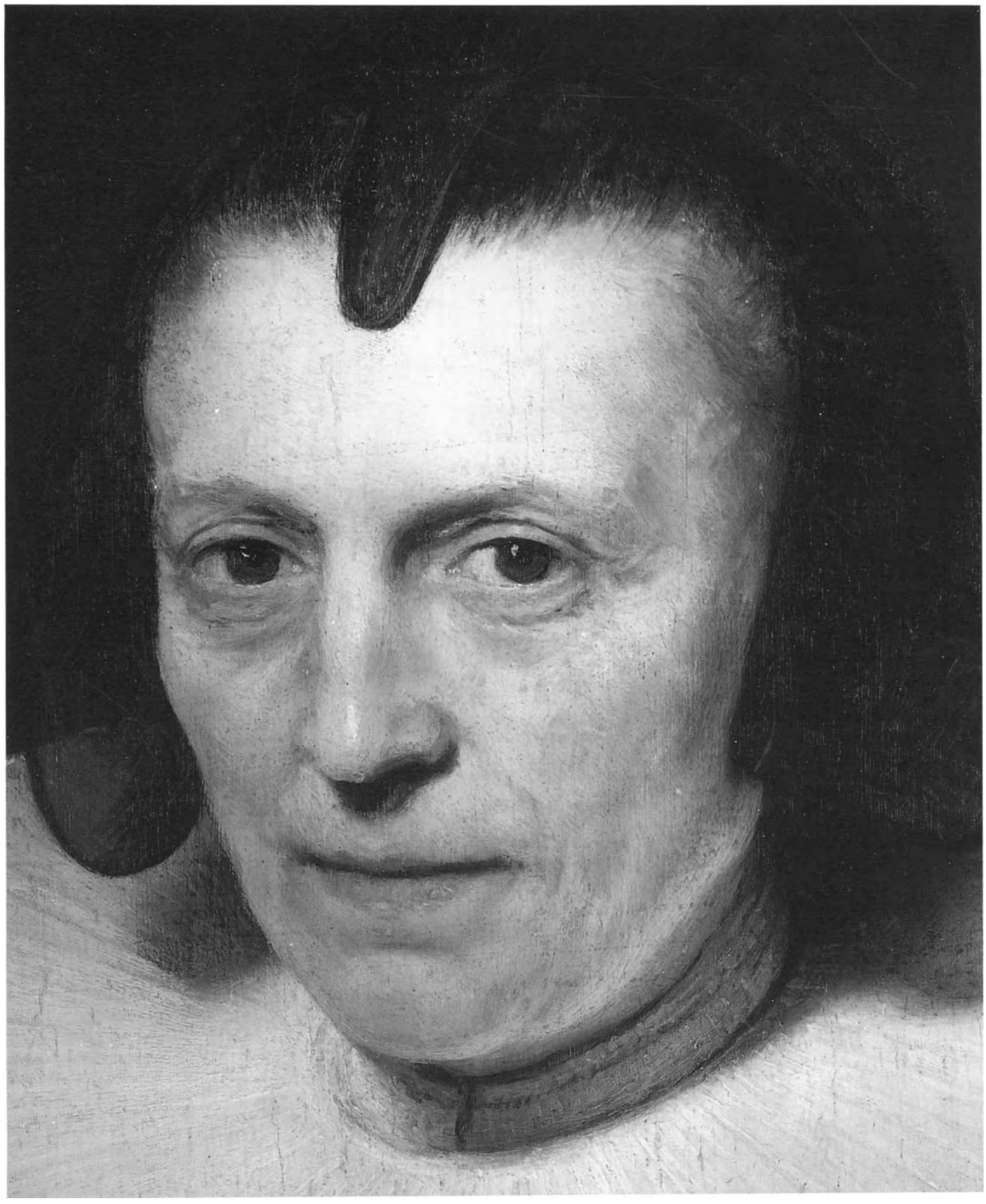
No special remarks.

4. Comments

The Rembrandt attribution, which until now has never been doubted in the literature, must in this in part poorly preserved painting depend mainly on the treatment of the head and immediately adjoining areas, where the original brushwork has remained reasonably intact. The modelling of the head is built up with an easy directness ; the eyes, nose and mouth as well as the convexity of adjacent areas are indicated sensitively with for the most part easily discernible, merging brushstrokes. In the head facing the light, deep shadows are limited to crisp accents in dark paint. The lefthand contour of the face, hard and with little plasticity, is less satisfactory; lit parts of the face and the black of the cap either stand immediately next to each other or are separated by spots of exposed ground. Equally unhappy is the blotchy treatment of the shadow side of the forehead and cheekbone. Conceivably a thin glaze that may have given this passage more homogeneity and plastic rounding has been worn away. These areas do not give any real reason to doubt Rembrandt's authorship: they tend more to accentuate the general picture of a fairly fluent treatment — rapid and rather routine, occasionally careful as in the beautifully painted mouth and chin, but otherwise relying more on cleverly distributed accents of colour and tone than on carefully constructed modelling. The X-ray image of the head seems to bear this out.

The colouring also plays an important role in the relationship between the head and its immediate surroundings, in an attractive combination of the warmly-tinted incarnate and the black of the widow's cap and brilliant white of the big ruff, which reaches its highest intensity towards the top. It is noticeable that, so far as can be seen from the X-ray, even the otherwise meticulously executed collar was not given a light underpainting such as we find in collars of this type in Rembrandt's portraits from the earlier 1630s, with broad strokes placed crosswise to the pleats in white paint. There may however well be

Fig. 3. Detail (1 : 1)



an underpainting in darker non-radioabsorbent paint. The diffuse shadows of the wings of the cap on the collar, an eyecatching detail in itself, are moreover — and in the way one is familar with in Rembrandt — used as a means of stating the spatial relationship between the head and the collar.

As we have already said (see *Paint layer*, CONDITION above) wearing and restorations of the original paint layer and later overpaints (some of which have been removed during successive restorations) affect the present appearance of the remainder of the painting. This being so one can only note that the tonal relationship of the background to the figure — the progression in tone from dark at the top to lighter tones further down —, and the occasionally visible short brushstrokes, still exhibit so much similarity to what one is used to seeing in Rembrandt's female portraits with a dark-tinted background that the general appearance of it has not necessarily undergone any substantial change. In the dark clothing the paint layer is partly overcleaned and overspiced with dark. The sleeve on the right presents, in the X-ray image too, a satisfying picture of the pattern of folds; but the other sleeve does not.

In the hand — which as already explained came to light beneath a dark overpaint during a previous restoration — the original paint has virtually disappeared. It is plain from the X-ray that the hand and red band were, no matter how unhappily they sit in the composition, part of the original design; this is also particularly evident from an old copy on canvas (see *7. Copies*, 1) in which both the hand and the tablecloth are present. This copy carries a certain amount of weight as evidence, since it has remained in the family; though its exact age is unknown, the nature of the craquelure gives the impression that it may have been made as far back as the 17th century. The proportions of the canvas differ somewhat from those of the original — about 5 cm taller — and give a less square, more normal format. At the bottom the red band is a little wider, while the lines of the band — which in the copy looks more clearly like a tablecloth — run away from the hand somewhat lower to right and left, giving the impression of a table. Furthermore, the red cloth in the copy runs out to the lefthand edge, whereas in the original the band stops short a few centimetres before the edge, in a rounded corner.

Of decisive importance in deciding whether we are dealing here with an autograph Rembrandt is a judgment on how the detailing and the way paint is handled in the head match up to the illusion being essayed. A characteristic touch is how (along the chin especially) reflected light is rendered with broadly brushed and slightly coarse paint. The play of light on the lit areas, on the other hand, is suggested with smaller and mostly straight strokes. In the transitions from these areas to the more shadowed passages the relative autonomy of these strokes produces a characteristic, slightly angular shaping, e.g. at the tip of the nose. The amalgam of brushstrokes, tones and surface structures in the shadow of the nose, which provide an insight into how the painting was built up, and the way the heavy cast shadow from the nose cuts through this, may be called typical of Rembrandt. One also has to consider how, around the eyes and in the mouth, the constantly repeated and seemingly hasty and ragged brushstrokes and linear elements create a three-dimensional effect in such a way that the physical properties of the paint and the illusion achieved keep a mutual balance that is unmistakeably rembrandt-esque. Phenomena that in themselves are not all that typical, such as the limited amount of underpainting in the head and its virtual absence in the collar, can perhaps be reasonably explained by the rapid and not particularly ambitious approach to the work, which also marks the handling of the surface.

The panel's present dimensions are squarish, and unusual for a portrait. Since the copy is some 5 cm taller and shows a wider and hence more recognizable red cloth, there is ample reason to suppose that the present work, too, was originally somewhat taller and has been reduced at the bottom. The fact that the small grooves on the back of the panel, described earlier, are present only at the top is further evidence in this direction.

A date of 1639 for its production, in line with the inscription, seems acceptable, on the one hand because of similarities of detail with, for instance, the Leningrad *Portrait of Baertje Martens* of 1640 (no. A 141), in which the upstanding neckband of the shirt was likewise left visible and the ruff was not underpainted. Besides this, several of Rembrandt's portraits from the years 1639–41, e.g. the Amsterdam *Portrait of a young woman (Maria Trip?)* from 1639 (no. A 131) show the use of an element in the foreground behind which the figure is placed. It would seem that Rembrandt was still — and in the case of the Aletta Adriaensdr. portrait with not too happy a result — experimenting with this device before achieving a wholly successful outcome in the London *Self-portrait* in 1640 (no. A 139), based partly on Titian's *Ariosto*. A highly successful treatment of a partially-seen hand and cuff (but then set against a vertical feature) is to be found in the *Portrait of Agatha Bas* of 1641 in Buckingham Palace (no. A 145), while the companion-piece, the Brussels *Portrait of Nicolaes Bambeeck* (no. A 144), offers further proof of how Rembrandt was interested by a motif like this.

For the rest, the belief that the Rotterdam portrait belongs in this period stems from an overall impression. We do not find an identical handling of the head (the component of the present work that lends itself best to a comparison) in any of the other portraits; admittedly the treatment in those works

varies slightly, but speaking generally this is aimed more at a sfumato-like suggestion of the modelling than at a sharper definition of form. The much more rapid manner of working on the one hand, and possibly the fact of it being the head of a woman of advanced years on the other, have in the Rotterdam portrait led to a different total effect that reminds us more of Rembrandt's portraits from the mid-1630s. The signature and date present the situation we have often commented on, of a crudish inscription still giving an accurate indication of the painting's author and even, apparently, of the year of production; the most obvious explanation for this would be that an authentic inscription was lost or largely worn away and has been rather unskilfully copied or retraced, but there is no unambiguous evidence for this.

The identification of the sitter is, as already indicated by Gerson[1], based on the existence of a copy still owned by the family (see *7. Copies*, 1). In an article by I. H. van Eeghen identifying a young woman in a Rembrandt portrait in Amsterdam (no. A 131) as Maria Trip, we also find information on her mother Aletta Adriaensdr. (also known as Alitea, Aeltje, Aeltken or — wrongly — Allotte) who is portrayed in the work under discussion here. She was the daughter of a rich cloth-merchant who was once or more times burgomaster of Dordrecht; in 1611 she became the second wife of the merchant Elias Trip, the son of an immigrant from the Southern Netherlands. In 1614 her husband moved his business from Dordrecht to Amsterdam, where his trade in iron, weapons and guns brought in so much that he could live in some considerable style. After his death in 1636 his widow continued to run the business, and the fact that during the visit to Amsterdam of the French dowager-queen Maria de Medici in 1638 she appeared as the hostess of Amalia of Solms, the wife of Prince Frederik Hendrik, illustrates the leading place she continued to occupy in Amsterdam society. Shortly afterwards (i.e. soon after the period of the portrait) she bought a large house on the Herengracht, which was becoming increasingly fashionable among the wealthy middle-class, and where her daughter Maria came to live after her marriage in 1641. Aletta Adriaensdr. died in 1656. Her brother-in-law Jacob Trip and his wife Margaretha de Geer, the sister of Elias's partner Louis de Geer, were later — in 1661 — also portrayed by Rembrandt.

5. Documents and sources

None.

6. Graphic reproductions

None.

7. Copies

1. Canvas 70.5 × 54.5 cm, owned by Jonkheer S. Laman Trip, Den Helder[1]. The painting is lined and the new canvas bears an inscription that has obviously been taken over from one on the back of the original canvas: 'Alitta Adriaans./getrout aan Elias Trip'. The letters are hesitantly placed, and a number of corrections point to the rendering being not entirely reliable; Alitta must be read as Aletta.

8. Provenance

- Coll. Thomas Emmerson, London. Despite the statement by Hofstede de Groot[3], not in the sales of the Emmerson collection in London, 15–16 June 1832 or the Dubois collection in Paris, 7–11 December 1840.
- Coll. Gaillard, sale Rouen.
- Coll. Sir Francis Cook; coll. Sir Frederick Cook, Richmond; coll. Sir Herbert Cook[4].
- Coll. W. van der Vorm, Rotterdam.

9. Summary

With this portrait, in part in a poor state of preservation, the attribution to Rembrandt must depend mainly on the assessment of the head and its direct surroundings. This exhibits enough features fitting in with the general image of Rembrandt's work to warrant the attribution, despite less typical aspects such as little or no underpainting (in the head and collar respectively) and, in particular, a certain harshness in the contour of the head. It is hard to gauge how badly the dark passages, the background and clothing, have suffered: in the hand the original paint has virtually disappeared. The date of 1639, forming part of a certainly unauthentic inscription, does seem to give an indication of the period of production; a number of specific details, plus the overall image of the head, could provide evidence for this. The panel was probably once a few centimetres deeper at the bottom.

REFERENCES

1 Br.-Gerson 355.
2 I.H. v[an] E[eghen], 'Maria Trip op een anoniem vrouwsportret van Rembrandt', *Amstelodamum Maandblad* ... 43 (1956), pp. 166–169.
3 HdG 619.
4 Br. 355.

A 133 A dead bittern held high by a hunter [1639]

DRESDEN, STAATLICHE KUNSTSAMMLUNGEN DRESDEN, GEMÄLDEGALERIE ALTE MEISTER, CAT. NO. 1561

HDG 283; BR. 31; BAUCH 312; GERSON 191

Fig. 1. Panel 120.7 × 88.3 cm



1. Summarized opinion

A well preserved, authentic work, with doubtful signature and date of 1639.

2. Description of subject

A man stands in an indistinctly defined space, seen almost to the knees and mostly in shadow, with his head tilted a little to the right; in his gloved right hand he holds up a dead bird — a bittern with its wings spread wide — by its bound feet. To the left there is a small wooden bracket with an iron hook projecting from the end of it; the man is, we may assume, on the point of hanging the bird on this (or taking it down?). The light falls fully on the bird and on part of the man's face. He wears a dark red velvet beret with an ostrich plume, and small gold earrings. In the darkness one can also make out, worn over a pleated shirt, a dark red belted jacket and (to the left behind the bird) a grey cloak. On the left, partly hidden behind the cloak, a game-bag hangs from his belt. In his gloved left hand he holds, almost vertical, what seems to be a gun. Further back behind are a few vertical planks belonging to a fence.

3. Observations and technical information

Working conditions

Examined on 15 May 1970 (B.H., E.v.d.W.) in good daylight and out of the frame.

Support

DESCRIPTION: Oak panel, grain vertical, 120.7 × 88.3 cm. Three planks, widths (left to right) *c.* 25.7, 35.7 and 26.9 cm. Back planed flat and cradled; bevelling is still just visible to left and right, but none at the top or bottom. Because of this allowance must be made for the possibility of the panel having originally been taller, though this is not really likely. The present dimensions are virtually the same as those of nos. A 1 and A 6, and a taller format would result in unusual proportions.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: Dendrochronology (Prof. Dr J. Bauch and Prof. Dr D. Eckstein, Hamburg) measured the three planks at the top, and showed them to have (from left to right): 191 annual rings heart wood + 10 counted on the heart side, dated 1420/30–1620; 219 rings heartwood + 2 counted on the heart side and 1 on the sapwood side, dated 1395/97–1615/16; and 30 rings heartwood + 175 counted on the heart side, dated 1418/1593–1622. The lefthand and righthand planks come from a single tree, whose 205 annual rings found date from 1418–1622. In view of the great age of the tree, more than 15 annual rings of sapwood and 1631 must be allowed for, and 1637 must be seen as the earliest possible felling date.

Ground

DESCRIPTION: A light yellow-brown shows through in the bird's neck and, to a lesser extent, in its wings, in thin parts of the man's jacket and in the game-bag. Since this is recognizable as the ground, indications that there is another painting underneath the topmost paint layer (see below) must be interpreted as meaning that this underlying painting was not finished when the present painting was done on top of it.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: Kühn[1] found chalk (calcium carbonate) in a sample taken from the righthand edge.

Paint layer

CONDITION: So far as the yellow varnish allows a judgment, this appears to be good. Craquelure: apart from a fine and quite regular pattern of cracks apparent mostly in the light parts, there are irregular cracks in various areas, mostly in the wooden bracket, the upper righthand corner and adjacent areas, in the plume on the beret, in the bird's neck and below it on both side of the head, and to the right of this at the righthand edge of the painting. It is natural to think that this has to do with paint having been applied over an earlier layer while it was not yet entirely dry (see also below).

DESCRIPTION: In large parts of the present paint surface brushstrokes can be seen in relief that obviously belong to an earlier paint layer showing a picture different from the present one. The passages where these brushstrokes appear most distinctly are also those in which the crack formation just described is clearest. As has just been said the paint seems to have been applied over an earlier layer before the latter was properly dry. The degree to which, in other areas, the ground can be seen beneath the present top layer would seem to indicate that the underlying paint belongs to a painting that was not completed. It is impossible to say with certainty what this earlier painting showed; level with the bird's feet and intersecting them there is a convex form (with a slightly indented upper outline) that might be a headdress — a cap or turban — for a knee-length figure standing rather higher in the picture area than the present one, and shows on a somewhat larger scale. Curved forms are visible to either side, on the right diverging slightly upwards to the right, that could have shown architecture or a curtain. To both sides of the present head of the bird there are shapes that defy interpretation; if the earlier painting showed a figure, there might have been hands at these points. To each side, adjoining them, there are horizontal strokes (a balustrade?).

In the top layer the background is done in an opaque and fairly dark grey that becomes very dark to the left and is lightest on the right along the figure; there is no distinct brushstroke. The wooden bracket is, in the lit parts, brushed firmly in a yellow-brown, with a dark warm brown along the shadowed edges; the iron hook is shown in a darker and lighter grey with on the left a brownish grey that suggests a reflexion of light from the wood. The planks of the fence at the bottom right are in a dark sand colour, with a cursory indication in black of gaps and joins and of the gun, which has no internal detail or modelling.

The man's head is (in contrast to what one usually finds in a head in shadow done on panel) painted entirely opaquely. The lit part on the left is in a flesh colour with some pink on the cheek, applied with an invariably apparent and quite firm brush stroke that contributes to the modelling. The shadow part is executed mainly in brown-grey, in which a few strokes of the same colour are used to give effective modelling to the nose, cheekbone and jaw. Some strokes of dull red, with touches of black among them, indicate the mouth; a similar brown-red is used in the eyelid and eye-pouch on the right. The eye is otherwise done in greys and black. The small gold earrings are shown in two shades of yellow, with a few fine brushstrokes. The hair is painted with relaxed and usually quite wide strokes, in the light using greyish paint with a little yellowish or reddish brown here and there, and in the shadow in a darker ruddy colour that comes close to the purplish red of the clothing. The cap is in a dark paint tending towards purple, over which a few curving strokes in an orangy brown show the sheens of light. The same orangy brown is found again in a broad stroke that can be read as an edge of light on the purplish jacket where this borders the pleated shirt, shown with strokes of grey. The feather is rendered with quite long strokes that follow its structure, using a dark grey with touches of a rather lighter grey along the lefthand edge.

The jacket has dark shadow lines over a purplish brown-red that becomes thinner towards the bottom where it appears to have been brushed directly over the ground. Some grey is used in the belt, the game-bag and the split in the jacket. A fairly flat, cool grey to the left of and below the bird seems to represent a cloak, painted at a late stage over the belt and part of the game-bag; three strokes of a greenish grey paint between the uppermost flight feathers of the wing on the left must also belong to this. A similar greenish grey is used in the shadows of the glove on the man's raised right hand, otherwise executed in a

translucent brown over a light underpainting, with rapidly-drawn strokes showing the seams. The glove on the other hand, at the lower right, is painted summarily in a flat, light brown.

The bird's head is drawn with black lines, some placed directly on the ground and others over a greenish grey and a few reddish strokes. Three types of brushwork can be seen in the treatment of the feathers: in the wings, the individual feathers are shown with rhythmic brushstrokes in a variety of tints ranging from black to a very light grey, here and there tending towards a brown; in the belly, breast and leg the soft down is suggested with lumpy and fluffy strokes in yellowish white tints, with occasional thin brown lines drawn over them; the fanned-out neck feathers are shown with rather chaotic strokes, often set directly on the ground, in various tints. The legs are drawn in quite thick grey and black paint, with the joints in particular accentuated; here and there highlights are added in ochre yellow, a light cool grey and white.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: Kühn[1] describes three samples. In the white from one of the bird's feet he found white lead containing copper, silver and tin. The brown-black of the righthand edge has a black pigment (not identified more closely), white lead, brown ochre and some smalt, while the black of the bottom edge consists of bone black, Kassel earth and some white lead and smalt. (The smalt in the two lastnamed samples may have been intended as a dryer.)

X-Rays

None.

Signature

At the top left in a reddish brown over the relief of the (clearly already dry) paint of the wooden bracket <*Rembrandt.ft. 1639*>. The letters and figures are set down deftly, though they show a certain uniformity of thickness and, in the digits especially, a roundness of form, neither of which can be called characteristic of Rembrandt's signature. Some, particularly the *R*, the *d* and the *3* differ so much in their shape from what one usually sees in Rembrandt's signatures as to give reason to doubt the authenticity of the inscription.

Varnish

A layer of yellowed varnish affects the appearance.

4. Comments

It is not easy to explain how in a painting that in many respects differs strongly from Rembrandt's other works his approach and his hand are so plainly apparent. The exceptional character of the painting stems in the main from two things: from the subject-matter — a study in chiaroscuro of a dead bird, with the human figure as a secondary motif — and from the fact that the painting was executed on a panel that had already been (at least partially) painted on. As to the subject, the attention is focused sharply on the strongly-lit dead bird, and especially on the texture of the feathers, seen in a varying lighting; in this respect there is a similarity with the Amsterdam *Dead peacocks and a girl* (no. A 134), though in the Dresden work the tendency already seen there is taken even further, by the marked chiaroscuro and by the fact that on a panel the brushwork produces a still more pronounced effect. The re-use of a panel already painted on led to an opacity of the paint layer that especially in the man's figure seen for the most part in shadow, one would otherwise not have expected. Nonetheless, Rembrandt's hand is quite unmistakeable. The gradations of chiaroscuro, the leading part it plays in suggesting depth, the rapid rhythm of the brushstroke in the lit passages and the slower and yet somewhat nervous stroke in the shadow parts, and the way colours are often suggested more by sheens of light than by actual colour are features that alone or in combination are to be found in Rembrandt's work from around 1640 — from the Leningrad *Danae* of 1636 (no. A 119) to the Amsterdam *Night watch* of 1642 (no. A 146). Remarkable, and no less typical of Rembrandt, are the arbitrariness of the cast shadow falling on the man (which does not seem to be explainable by any element seen in the picture) and the summary treatment of the bottom righthand corner, where the hand and gun are depicted with an extreme economy of means and where the relationship to and nature of the fence seen in the background are spelt out just as little as is the case with the elements of the interior in the 1639 *Portrait of a man standing* in Kassel (no. A 129). The signature and date are such as to throw doubt on their authenticity, though the date of 1639 probably gives an accurate (or nearly so) indication of the year of production; it is in line with the dendrochronology evidence. At all events, the painting is typical of certain aspects of Rembrandt's style in the late 1630s — the atmospheric effect in the space suggested around the figure placed in the half-shadows, against the startling illusionistic effect in the bird. In many ways — including the tilt to the man's head — this pictorial approach seems like that found in the *Night watch*, which the artist must have started on in 1639/40.

The unusually large panel (cf. nos. A 1 and A 6) was, one may assume, painted on previously by Rembrandt himself; it may be deduced that this took place not all that long before 1639, from the results of dendrochronology examination of the panel which show that two of the planks are from a tree that had probably not been felled before 1637. The underlying painting probably showed a figure seen almost to the knees, wearing a cap or turban; it may have been comparable to the *Man in oriental costume* at Chatsworth (no. A 128) of which there are many copies extant (including probably workshop copies). For reasons unknown this work, which one has to assume was unfinished, was abandoned and the panel was re-used for an 'informal' (and probably inexpensive) painting — something that had often happened before (cf. nos. A 8, A 9, A 20, A 32, A 33 and B 4 and Br. 27). Frequently this superimposed painting was what we are used to calling a 'self-portrait', i.e. a head or bust for which the artist took himself as a model though without one getting the impression (in most instances) that it was intended as a portrait in the real sense of the word.

The iconographic significance of the piece poses

Fig. 2. Detail (1 : 1)

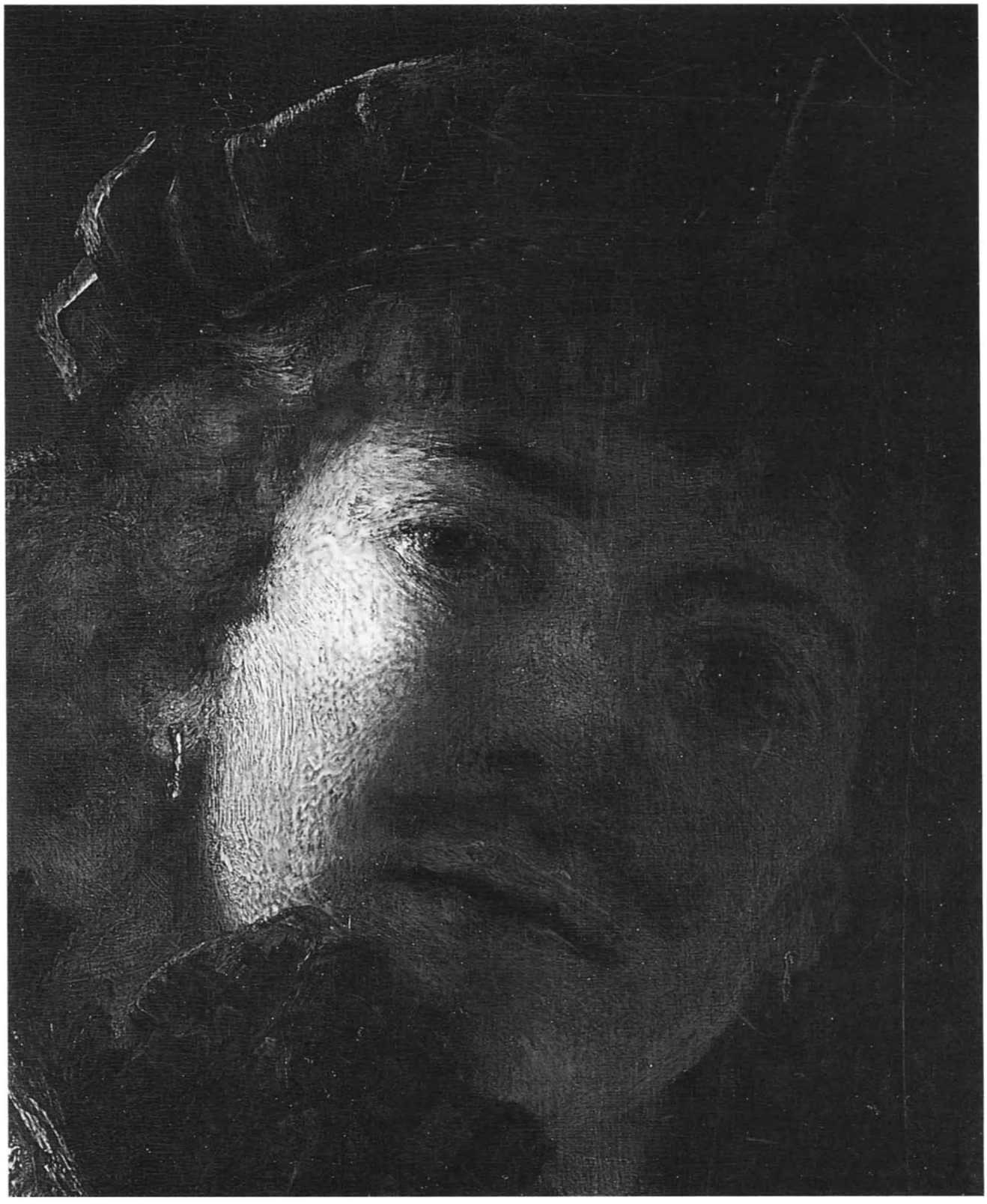
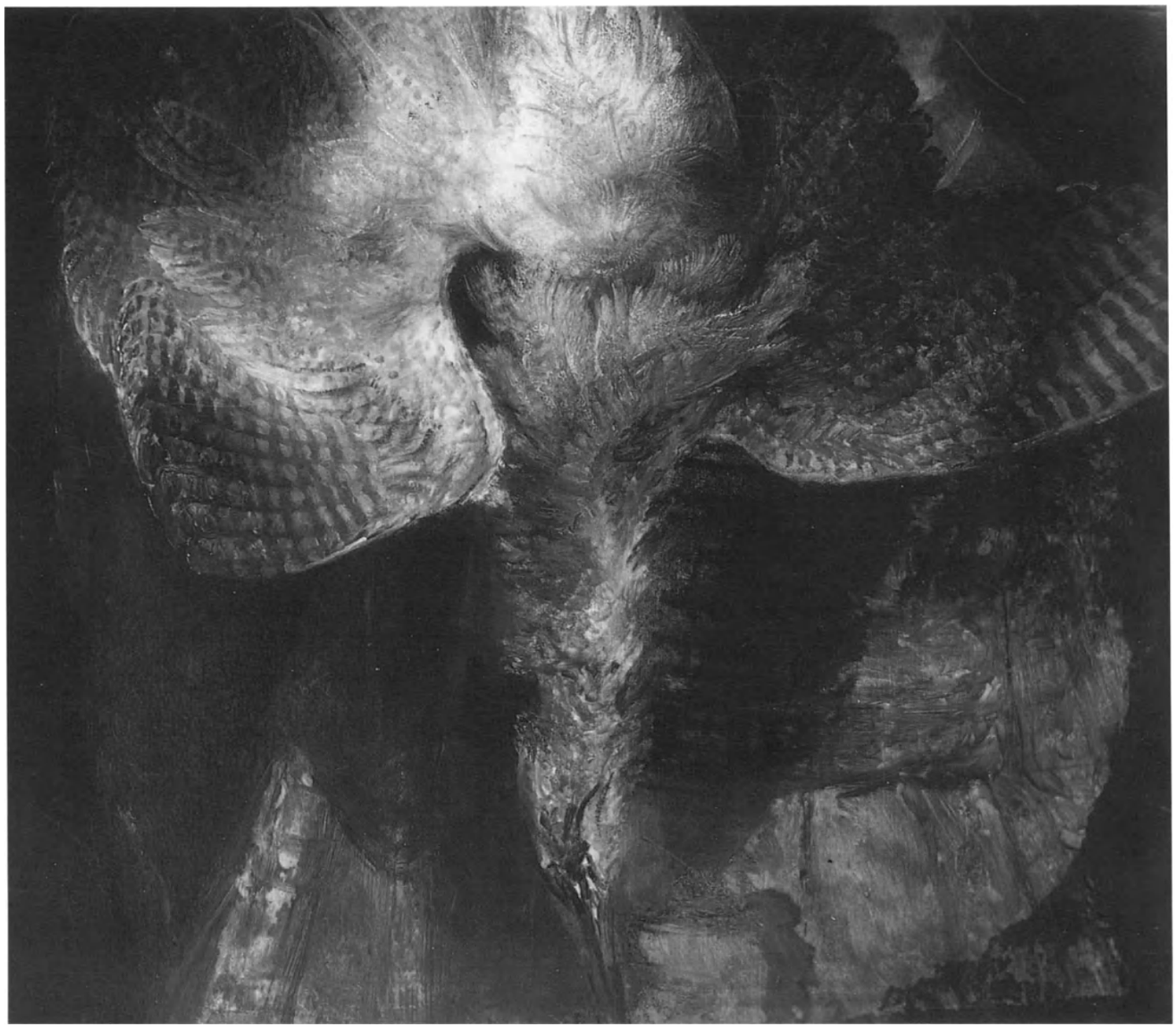


Fig. 3. Detail (infrared photograph, 1 : 3)



something of a problem. The usual title, *Self-portrait with a dead bittern*, seems even more misleading than using the title of 'self-portrait' in most cases already is. The figure may present some traits that are rather like those of Rembrandt, but he remains for the most part literally in the shade. The main motif is — as Bode[2] was keenly aware — the dead bird in the light and in the centre of the composition, and it must be regarded as not impossible that the painting is indeed (as Hofstede de Groot[3] and others have believed) identical with a work in Rembrandt's possession described in 1656 as: 'Een pitoor nae 't leven, van Rembrant' (a bittern from life, by Rembrant) (see *5. Documents and sources*). The subordination and poor recognizability of the man's figure are at all events in themselves an argument against a recent interpretation[4] according to which Rembrandt's social pretensions led him to portray himself as a hunter, i.e. as a member of a restricted social class to whom hunting, as an aristocratic pastime, was reserved. A second argument against this notion is that in cases where Rembrandt sought to emphasize his position in society as an artist — as in the etched *Self-portrait* of 1639 (B. 21) and the painted *Self-portrait* of 1640 in London (no. A 139) — he did so by adopting the pose of respected *literati*, not by showing himself as a member of the aristocracy.

The meaning of the picture must rather be sought, in part, in the world of popular pictures with an erotic undertone. It has already been shown that this does not clash with the character of Rembrandt's work (see A. MacNeil Kettering, 'Rembrandt's

Flute player: a unique treatment of pastoral', *Simiolus* 9, 1977, pp. 19–44). In erotic imaginary — both in word and in picture — hunters and birds played a great role, as De Jongh[5] has explained; in particular, dead birds (sometimes being offered to girls or women) often provide the principal motif in a wide variety of scenes intended as amorous, and the hunter's gun unmistakeably takes on a phallic significance in that context. Probably Rembrandt's *Dead bittern*, too, ought to be interpreted in this light, as De Jongh believed. If so, love is however here clearly linked with Vanitas. The gallows-like wooden bracket on the left may perhaps indicate this, but the hunter/lover's garb with the plumed cap certainly does (see Vol. I, pp. 223–224); he appears dressed in the same way and with the same significance in, for example, the *Landscape with a moated castle* in the Wallace Collection, London (no. C 119) attributable to Govaert Flinck, and again — this time holding a dead hare — in a picture of a young hunter by Lambert Doomer dated 1648 (Sumowski *Gemälde* I, no. 224). The composition of the latter is strongly reminiscent of Rembrandt's Dresden picture, which may be counted among depictions of anonymous figures with a clearly moralising meaning.

5. Documents and sources

Possibly identical with a painting mentioned in the 1656 inventory of Rembrandt's possessions as 'Een pitoor nae 't leven, van Rembrant' (A bittern from life, by Rembrant) (Strauss *Doc.*, 1656/12, no. 348).

6. Graphic reproductions

1. Etching by Johann Anton Riedel (Falkenau-bei-Eger 1736 — Dresden 1816). Inscribed: *Rembrant. pin. — A. Riedel Scu. 1754.* Reproduces the picture (including the signature) with little subtlety, in reverse. The fence behind the figure and gun is shown as continuing to the edge. The author was deputy inspector of the Elector's collection of paintings from 1755, and inspector from 1757.
2. Etching by Bartholomäus Ignaz Weisz (Munich *c.* 1740–1814). Inscribed: *Rembrandt.* Reproduces the picture (without the signature) in the same direction, and appears to have been copied after etching 1 above.

7. Copies

None.

8. Provenance

— Possibly among Rembrandt's possession in 1656 (see *5. Documents and sources*).
— Electoral picture gallery, Dresden; acquired for Augustus III (reigned 1733–1763) by Count Gotter[6], envoy to Vienna. First mentioned in the inventory begun in 1747 by Pietro Guarienti (d. 1753), and described under no. 159: 'Rembrant van Ryn. Quadro in tavola con mezza figura al naturale d'un Giovane, con berretta, e pennacchio in testa, tiene nelle mani un gallo di montagna. Opera mirabilissima. 4" 2½. 3" 2.–'[7].

Fig. 4. Detail with signature (reduced)



9. Summary

Although unusual in its subject-matter and, partly, in its manner of painting (explicable by the fact that there is another painting hidden beneath the present paint surface) no. A 133 is entirely convincing as to its authenticity. The handling of light, rendering of form and colour are, in their relationship to each other, quite typical of Rembrandt's work around 1640 and the (probably unauthentic) date of 1639 may well give the true year of production. The dead bird has to be seen as the principal motif, and probably has an erotic symbolism that is here — on the evidence of the costume of the hunter/lover — linked with the idea of Vanitas.

REFERENCES

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2 W. Bode, *Studien zur Geschichte der holländischen Malerei*, Braunschweig 1883, p. 453.
3 HdG 283.
4 S.A. Sullivan, 'Rembrandt's self-portrait with a dead bittern', *Art Bull.* 62 (1980), pp. 236–243; cf ibid. 63 (1981), pp. 313–315. Idem, *The Dutch gamepiece*, Totowa NJ — Montclair NJ 1984, p. 43. Cf Schwartz 1984, pp. 205–206 and Tümpel 1986, cat. no. 167.
5 E. de Jongh, 'Erotica in vogelperspectief. De dubbelzinnigheid van een reeks 17de-eeuwse genrevoorstellingen', *Simiolus* 3 (1968–69), pp. 22–74, esp. 41 note 46.
6 Jules Hübner, *Catalogue de la Galerie Royale de Dresde* (transl. L. Grangier), Dresden [1856], no. 1158.
7 K. Woermann, *Katalog der königlichen Gemäldegalerie*, Dresden 1892, no. 1561, and additional information kindly provided by Dr. A. Mayer-Meintschel.

A 134 Two dead peacocks and a girl

[*c.* 1639]

AMSTERDAM, RIJKSMUSEUM, INV. NO. A 3981

HDG 968; BR. 456; BAUCH 558; GERSON 98

Fig. 1. Canvas 144 × 134.8 cm



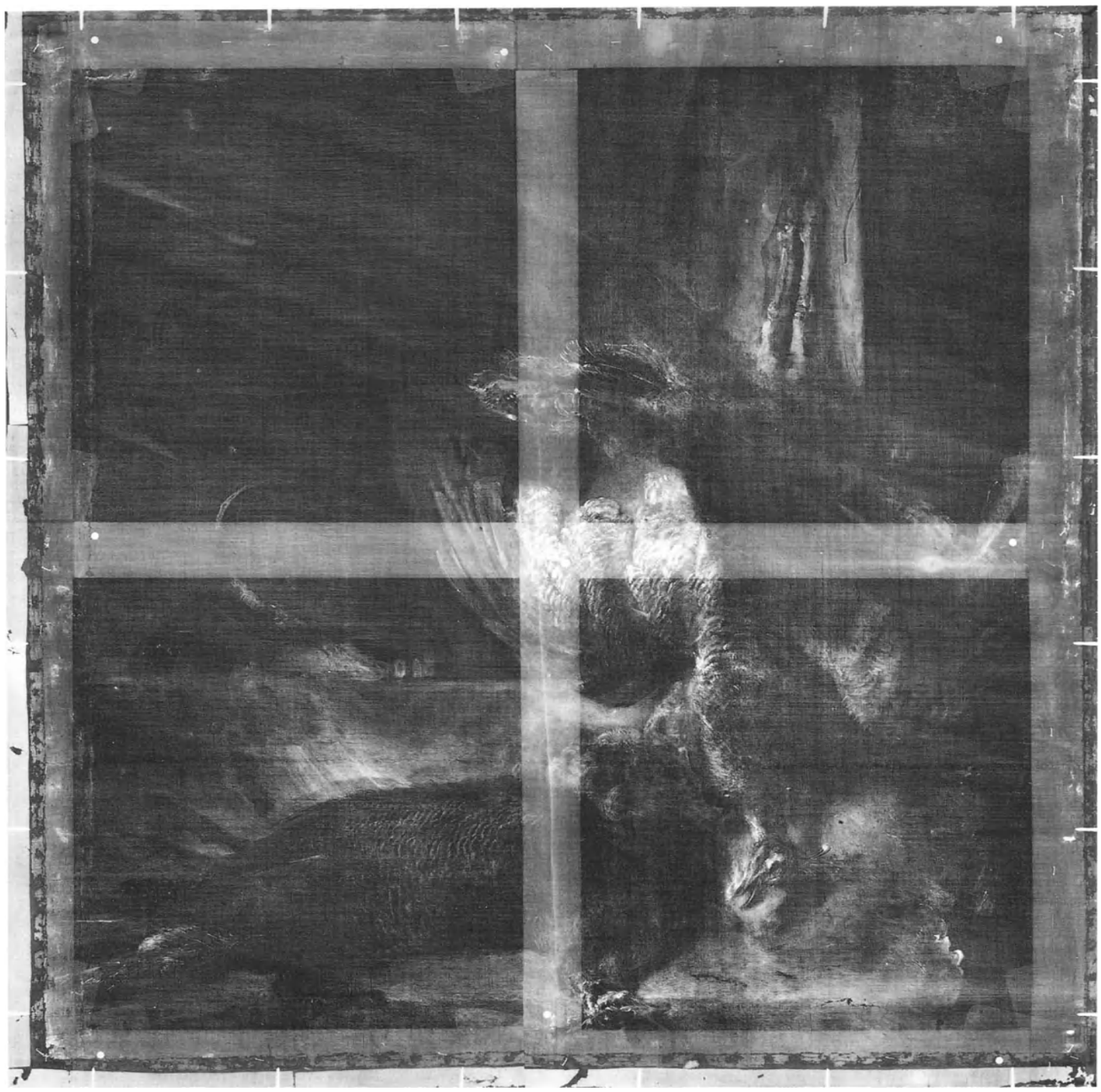
1. Summarized opinion

A well preserved, authentic work, datable around 1639.

2. Description of subject

A wall running parallel to the picture plane is interrupted on the left by a broad, deep and arched window; through this a vaulted ceiling can be vaguely made out in a dark room. A girl is seen in the window, in half-shadow, looking out with her arms resting on the windowsill. On the right the window has a shutter, opened towards the front, and a dead peacock without its tail display-feathers hangs by the legs on a cord tied round the bolt of the shutter. A second peacock, likewise devoid of display-feathers, lies on a long wide stone ledge running along the wall; a wide puddle of blood runs from beneath the dead bird and spills over the ledge. Further back on the ledge there is a basket containing fruit and a tub. A brilliant beam of light falling from the left throws shadows from the open shutter on the wall to the right, from the hanging bird on the shutter, the basket of fruit, the tub and the stone ledge. Its tail, projecting forward, casts a shadow on part of its body and on the wing to the right.

Fig. 2. X-Ray



3. Observations and technical information

Working conditions

Examined in February 1970 (J.B., B.H.) in satisfactory daylight and out of the frame, with the aid of five X-rays of parts of the picture which were also available later. Two large-format X-ray films, together covering the whole of the painting, were examined together with the painting on 2 May 1988.

Support

DESCRIPTION: Canvas, lined, 144 × 134.8 cm (measured along the stretcher). The original canvas has a horizontal seam at 44 cm from the lower edge of the stretcher. At the bottom, according to the X-rays, a strip of the original canvas 2 cm wide that was at some time wrapped round the stretcher has been unfolded; this shows traces of nail-holes, spaced at 3.5 to 4 cm from each other. Below this edge, at the front, there is a projecting strip, 1 to 1.5 cm wide, of the lining canvas. A strip about 2.5 cm wide has been added along the lefthand edge. In its present state, the original canvas thus measures about 141.5 × 132 cm.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: Cusping along the lefthand side has a pitch varying from 6.8 to 9.9 cm, and extends *c.* 15 cm into the canvas; along the top it has a pitch of 6.5–9.5, and extends 15–20 cm inwards. The pitch on the right ranges from 7.2 to 10.2 cm, and

Fig. 3. Detail (1 : 2)



the distortion stretches some 18 cm into the canvas, while the bottom edge has no cusping at all. Threadcount: above the seam, 13.9 horizontal threads/cm (13–14.5) and 10.5 vertical threads/cm (9–11.5). Given the wider spread of density in the vertical threads, the numerous thickenings in them and the fact that the seam between the two strips of canvas is horizontal, one may take it that the warp runs horizontally. Because of the similar weave, the canvas used for the Hanover *Landscape with the baptism of the Eunuch* (no. C 116) may well have come from the same bolt.

Ground

DESCRIPTION: A yellow-brown shows through light in brush-strokes at the top right in the intrados of the window opening and, rather less obviously, in the masonry to the right of the shutter,

SCIENTIFIC DATA: According to Kühn[1] the ground has two layers: in the lower he found a red ochre pigment, and in the upper white lead; evidently this is the usual ground comprising a red and a grey layer.

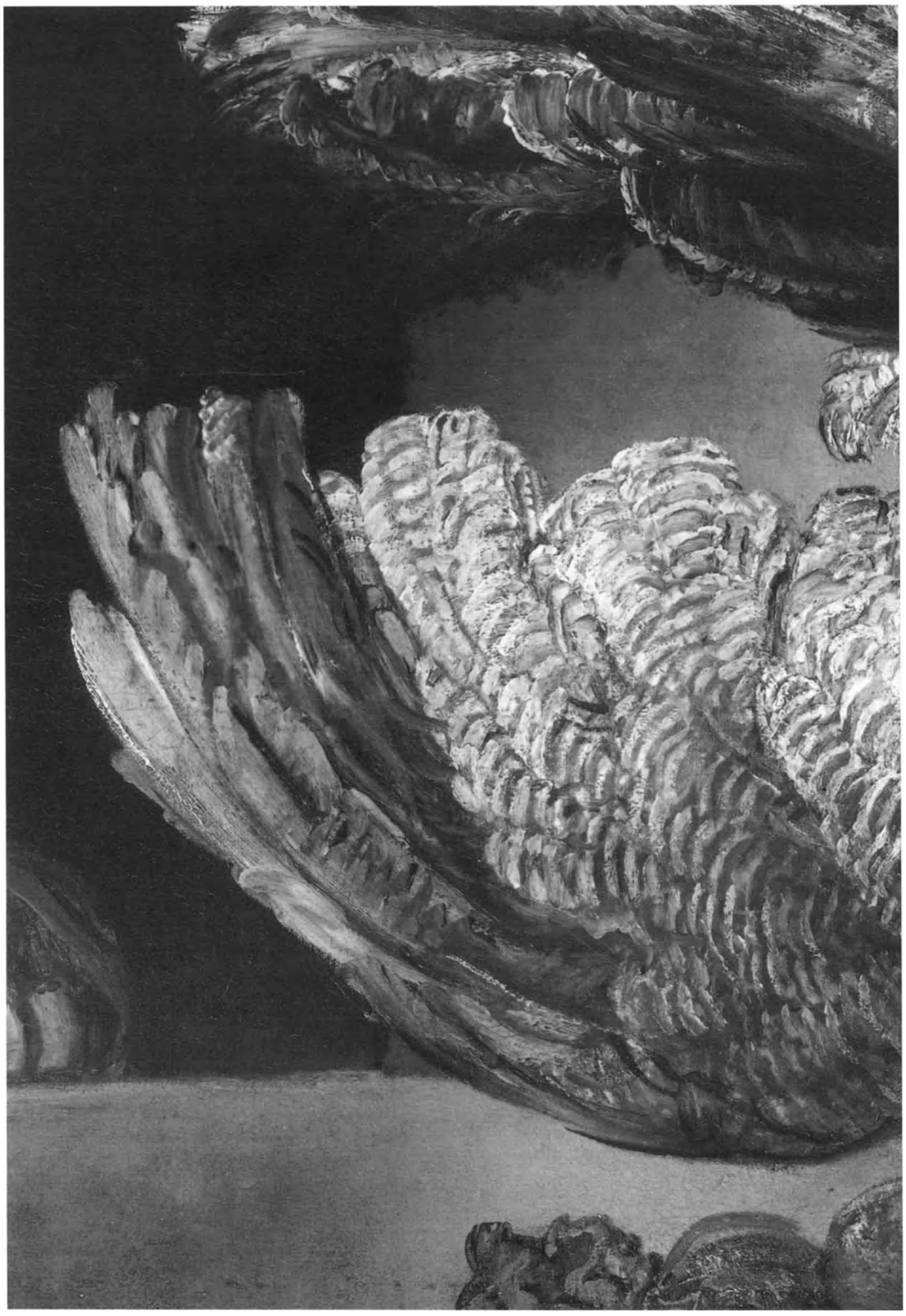
Paint layer

CONDITION: Generally good; the edges are overpainted (to a depth of 3–3.5 cm at the bottom). There are a few retouches in the dark background area. The most recent restoration, carried out in the 1930s, revealed the pool of blood and the tub, both of which had been painted out. Craquelure: a regular network, more clearly apparent where the paint is thicker (in the light passages); in the dark areas there is only, or mostly, a fairly severe varnish craquelure.

DESCRIPTION: Some relief is seen mainly in the accents done in light paint. On the whole the paint is quite thickly applied, certainly so in the foreground still-life and its immediate surroundings, where one finds the most carefully worked passages and can also detect a number of pentimenti. On the right, in the cast shadow from the hanging bird on the stone ledge, a peacock's head facing to the right can be seen in relief at the paint surface. On the left, below the tail of the peacock lying on the ledge, dark unidentifiable shapes show through in the vertical face of the stonework. Further evidence of a change can be found in the side-cheek of the window, where there is the relief of a curved line that forms the extension of one of the lines that can now be read as indicating a vaulted ceiling in the background.

Though there were plainly a number of changes made during the genesis of the picture, the end result impresses through its great directness of treatment; in particular, the peacocks, basket of fruit and figure of the girl are painted with considerable

Fig. 4. Detail (1 : 2)



fluency. The surroundings are very largely determined by large, broadly-brushed areas in which the paint is applied fairly flatly. The dark interior behind the girl is shown in a thin dark grey enlivened with a little brown. The wall surfaces in and around the window are in a grey-brown tending slightly to green, applied opaquely in the lowest part of the side-cheek of the window (where the alteration was already made) and in the wall below the window, where on the left patches of weathering are indicated in dark grey. A somewhat darker grey-brown tint is used for the wall in shadow behind the shutter; the joints in the masonry and the moulding in the window-opening are sketched in dark brown.

The girl is subordinated to the still-life in the foreground by a remarkably sketchlike rendering of form and the use of a subdued colour-scheme. The head is done in a greyish yellow-brown, with some detailing in darker brown; the hair is in loose strokes of grey. For the girl's dress, a thin dark brownish-carmine is used with sheens done in grey; the collar and sleeves are rendered in an off-white and some grey-black. Her hands are executed in a rather ruddy orange-brown, with the fingers indicated cursorily in grey.

The part of the painting described so far forms a subdued tonal backdrop against which the foreground objects, with a heightened intensity of colour and contrast, stand out. The forward-projecting shutter, catching the light, is painted with broad strokes of a brown-yellow in a tint that becomes progressively lighter and brighter towards the bottom; the hinge and bolt are sketched in a black-brown. This is also used to accentuate the contours of the claws of the hanging peacock, which are further worked up with firm touches of a brownish ochre, some green-grey and a mixture of thick white and ochre colour. The tail is painted with fluent strokes of brown and brown-grey along and across which are placed thick, short and fairly wide strokes of orange-brown and long, pointed and obviously quickly-done touches of yellowish green and light yellow. The basic colour of the bird's body below this is a very dark green over which, on the lit side, blue-green is placed with curling strokes, and with short strokes on the breast. The detail in the spread wing on the left is drawn, over brown, with curving strokes in brown, yellow-brown, yellow-white and a little pale green. The flight feathers on the left are executed with long, broad strokes of yellow-brown and a rather darker brown drawing of detail. The righthand wing offers the same structure, but the paint is applied more thinly, and the colour-scheme is not as light. The heads of the two birds are closely similar, and are given a fair measure of detail in dark green, white and some brown; in the crest of the hanging peacock the paint layer has a few scratchmarks. The tail feathers of the lower bird are indicated meticulously with fine pale green and light yellow sheens of light set on a dark background. The predominantly dark but richly variegated tints in the body feathers of this bird are set off against a remarkably warm yellow, tending towards orange, in the stone ledge on which it lies; the blood is done in a carmine red. The basket is sketched very cursorily in browns, with some brick red that recurs in the fruit; a few easy strokes of brick red have been placed along the beak of the hanging bird, and a single one in the greenish-grey wall below the window.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

X-Rays

The radiographic image partly matches what one expects from the paint surface. The animated brushwork in the feathers of the hanging peacock shows up distinctly, while in the girl — done in paint with very little radioabsorbency — it is extremely faint. The traces of a peacock's head facing right that is seen in relief to the right below the head of the present hanging bird can also be made out here in the paint mass, but it is unclear how the rest of a peacock relating to this can be pictured. It certainly appears that there were a great many alterations in this particular area. The head of the present suspended bird is in a partly light but

Fig. 5. Detail with signature (reduced)



evidently later toned-down area, in which on the right there is a reserve for the cast shadow of the head falling on a rear wall. The basket of fruit was initially not in its present position — what appears to be strokes of radioabsorbent paint further to the left does not match this, but relates to a now no longer visible shape (perhaps connected with the peacock's head that has disappeared?). The lower bird seems initially to have had a more generous reserve left for it along the top edge; this is intersected by light brushstrokes that probably belong to the obliquely placed wing, which was subsequently greatly reduced in size and toned down.

The X-ray tells one nothing about any changes in the lower lefthand corner. At the bottom right there are light accents caused by a strange and pronounced form that cannot however be interpreted. The diagonal line seen in the side-cheek of the window in the surface relief is recognizable in the radiograph as the border between two areas, the upper of which shows up rather lighter than the lower.

Dark reserves are seen to the left of each foot of the hanging peacock, giving the impression that both feet were originally intended to be more vertical. To the right of them there are long and roughly vertical shapes of varying width that show up as dark with thin light edgings; they can be detected in relief at the surface. One gets the feeling that at this point the paint has been pushed aside by the tip of a blunt object, though without there having been any formal intention in doing so.

Paint-loss along the underside shows up dark, indicating that a strip of the canvas was once folded over here. Oblique light bands in the upper half are, to judge from the fact that the craquelure continues through them, connected with the ground.

Signature

At the lower right immediately above the straightened-out fold in the original canvas, in thin black-grey paint and written large, <*Rembrandt*>. The paint layer is far from intact at this point, and shows retouches that extend into the signature; a large part of the *R*, as well as the *d* and *t*, reveals more or less distinct signs of overpainting. The letters are rather meagrely shaped, and irregularly placed. The somewhat hesitant script does not give the impression of being autograph.

Varnish

No special remarks.

4. Comments

Although the theme, and to a lesser extent the execution, of this painting might be termed unusual in Rembrandt's work it is quite convincing as an autograph work. This certainty is based mostly on the powerful and varied depiction of form both in the partially lit birds with their effectively-rendered perspective and material, and in the figure of the girl sketched rapidly in half-tints; but the colour-scheme too, with yellow-brown, yellow, white, green-blue with purplish red and an accent of dull red set

against a background of brown and grey blends, contributes to the impression of authenticity. The emphasis on brushstroke as a linear element on the one hand, and large and quite thickly painted fields of almost homogeneous colours on the other, are however not to be found to such a degree in any other Rembrandt work. The greatest resemblance is to the Dresden *Dead bittern held high by a hunter*, probably from 1639 (no. A 133), where the manner of painting in the feathers is very similar and where in particular the effect of the shaft of light falling on the bird matches the effect of the lighting in the present work. Here the hanging bird's tail-feathers projecting obliquely forward, together with the open shutter, mark out the space corresponding to the depth of the ledge at the bottom and bounded at the back by the wall and dark window, shown in summarily-drawn lines and fields of paint. There is something of the same in the rendering of depth in the 1639 *Portrait of a man standing (Cornelis Witsen?)* in Kassel (no. A 129). In the resemblance to two paintings dating from that year one may see evidence that no. A 134, too, was produced in or around 1639.

The painting gives the impression of having been executed rapidly and with sureness of touch, and of perhaps having been intended to have been looked at from some considerable distance. Yet sizeable changes must have been made while it was being painted. One can get an idea of the nature of some of these, in particular in the case of the head of a peacock visible in relief but now disappeared under the present basket of fruit; but for others this is hardly if at all possible (for example with the curved dividing line in the dark window aperture that, on the X-ray evidence as well, continues into the presentday side-cheek of the window. A drawing in Berlin attributed to Rembrandt (Ben. 353), in which an Oriental is shown in front of a window in which a girl is seen, provides no help in trying to reconstruct an earlier state of the composition.

As Rosenberg[2] among others has noted, Rembrandt's composition cannot be classified among still-lifes of the usual type that were being painted in Holland in the 1630s. In theme it is, as Scott A. Sullivan[3] has remarked, closer to the kitchen scene with one or more figures, of the kind painted in the Southern Netherlands in the 16th century by, for instance, Pieter Aertsen and Joachim Bueckelaer, and in the 17th in the Northern and especially Southern Netherlands by artists such as Frans Snijders. Rembrandt's picture is however even less close than the work of these painters to a motif conceivable as reality. In his painting the girl watching through the window wears clothing that is obviously not contemporaneous; it is reminiscent, through its dull red colouring and even its brushwork, of 16th-century Venetian prototypes, and especially of Tintoretto. Her presence seems essential for an understanding of the meaning that the picture must — apart from the pictorial interest of its subject-matter — have had at the time and that perhaps, like the kitchen pieces (see J.A. Emmens, '"Eins aber ist nötig" — Zu Inhalt und Bedeutung von Markt- und Küchenstücken des 16. Jahrhunderts', *Album amicorum J.G. van Gelder*, The Hague 1973, pp. 93–101), ought to be looked for in the area of portraying earthly pleasures. In his comments Tümpel[4] stressed the peacock's fine feathers showing the glory of God's creation, but thought that at the same time the dead peacocks were a sign of Vanitas. It is unlikely that (as Schwartz[5] suggested — see also the Comments under entry no. A 133) the birds point to the aristocratic pursuit of hunting — hunting peacocks seems hardly probable.

5. Documents and sources

See *Provenance*.

6. Graphic reproductions

None.

7. Copies

None.

8. Provenance

*– Described (as a pledge) in the inventory drawn up in Amsterdam on 16 October 1660 of the estate of Clara de Valaer (1584–1660), the widow successively of Eduart (or Evert) van Domselaer (1568–1624) and Hendrick van Domselaer (1580/81–1652): 'Een stuck synde twee pauwen ende een kint van Rembrant' (A piece showing two peacocks and a child by Rembrant) (A. Bredius in: *O.H.* 26, 1908, p. 223; Strauss *Doc.*, 1660/15).
– Occurs in the inventory drawn up in Amsterdam in September 1685 of the estate of Tobias van Domselaer (1611–1685), second son of Eduart van Domselaer and Clara de Valaer, as: 'Een groot schilderij met twee paeuwen van Rembrandt' (A large painting with two peacocks by Rembrandt) (HdG *Urk.*, no. 359).
– Coll. W.C. Cartwright, London, later Aynhoe Park, Banbury (on the evidence of labels on the stretcher at the time of the exhibitions in London in 1878, Amsterdam in 1898 and London in 1899).
– Dealer F. Muller, Amsterdam, during the First World War[6].
– Coll. J.J.M. Chabot, Wasssenaar; from 1923–42 on loan to the Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam. From 1948 on loan from the Stichting Nederlands Kunstbezit (later the State-owned Art Collection Dept); ownership transferred to the museum in 1960.

9. Summary

Though unusual among Rembrandt's work this painting is, through the brushwork that is clearly visible over large areas and through the use of colour, quite convincing as to its authenticity. It appears to have been meant to be viewed from some distance. Though the sureness of execution would not make one suspect this, quite substantial changes (some of them hard to define precisely) were made

to the composition in the course of production. Partial resemblances to a number of works dated 1639 lead one to suppose that this undated painting was done in or around that year.

The type of composition shows the greatest similarity with the kitchen scene with one or more figures of the kind that was produced, in the Southern Netherlands especially, from about 1550 onwards. Perhaps — though this would need further research — the picture, like the kitchen piece in general, meant a rejection of earthly pleasure as being vain and shortlived.

REFERENCES

1 H. Kühn, 'Untersuchungen zu den Malgründen Rembrandts', *Jahrbuch der Staatlichen Kunstsammlungen in Baden-Württemberg* 2 (1965), pp. 189–210, esp. 200.
2 J. Rosenberg, *Rembrandt*, Cambridge 1948, p. 154.
3 S.A. Sullivan, *The Dutch gamepiece*, Totowa NJ — Montclair NJ 1984, p. 25.
4 Tümpel 1986, p. 207.
5 Schwartz 1984, pp. 206, 208.
6 F. Schmidt-Degener, 'Rembrandts Pfauenbild', *Kunstchronik und Kunstmarkt* 54, new series 30 (1918/19), pp. 3–7.

A 135 The Concord of the State

[later 1630s]

ROTTERDAM, MUSEUM BOYMANS-VAN BEUNINGEN, INV. NO. 1717

HDG 227; BR. 476; BAUCH 105; GERSON 206

1. Summarized opinion

A well preserved, authentic almost monochrome oilsketch that must probably be seen as a draft done for an as yet unclear purpose. It can be dated only roughly, somewhere in the later 1630s and (in respect of the extension of and some changes in the composition) soon thereafter.

2. Description of subject

A crowd of horsemen are seen in front of a high fortification and, to the right, some trees; they are gathered behind and to either side of what looks like a steeply-built mound in the centre. Above the whole stretches a dark sky with a light patch to the left. Cannon are being fired from the fortification. The horsemen seem to be preparing to take part in a battle that can be seen raging in the left background. Some of them, behind and to the left of the mound, are already moving to the left, preceded by one rider on a galloping horse (actually depicted in a *levade*). To the right soldiers, most of them in armour, are riding to and fro or, like two in the foreground, mounting their horses; the lefthand one of these, seen contre-jour, is being helped by a squire holding his stirrup. Another, further back and wearing a plumed helmet, points with his pistol in the direction of the fighting, while to the right of him a man is loading a pistol. A horseman on a grey to the right of these two holds a long jousting lance; on his saddlecloth the three S. Andrew's crosses of the arms of Amsterdam are vaguely visible. Behind him an ensign, wearing a cap with a tall plume, holds a standard on high. The clothing and armour have for the most part a fanciful and archaic look about them — for instance in the jousting lance, the shape of some of the helmets and the use of a sword and shield by a rider who looks over his shoulder on the extreme right and of a mace by a soldier three rows further back.

The lit mound in the centre has two winglike projections to the sides over which a white cloth is draped, and it is topped by a weatherbeaten and almost leafless oaktree that leans to the left and palm-branches that lean to the right. The oak and palm-branches are held at the bottom in a cylindrical object, which appears to be encircled by two iron bands. Against the cloth hangs a shield with the arms of the city of Amsterdam, topped by its imperial crown; to either side of this the cloth bears the motto SOLI DEO GLORIA. This shield is larger than the other escutcheons, all linked by a clasped-hands motif, that stretch out in a line along the upper edge of the cloth, which is spread out wide to the left; of these, one can recognize only the one visible on the right, bearing the arms of Leiden (two crossed keys), and that immediately on the left with the arms of Haarlem (a sword flanked on each side by two stars; here there are three, and the cross at the top is missing). To the left of centre a lion lies on the cloth, with lashing tail — and a second tail flat on the ground, probably an earlier rejected version — and with the left paw resting on a clutch of arrows. The animal is tethered by one chain to a ring at the bottom of the podium, and by another that runs under its right fore- and hindpaws to a ring between the front legs of a throne standing on the far left in the shadow at the foot of a tall pillar. Against this pillar, halfway up, there is a charter-book with dangling seals. The throne, with the swirling shapes of the lobate style, has a canopy linked at the bottom to the armrests, and beneath this stands a blindfolded woman, her elbows resting on the back of the throne, with head raised and mouth open. She is recognizable as Dame Justice from the blindfold, her sword held by the hilt with hands clasped before her breast, and her set of scales. The tip of the sword is placed in a metal crown (a coronet?) on a pillow on the seat. In the lefthand pan of the scales are a purse and rolled-up documents; the weight tilts to the other side, where there is again a charter with hanging seals. Ironbound chests stand to either side of the throne.

3. Observations and technical information

Working conditions

Examined in December 1973 (B.H., P.v.Th.), and in 1980/81 (E.v.d.W.) before and during restoration carried out at that time by P.F.J.M. Hermesdorf, and in the company of the restorer (whose report to the museum was available subsequently), Drs. J. Giltaij the museum curator, Miss C.M. Groen and other staff of the Central Research Laboratory, Amsterdam. Two complete sets of radiographs were used (taken before and after removal of a cradle during restoration), as were colour and B&W ultraviolet photographs and infrared and raking-light photographs. The paint surface was studied under an surgical microscope.

Support

DESCRIPTION: Oak panel (identification of the type of wood was confirmed during dendrochronology examination by Dr P. Klein, Hamburg), grain horizontal, 74.5 × 100 cm. Two planks of unequal size: the larger, about 68.5 cm deep, is at the bottom, butt-jointed at a slight skew to a plank 5.5 cm deep at the lefthand end and 6.5 cm at the right. These must have been joined before the ground was applied to the panel, since at various points this runs across the join. The join was strengthened at the back (probably later) with six small recessed oak blocks. The upper plank has four knots in the centre (all visible at the paint surface), two of which have been filled in with round wooden plugs; these are located a little to the left of the forefeet of the galloping horse, in front of the chest of its rider, at the cylindrical object on the mound and by the neck of the rider pointing with his pistol. A horizontal crack runs above the horizon from the lefthand edge of the panel to close to the nose of the galloping horse.

A wooden cradle, which set up so many stresses in the panel that warping (and probably the crack just mentioned) resulted, was replaced in 1980/81 with a construction in which the panel is suspended in an aluminium frame by means of glued-on, slotted wooden blocks. In connexion with the earlier cradling the panel was planed down to a thickness of *c.* 0.5 cm, and all the edges planed slightly to bring them straight and square to each other. Traces of bevelling can be seen along the lefthand edge. Along the other edges there are shallow gouged grooves, half-round at the top, about 0.7 cm wide, 0.5 cm long and 7–8 cm apart (though the smallest distance is 4 cm and the greatest 9.5 cm). Their physical appearance suggests that they are old, and they were in any case done before the panel was planed down since some of them have partly (and other perhaps even wholly) disappeared as a result. The grooving probably served the same purpose as the bevelling — to fix the panel in a shallow-rebated frame with nails whose heads were then sunk into the groove. Such treatment of the edges of a panel, though not unique, is unknown to us in any other Rembrandt work.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: Dendrochronology (Dr P. Klein, Hamburg) showed the larger plank of the panel to be from a radial board, the last measured annual ring dating from 1611. The plank appears to come from the same treetrunk as the panels of the Kassel *River landscape with windmill* (no. B 12) and the Washington *Half-length figure in 'Polish' costume* of 1637 (no. A 122). The Rotterdam and Kassel panels must have been immediately next to each other in the trunk. In the case of the latter the junction between heartwood and sapwood lies at 1620, which thus gives an earliest possible felling date of 1629 and a statistical average one of 1635 for the Rotterdam panel as well.

Ground

DESCRIPTION: A light yellowish brown that can be reckoned to belong to the ground is exposed at various places — on the left in the battle area and in the galloping horse, and on the right at many points in the group of riders; here and there the projecting ridges of the grain are clearly apparent. To the left of the oaktree the ground shows through in some places in the sky and

Fig. 1. Panel 74.5 × 100 cm



the figures on the battlement. A difference in tone, most clearly seen in the horse in the middle foreground, would seem to indicate that a translucent brown wash was at some points placed over the light-tinted imprimatura (see also *Paint layer*, SCIENTIFIC DATA).

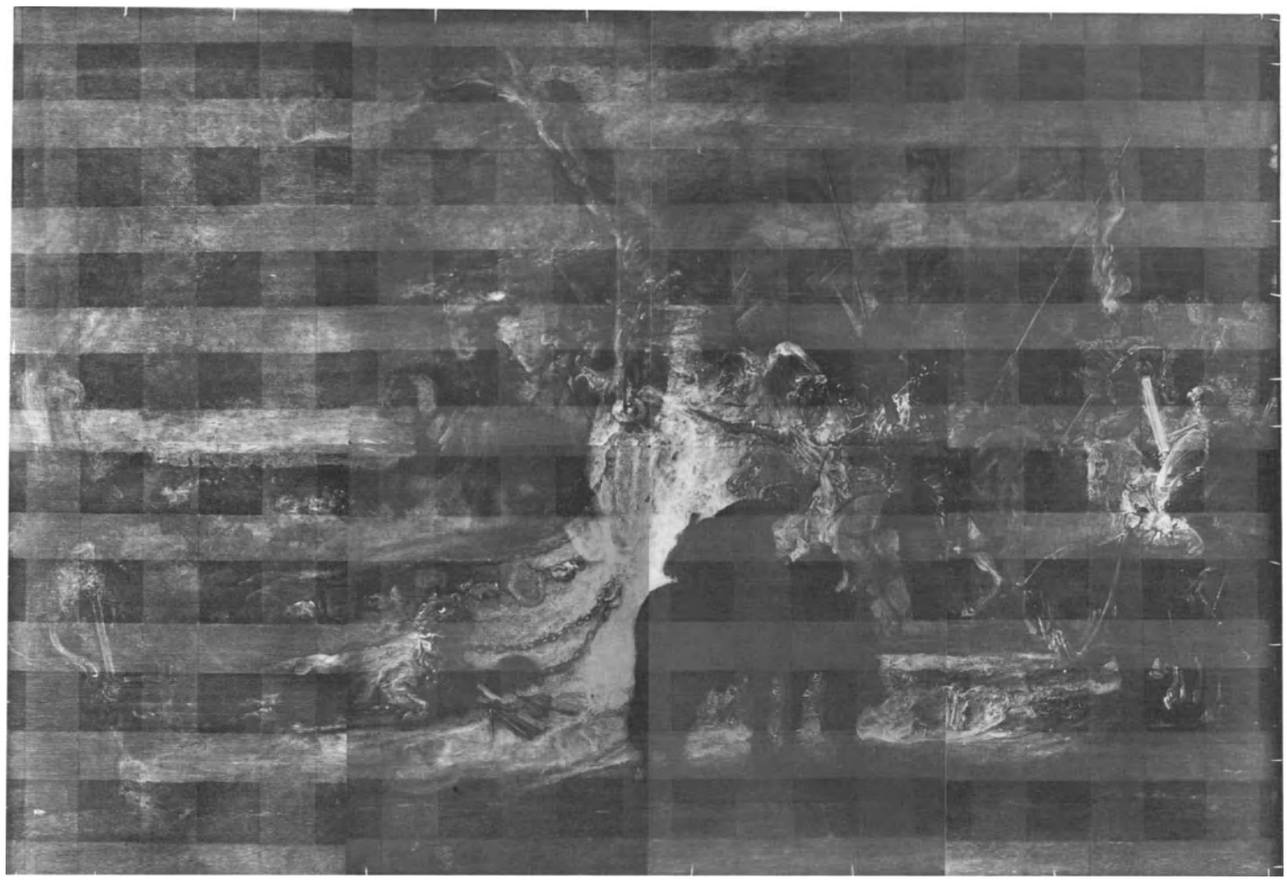
SCIENTIFIC DATA: Paint samples, revealing the entire structure of the ground and paint layer, show the former to consist of a chalk-and-glue mixture, with on top of it a layer of ochre-coloured 'primuersel' 5–16 microns deep and comprising white lead with grains of black, brown and red pigment and, in one sample, a very small amount of yellow pigment. The fact that the subdued lights on the galloping horse in the middle ground do not differ in tone from the ground (which is exposed at this point) makes it likely that the ground has become lighter through the *primuersel* becoming more transparent.

Paint layer

CONDITION: Good, apart from slight local wearing. The paint layer has cracked at the knots and wood plugs, and is worn at places on the upstanding grain of the panel. There has been occasional paint loss along the join between the two parts of the panel. The sky has a number of damages that came to light from beneath overpaintings during the restoration in 1980/81, and were retouched. Small patches of wear elsewhere have also been retouched. Craquelure: occasional, and mainly in the thickly painted light passages with a predominantly horizontal and vertical pattern. A fine shrinkage cracking can be seen in the grey-brown paint of the strip along the top edge that was painted later (see below under DESCRIPTION).

DESCRIPTION: Close observation of the paint surface will in general give a good insight into the procedure used, even though the image is complicated by alterations and additions made during the course of the work. In looking for a first lay-in one is struck by thin traces of slightly lumpy, light paint that from the fact that they are invariably overlapped by adjacent strokes of paint (where there are any of these) must belong to the earliest stage of production. In the lion, especially, the relationship between these clumps of paint and the form is evident — for instance along the contour of the rump and at the forepaws, where they are accompanied by fuzzy strokes of grey-brown. This light paint shows an unusual fragmented craquelure and appears hardly if at all in the X-ray image (for its composition see below under SCIENTIFIC DATA). The second phase includes the far more powerful brush drawing in dark brown paint that in some places, such as the young squire in the foreground, has been strengthened further still at a late stage — at the outline of his boot on the right the dark paint just overlaps the lit vegetation of the terrain, which is given much more detail. The fairly linear brush drawing is combined with the application of tone in the same brown, and is followed by the addition of lit passages and accents in a thick white, white broken with an ochre colour, and yellows (probably yellow ochre). Grey mixed with ochre colour is used mainly in the lefthand side of the picture, e.g. in and around the figure of Justice. Cool greys, which appear dark in the IR photograph, occur in the right part of the fortification, above and below the battle in the left background, and on the right in the sky; as we shall see below and when discussing the X-rays, there were changes made to the

Fig. 2. X-Ray



picture at a late stage, and the use of grey in the sky is connected with an upwards extension of the scene. In the crown of the arms of Amsterdam touches of dark red are partly overlapped by accents in an ochre colour and yellow-white.

The handling of paint is particularly varied, in line with the noticeably different extent of completion, intensity of lighting and nature of the materials depicted. One example of this among many might be the varying lighting of the horses' heads in the righthand part of the painting. The head of the horse in the right foreground is marked by thick, spiky strokes of dark and light paint that give an almost graphic suggestion of plasticity, while the shadowed head of the grey behind it is shown with a few thin strokes of brown inside a shape that comes mostly from a reserve left in the dark surroundings; the horse's head to the right of this is built up from broad, flat brushstrokes. One notices an extensive use of scratchmarks, especially in the foreground figures and objects — in the complicated passage on the left where the form of the monumental throne and chests and that of the scales is largely determined by scratchmarks, and in the riders in the centre and far right foreground where their function is far more that of giving detail or enhancing the suggestion of plasticity. The dark lines that are found in these areas consist to a large extent of small ridges of thin paint that have been rucked up as the scratchmarks were made.

A number of changes made as the work proceeded are readily recognized, especially from the radiographs, although not easy to interpret. Between the commander on the galloping horse and the first rider following him there was another rider who has been painted out, as has a long lance that the commander was holding (evidently in the underpainting stage). Additions include the raised sword and the highlights on the helmet of the rider now immediately following him, and two horses' heads (which are hard to separate) just above the rear of the galloping horse. A pentimento that can be seen below this horse is connected with the painting-out of the feet of the horse of the vanished rider; one of these was found, after later overpaintings were removed during the recent restoration, to consist of a brown wash over the ground. Just in front of the rear hooves of the galloping horse a shape has appeared that one might, at a pinch, be able to interpret as the front half of a running dog. The pentimento below the horse is continued to the left, along the wavy upper edge of the cloth, as far as the canopy over the seat. Between the cylindrical object on the lit podium and the wing to the right of it a shape done in yellowish paint has been painted out with dark brown paint that is worn on the relief of underlying brushstrokes; this overpainted shape resembles, in colour and handling of paint, the righthand wing of the podium. Alterations have also been made to the transition from the lit part of the cloth to the dark foreground on the left. Observations at the paint surface coupled with a study of the radiographs and infrared photographs make it clear that here too there was, just as at the top of the cloth, a row of armorial shields — this time seen upside-down and probably shown only as dark outlines; as these were painted out the dark foreground was extended upwards a few centimetres. A second change in this area involves the lion's tail: two long strokes of dark paint (which may have become more evident with the passage of time) show that this was initially shown lying flat.

Fig. 3. Detail (infrared photograph, reduced)



Running across the right part of the fortification and into the sky to the right of the jousting lance there is a thin, bent shape ending at the top in a knob sloping to the left, the light paint of which has because of wearing become partly visible at the surface; that of a curved form to the right of this, petering out to the right, can also be seen. It is not clear, even with the help of the X-ray, what has been painted out here; it would certainly seem that the shapes have nothing to do with the fortifications, and should rather be seen as belonging to one or more objects that projected up above the mass of riders — possibly standards. The present dark grey area of sky and the righthand fortification that cover over these shapes were evidently set down in an advanced stage of the work, and this is confirmed by the fact that the already completed lance and other weapons standing up high are in reserves left in the paint. Against this, the ground shows through in many places in the sky to the left of the oaktree, indicating that for the most part this passage was not gone over again (as is also evident from the IR photograph). The same can be said of the part of the fortress to the left of the oaktree, where the ground is apparent in all of the figures that staff it as well as in the shapes above them. Above the battle scene in the left background one finds, in a broad, horizontal sweep, the same grey as is used above the righthand fortification, showing that this passage too must have been given its present appearance only at a late stage. For other pentimenti, see under *X-Rays*.

During the restoration in 1980/81 it became obvious that along both the top and bottom edges there are strips some 5–6 cm wide that are treated differently from the remainder. While the latter is typified by a crisp brushstroke and clearly-defined tonal values, these strips have a somewhat murky tint and casual treatment; details like the foliage in the upper righthand corner or the bands round the chest in the lower lefthand corner are dealt with differently, or disappear altogether in the transition to these brushstrokes. The thickly-painted light area of sky to the right of the oaktree continues into the strip at the top, showing that this part of the sky and the dark part below it were painted when the strip was filled in. For such is the remarkable conclusion that has to be drawn from the features just described — the composition initially stopped some 6 cm from the upper edge and from the bottom of the panel, and when the picture was for the greater part already in the existing state of completion the uncovered ground was still visible in these strips. The fact that the join between the two parts of the panel is also at 6 cm from the bottom edge is purely coincidental: parts of the lay-in in dark brown paint that are mostly above the join and are connected with the initial bottom boundary of the composition occasionally overlap the join. Besides, the undamaged condition of the ground on parts of this join and the presence of spatters on the narrow bottom plank of the light paint of the very first lay-in, described earlier, are further evidence that this plank was not added subsequently. When the top strip was filled in, a band about 1 cm wide along the top edge of the panel, running from the top lefthand corner to the light area of sky, was left unpainted; a similar band *c.* 6 cm long runs from the same top lefthand corner downwards along the lefthand side. Besides the strengthening of the sky above the battle in the background (which as we have said belongs to the same stage as that of the sky to the right, and thus to that of the infilling of the top strip), some of the other pentimenti mentioned may also have been done in this late phase.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: During the investigation preceding the restoration work in 1980/81, 20 paint samples were taken and cross-sections prepared from 10 of these. The sampling had to do partly with problems posed by the restoration process, in particular that of identifying later overpaintings, and partly with investigating the painting technique and materials used. The sample reference numbers quoted below are those of the samples in the documentation of the Central Research Laboratory in Amsterdam (the code number for the documentation as a whole is 1145).

In five of the six cross-sections yielding the full layer structure of the passages concerned (nos. 5, 8, 12, 17 and 19) there is still, on the brownish *primuersel* of the ground, a probably translucent layer the binder of which had (or has taken on) a brownish colour, and which contains particles of brown and black pigment. The presence of this layer explains why at many places (e.g. at the rider in the foreground) the exposed parts of what seems to be the ground are darker than with what is seen in other places (see *Ground*, DESCRIPTION).

A noteworthy feature of the painting is the sporadic occurrence of yellowish-white highlights with unusual properties — they show up hardly if at all in the radiographic image, and present an uncommon craquelure that lends them a fragmented appearance. On IR spectrometry analysis, samples 1 and 4 proved to contain chalk as a pigment in an animal-glue binder (noted in sample 1). Occasionally the presence of these highlights can be related to grey-brown brush lines that form part of the first lay-in for the composition as mentioned in DESCRIPTION above. From the point of view of the binding medium, analysis of this paint provided no clear result because of the smallness of the available sample (no. 16). The pigments used in this first lay-in appear to contain chalk and a silicate (probably ochre). It is unclear whether these brownish-grey strokes and the white chalk/glue highlights were set down before or after the layer of translucent brown described above.

At the time of the restoration a sample (no. 19) was taken from the dark area of sky above the righthand part of the fortification, to the left of the figures seen below the trees on the extreme right; this passage proved not to have been overpainted. The layer of paint used for the dark sky at that point contained white, black and yellow and red ochre pigment particles. The same composition was found in the paint of the sky in samples 6 and 7, taken from the left above the battle scene and from a little higher up close to the pillar. At the position of sample 6 (to the right of the pillar) there was an overpainting, now removed.

In a number of samples there was beneath the uppermost layer of paint a layer of varnish, recognizable as such as a transparent layer containing no grains of pigment and fluorescing light green under a UV radiation. In the case of samples 7, 8 and 10, taken from the dark areas just above and below the battle in the background, this could not (as it usually can) be taken as evidence that these passages had been overpainted by a much later hand; the nature and composition of the paint, from the viewpoint of mixture and pigment grain size, above and beneath the varnish layer are so alike that there can be no question of subsequent overpainting. It is more likely that the varnish layer encountered there was either applied as a sealing varnish and Rembrandt then amended his composition further, or is connected with the cleaning-out of paint that had found its way in during the work.

X-Rays

In general the radiographic image matches what one expects from the paint surface. Some of the forms that have been painted out, such as those above the righthand fortification, the armorial shields in the foreground and the lit area immediately to the right of the cylindric-shaped object, are clearly visible. There are some further changes to be found. The arms of Haarlem, to left of those of Amsterdam, appear to have been painted beyond the edge of the cloth, which was originally continuous. Above and to the right of the arms of Amsterdam there is a dark area that continues some way upwards; this is bordered on the right by a vertical zone, showing up light, that terminates level with the upper edge of the cylindrical object. This cannot so far be interpreted, though it does indicate that the object with the metal bands was not planned in the first instance. In the text 'soli Deo gloria' the word 'soli' was (as may also be seen from the paint surface) done in paint so wet that the writing dragged away light paint, resulting in a dark image; to the right of the imperial crown the words 'Deo gloria' were

evidently set on much dryer paint, and they do not show up in the X-ray. This is evidence of the entire text having been added at a late stage, necessitating an extension of the drapery to the left of the arms of Amsterdam. There is no clear indication of the present lefthand wing of the mound having also been a later addition. One could however well imagine that the lit mound was originally seen more from one side; the lefthand wing would then have been for the most part hidden behind the righthand one, so that only the tip of it (the light shape, painted-out to the right of the cylindrical object) was visible.

A little to the left of the front legs of the galloping horse there is a cluster of light spots that can be seen in relief at the paint surface; these may have formed part of the battle scene at an earlier stage. Between the rear legs and below the belly of the grey on the right there are brushstrokes that appear light, and it is also apparent from the paint surface that light shapes were later covered over with thin dark paint.

Signature

At the bottom right, in the strip that was painted only in a late stage of the work, in dark brown paint <*Rembrandt.f. 164*> (followed by the remains of an indecipherable digit). The letters and figures, set down with short, straight strokes, differ so greatly from those in signatures that can be regarded as authentic that it is hard to accept them as autograph. It is likely that the final figure of the date was mutilated when the edge of the panel was being planed to fit the wood cradle. In the infrared photograph the other figures, like all the letters of the signature, appear dark; there is however nothing to be seen of the final digit, as if the material in which it was written differs from that of the rest. It can, with due caution, be assumed that the whole inscription was added by another hand, and furthermore that the fragmentary final figure is no more than a retouch after mechanical damage.

Varnish

No special remarks.

4. Comments

The many problems that the *Concord of the State* presents do not include that of the identity of its author. In the handling of light and shade, and in the way the interplay between them is used to arrange the composition and give the scene an illusion of depth, Rembrandt's manner is unmistakeable. The same is true of the simultaneously descriptive and modelling nature of the brushwork — broad at one moment, sharp and crisp at the next — that determines a large part of the picture; of the telling combination of this with a tone painting in deep brown-black, translucent and light yellow-brown, opaque greys and thickly-applied white; and of the free and effective use of scratchmarks made in the wet paint. These characteristic features are, it is true, less evident in the strips about 6 cm wide along the top and bottom; but as we shall see in a moment the painting on these strips is so closely connected with plainly autograph alterations to the composition that it, too, can confidently be attributed to Rembrandt. Remarkable, however, and never before seen in his earlier work is the character of the very first lay-in using strokes and clumps of white, consisting of a paint with a glue medium, combined with greyish-brown brush lines. Equally surprising is the occasional use of a very thin brown tone in which there is no trace of a brushstroke to be seen, most clearly apparent in the dark repoussoir of the mounting horseman, horse and squire in the foreground. Study of the paint surface and of the X-ray and infrared images shows that during the course of the work there were changes to the picture that only in a late stage were extended to the strips at the top and bottom of the original panel, already mentioned, which until then had remained unpainted. These additions and alterations have already been described (see *Paint layer*, DESCRIPTION and *X-Rays*), and are referred to in an article by Hermersdorf, Van de Wetering and Giltaij[1] which, inter alia, gives an account of the restoration work carried out in 1980/81. For that reason a brief summary will suffice here.

The changes to the composition discovered to date occur mostly at four places — around the commander on the galloping horse on the left; in the upper part of the lit mound and, perhaps linked with this, in the cylindrical object; in the foreground where there is today the transition from the lit cloth to the shadow area; and finally on the right in the sky and the adjacent righthand part of the fortification. In the case of the commander on the galloping horse a long lance sticking up was painted out, as was a rider behind him and perhaps also some of the feet of the latter's horse that must at first have been visible below the galloping horse. This latter alteration may be seen as a simplification, made to isolate the commander on the galloping horse. Additions were, in light paint, the sword of the rider who now follows the commander and the highlight on his helmet, and in dark opaque paint and rather indistinctly two horse's heads immediately to the left of the lefthand wing of the lit mound. In this mound the part of the cloth to the upper left was added later, probably in connexion with the symmetrical placing of the motto SOLI DEO GLORIA; the first word of this was set down in wet paint, whereas the other two words to the right of the arms of Amsterdam were written on paint that had already dried. The use of the motto thus appears to have been an afterthought. The armorial shield to the left of the arms of Amsterdam appears to have been (perhaps in connexion with a change on the position of the mound) twisted rather further forward, so that unlike all the others it has a corner projecting above the cloth. In the X-ray the area to the right above the arms of Amsterdam shows, reaching to the upper edge of the present cylindrical object and differing from the present image, a division into vertical zones — one dark and another, immediately to the right of it, that shows up light. It is not entirely clear what was being changed here. For a hypothesis that the mound was once seen much more from one side, see under *X-Rays*. In any

Fig. 4. Detail (1 : 1)

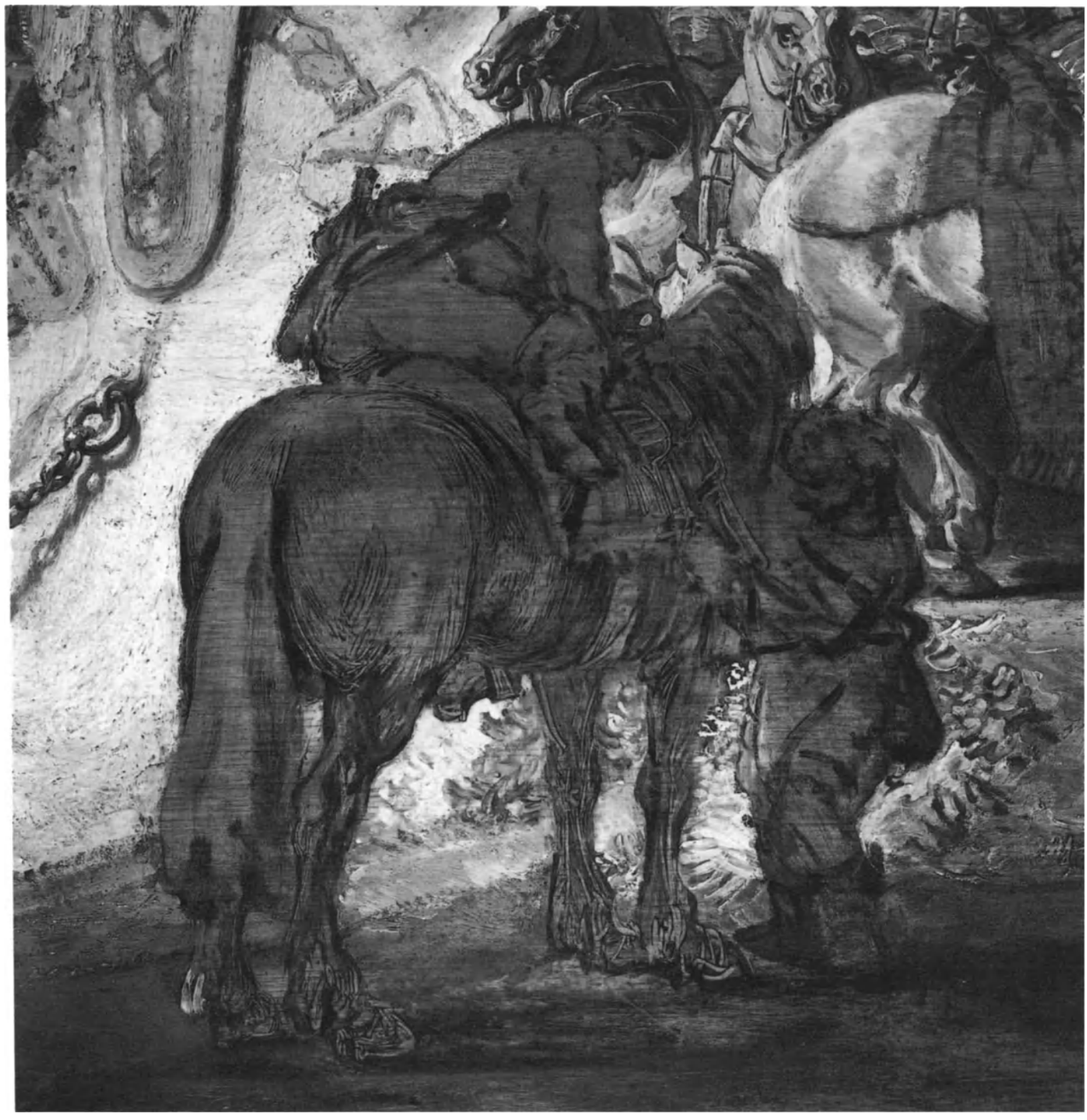


case, there seems originally to have been a different shape continuing upwards in place of the cylindrical object. The modification in the left foreground involves the painting-out of armorial shields, sketched with a few lines, that — in an intrinsically logical connexion with the shields along the edge of the cloth on the further side and with the arms of Leiden on the near side — were seen upside-down. It may be imagined that this arrangement, unavoidable if what already existed was to be carried through consistently, was nonetheless felt to be unsatisfactory. The margin of the shadowed foreground against the lit cloth, and the appearance on the extreme right of a row of isolated dots, suggest that in the second instance Rembrandt was intending to show only the upstanding edge of the cloth, bordered with a chain. A number of broad strokes visible in the IR photograph that run from the area of the overpainted shields and penetrate into the originally unpainted strip at the bottom of the picture make one suspect that the alteration just described and the filling-in of this strip belong to the same late stage of the work. A fourth area that knew extensive alterations takes in the righthand part of the sky and the fortification; this was gone over again in the phase during which the so far unpainted strip along the top of the panel was incorporated in the picture. One or more objects show through the dark grey used in this part of the sky; they probably originally projected above the heads of the riders, but cannot be identified (banners?). During the reworking of the sky the jousting lance, which already had been given a finishing catchlight, was let into a reserve in the sky and fortification; the paint of the latter overlaps that of the sky and must thus have been painted last. In the light of this alteration it is not all that likely that the righthand fortification was designed directly in its present form. In the sky above the battle scene in the background on the left one finds, in a broad band, the same dark grey that was used (evidently at the same time) in the sky on the right.

In its largely monochrome colour scheme and sketchlike treatment this work resembles others from Rembrandt's oeuvre that were described in the 1656 inventory of his possession as a 'sketch' or 'in the grey' (= grisaille); examples of this are 'een Schets van de begraeffenis Cristi van Rembrant' (Strauss *Doc.*, 1656/12, no. 111), which is probably the work in Glasgow (no. A 105) and 'Een excehomo in 't graeuw, van Rembrant' (ibid. no. 121) which can be identified with the London work of 1634 (no. A 89). It may be noticed that when 'de eendragt van 't lant, vanden selven' (the concord of the state, by the same [Rembrandt]) — see *6. Documents and sources* — was listed, as located like the other two works in the 'Agtercaemer offte Sael' (the rear room or hall), the same specification was not added. One might conclude from this that the identification of the Rotterdam work with the 'eendragt' mentioned in the inventory[2], which has been accepted since 1836, is wrong or (assuming it to be correct) that Rembrandt made a distinction between the *Concord* on the one hand and the *Entombment* and *Ecce homo* on the other. For the moment, however, there is no clear argument that can be offered for either of these assumptions. The traditional identification finds support in the motif of the clasped hands between the escutcheons (unmistakeably symbolizing concord) and may therefore be considered correct. Even though the *Concord* is not mentioned in the 1656 inventory as either a sketch or a grisaille, it can hardly be looked on as anything else. One might perhaps suppose that the work mentioned in the inventory was a version of the same or roughly the same picture done in another mode of painting, but without further evidence as to the existence of such a work this is no more than speculation. For the time being it therefore seems reasonable to look on the Rotterdam painting as being the work listed among Rembrandt's belongings.

In most parts of the picture an extreme sketchiness goes hand-in-hand with detail shown with crisp drawing in dark and light paint and, as especially in the horse in the middle foreground and the rider to the far right, with scratchmarks. In anautonomous painting the occurrence side-by-side of a first lay-in and finishing touches would be anomalous, so it is unlikely that the work ought to be regarded either as a painting intended as a grisaille standing in its own right or, as has been suggested, as a painting in an uncompleted state[3]. The way of working is far more like the making of a draft in which the composition as a whole is laid down while the individual elements are set down with great immediacy, but with an uneven degree of detail. If one thinks of the work as a sketch, then it is remarkable that such a large panel was used for it. Most of the other grisailles known from Rembrandt's hand — for instance the London *Ecce homo* — are painted on paper, one (the Berlin *John the Baptist preaching*, no. A 106) was originally on canvas, and some such as the Glasgow *Entombment* are on small panels. We know that the *Ecce homo* grisaille was made as a sketch for an etching, and in the other cases too this is a fair possibility. It is not entirely impossible that Rembrandt had an etching in mind when he made the *Concord*; this has been assumed by a number of authors, including Schöne[4], Van Regteren Altena[5], Haverkamp-Begemann[6] and Tümpel[7]. There is a broad similarity between this allegory and contemporaneous prints of a pamphleteering nature, in which as we shall discuss later a number of the motifs used here can be found in isolation. Yet in its dimensions the work is so much larger than any of the other Rembrandt grisailles (certainly those on panel)

Fig. 5. Detail (1 : 1.5)



that one tends in this particular case to look for a special reason for making it, and to see it as a draft for something different, such as a monumental painting — as Schmidt-Degener[8] believed (see below) — or a decoration for temporary use; Bille[9] and Schwartz[10] have suggested that the work was a draft for an allegorical tableau for the entry of Prince Frederik Hendrik and his family in 1642. The problem of the painting's purpose must remain unsolved for the time being.

The remarkable fact that strips were initially left unpainted at the top and bottom of the panel presents a curious problem. Similar phenomena in other paintings (cf. nos. C 58 and B 11) are at least just as puzzling, and are no help in finding the answer. One assumption as to the function of these strips can be reached from an idea put forward by Schöne[4], quoted with approval by Tümpel[7]. Schöne took it — a full ten years before restoration revealed the initially unpainted strips — that the painting was

Fig. 6. Detail with signature (reduced)



intended as a draft for a print, and that allowance was being made for the insertion of explanatory texts. This notion merits consideration, certainly so long as no better explanation has been found. It should be added that the painting of the two strips can, in this line of thinking, have taken place after the design as such had lost its original function, perhaps through being rejected by the person commissioning the work.

Dating of the grisaille has always been based on the *164.* present on the painting. This inscription does not appear to be authentic (see above under *Signature*), but even if by another hand it could well provide accurate information. Only a small portion of the final figure can be seen, and it seems that whether it is the remains of an 0, a 1 or a 6 it is not to be trusted. The figure *4* is clearly visible, and if there were other supporting evidence could well indicate that the work was done in the 1640s. An extra complication here is the absence of works from those years that could lend themselves to direct stylistic comparison with the *Concord* — the most suitable way of testing the truth of the information the inscription might offer. To support his reading of the date as 1641 Schmidt-Degener[8] pointed, in 1912, to similarities with other works from the early 1640s; his references to the *Night watch* finished in 1642 (no. A 146) are the most apposite. They involve details in the righthand group of soldiers in the *Concord*, such as the mounting rider in the extreme right foreground glancing back over his shoulder, the two soldiers shown in conversation further back with the one on the left looking to his right while pointing to his left, and the figure of the ensign holding the banner on high. One does indeed find the same actions by persons placed, roughly speaking, in comparable places in the *Night watch*. An argument such as this is certainly not without foundation, but it is impossible to base more than a very broad dating on it; to this one must add in this instance that Rembrandt started on the *Night watch* in 1639 at the latest. It is just as, and perhaps even more justifiable to make a link with the mid 1630s, the period in which there is a remarkable concentration of grisailles in Rembrandt's oeuvre, and then especially with the Berlin *John the Baptist preaching*, datable in 1634/35. The two works reveal similarities not only in the manner of painting but also in the lighting, in the general organisation of the picture and in the emphatic sketchiness with which foreground contrejour figures are shown (the 'sibyl' in the Berlin work and the rider's squire in the *Concord*). An earlier date than is traditionally assumed for the *Concord* — perhaps just for the central portion, without the strips filled in at a late stage and carrying the problematical inscription? — could certainly be defended in the light of these resemblances. But they are not conclusive: one can wonder, for instance, how far the similarity in the manner of painting stems from the special nature of the grisaille, and the resemblance in layout from a constant element in Rembrandt's ideas on composition that can have played a role over a number of years on end. Nevertheless, the similarity with works from the late 1630s, such as the 1638 *Landscape with the Good Samaritan* in Krakow (no. A 125), is so much closer than with any work from the '40s that a production before 1640 is rather to be preferred.

Where the interpretation of the picture is concerned it is ironic that while in this case — from what can be assumed and from what Smith[2] already believed — we know the authentic title of the painting from Rembrandt's inventory of 1656, one finds considerable difficulty in understanding the allegory fully, and there have consequently been differences of opinion that are so far unresolved. There has never been any doubt that the picture had a political significance, and it is evident — if only because of the clasped hands that can be seen linking the escutcheons and that were used from 1565 on as a symbol of political unity, first by the Alliance of Nobles and later by the 'Beggars' — that unity forms an important component, as is suggested by the title given to the work in 1656. This, however, is where agreement between the various interpretations ends. These differ substantially in two respects: firstly, some authors opt for a meaning linked to a specific and contemporaneous theme, while others prefer a general meaning connected with the struggle for freedom of the United Provinces. In particular it is unclear whether the allegory relates to concord between the United Provinces, or within the province of Holland under the leadership of Amsterdam. These divergent views stem, of course, from the difficulty there is in finding a sufficiently unequivocal explanation of the relationship between the motifs depicted (e.g. on the basis of similar pictures of other political allegories, especially prints). This is a problem that remains unsolved here as well.

Besides Smith[2] — who mentioned a Triple Alliance, aimed against the United Provinces, of the Emperor, Philip III of Spain and Archduke Albert of Austria — the idea of a contemporaneous event was shared by Vosmaer[11]. Working from the reading of the date on the painting as 1648 this author believed that the work was an allegory on the Peace of Munster. Without giving any more detailed

Fig. 7. Detail (1 : 1.5)



explanation of the picture, he considered that the terrain inside the line of escutcheons represented the United Provinces, symbolized the by arrows beneath the lion's paw. He interpreted Justice as supplicating, and the documents with seals hanging from the foot of the pillar, above her head, as the privileges that the towns and provinces had received from the sovereign. Vosmaer pointed out that the throne had a canopy as well as a back, and that Dame Justice was standing between the two, leaning on the back of the seat. Schmidt-Degener[8] was the first to place the various motifs in a quite different context. He read the date as 1641 and, starting from the admittedly striking similarity between certain configurations and gestures in the group of riders on the right and motifs in the *Night watch*, had the curious idea that the painting was a study for Rembrandt's militia group portrait. He later went back on this notion, and suggested that it might be a sketch for a chimneybreast piece for the hall of the Arquebusiers[12]. A fruitful aspect of his interpretation was the idea — based on the prominent position of the arms of Amsterdam in the row of escutcheons, and their appearance on the saddlecloth of the rider with a jousting lance — that Amsterdam was accorded a special place in the picture, and (though rather more speculatively) that the allegory might well be a glorification of the militias of the towns of Holland, and in particular of Amsterdam. This author saw the lion as the lion of Holland, chained to the soil of Holland — the chain shackled to the throne on the left he later regarded as possibly a rejected version[13] — while the throne was the one fallen vacant through the abjuring of the authority of Philip II. This interpretation did not go unchallenged. Hofstede de Groot[14] rightly made the point that the militias of the cities of Holland never banded together into a single force. Schmidt-Degener persisted in his view, however[15], emphasizing the importance that had been attached to unity in the Republic in the first half of the 17th century, in particular in connexion with the religious quarrels during those years; he believed he had found a prototype for Rembrandt's picture in an engraving commemorating the militiamen of Amsterdam marching out to defend Zwolle in 1622, after the end of the Twelve Years' Truce (1609–1621). This print shows, under the motto 'Eendracht maeckt macht' (unity is strength), the militia marching towards a number of entrenchments near Zwolle; in the left foreground is a group of allegorical figures representing the 'Cleavage in the State' and 'Discord in religion' on either side of the arms of Amsterdam, with behind this the bonnet of freedom on a stave and the lion from the arms of the United Provinces with a bundle of arrows (the symbol of unity) in one paw. Schmidt-Degener paid no attention to the scene shown in the print, but did quote some lines from a poem by Jan Jansz. Starter (1594–1626) printed below the engraving, in which the courage of the Netherlanders in their fight against the Spaniards is praised with the motto taken from Plutarch's biography of Agesilaus, King of Sparta, of 'De macht van 't Land bestaet meer in Eendrachtige Burgers als in stercke vesten' (The power of the land lies more in united and well-armed citizens than in strong fortresses). Clara Bille[9] reproduced the poem in its entirety and pointed out numerous motifs that appear in visual form in Rembrandt's picture: the rejection of the Spanish king (represented by the empty throne) defeated by Justice; the Spanish treasury depleted by the war against the united Netherlanders (the chests or coffers on either side of the throne on the left); unity in the struggle, the mutual aid that towns gave each other with their militia at the call of the stadholder (and in particular Amsterdam's help to Zwolle); the role of the stadholder — Maurits in 1622, and Frederik Hendrik in the 1630s and 1640s — as a general; and the comparison with the Batavian war of liberation against Rome (reflected in the archaic dress and weaponry). As the possible origin of a commission prompting the preparation of this sketch for a painting or etching this author mentions the visit by Prince Frederik Hendrik of Orange to Amsterdam in 1642. Schwartz[10] had the same visit in mind when suggesting that the work might have been a rejected draft for an allegorical tableau. Parallel with Bille's study, Hellinga[16] also drew on Starter's poem and came to similar conclusions; on the basis of Ripa's *Iconologia* he interpreted the pillar on the left as Law, and using texts from various (and quite heterogeneous) sources saw the picture as representing the army's campaign, led by Amsterdam, to protect law and liberty. In the meantime Schmidt-Degener[13] had summed up and slightly altered his view: the throne on the left, and the crown lying on it, no longer belonged to the sovereign, but were those of Justice.

While all the interpretations discussed so far were based on the significance the idea of concord undoubtedly had in political life in the Netherlands in the 17th century, other authors have seen the painting rather as the expression of a particular confrontation that threatened unity. Hofstede de Groot[14] already alluded briefly to the conflicting interests of the provinces, especially Holland, and of the stadholder. Six[17] connected the empty royal throne with the old tree with its young shoots, which he felt embodied the motto of Prince Maurits of Orange (d. 1625) — 'Tandem fit surculus arbor' (eventually the shoot becomes a tree) — and referred to Prince Frederik Hendrik's striving for an hereditary, royal position. The painting was, he believed, intended as a preparation for an Orangist print showing the minor part played by Amsterdam

in defending the country — the soldiers on the right, to which the rider depicted specifically as representing Amsterdam belongs, are as yet taking no part in the battle. The historian Cornelissen[18], subsequently supported by Van Hamel[19], accepted the interpretation of the empty throne as alluding to the ambitions of the Prince of Orange in the years around 1640, and set this against the background of the conflict between the Prince (who wanted to strengthen the army) and the towns of Holland, led by Amsterdam, who were striving for peace and sought to cut back on military expenditure. In this line of thinking, concord has been disrupted: the arrows under the lion's left paw are not bound together, but fall loose on the ground. Cornelissen saw the picture as embodying the four concepts that were hailed in political plays and writings in the years around 1630 as the foundations for the State — religion (in the motto SOLI DEO GLORIA), justice (in the figure of Dame Justice), political order (in the pillar on the left, representing the authority of the State according to, for example, Diego Saavedra Faxanda, *Idea de un principe politico christiano*, Munich and Munster 1640, symbolum XXXI, combined with the charter with its seals representing the Union of Utrecht), and military order (in the Amsterdam militia in the right foreground and the Republican army riding out against the enemy in the middle ground). The conflict between the stadholder, supported by the governing bodies of the Republic of the United Netherlands, and the States of Holland under pressure from Amsterdam, was felt to be depicted in the area surrounded by the escutcheons of the towns of Holland, in which the Dutch lion is chained not only to Holland but also to the throne. As an explanation of this motif Cornelissen quoted two verses by Vondel, first printed in the *Hollantsche Parnas* of 1660:

Op den geboeiden leeuw
De Leeuw met Hollant suft in 't stof,
Geketent met den hals aan 't Hof.

(On the chained lion
The lion of Holland is dozing in the dust,
His neck chained to the Court.)

Op den ontboeiden leeuw
De Leeuw ontboeit, en op zijn wacht
Bewaert de vrijheit in haer kracht.

(On the lion unchained
The lion unchained and keeping guard
Preserves liberty in all its force.)

A similar interpretation was offered by Schöne[4], quoted by Tümpel[7]. A fresh element was that this author saw the chair on the left as comprising two thrones — a large one, that of the Spanish king as overlord, enclosing a smaller one, that of the provinces' own sovereignty. The rider on the galloping horse in the middle ground would undoubtedly be Frederik Hendrik, and the roaring lion expresses anger at the threat to concord.

The motif of the lion lying on the cloth bordered with the arms of the towns also occupied Van Regteren Altena[5]. Apart from speculating on a connexion between an event in 1641 (the defection to the Spanish side of Duke Godefroy de Bouillon) this author pointed to a number of political prints containing motifs that might have played a role in Rembrandt's depiction, and we shall come back to one of these later.

The variety of the interpretations proposed so far demonstrates clearly that the iconographic programme of the scene cannot be read from the painting with total clarity. Possibly the allegory was meant to have a function in a context that would make its meaning plainer. But then one has to note that though some of the motifs employed can be recognized in comparable pictures all of which are political prints, they appear here together with most unusual motifs in an unparalleled relationship. Whether the artist or some unknown person commissioning the work was responsible for this we cannot now tell. Two alterations can however perhaps be seen as evidence that a client was involved in the iconographic programme. The first is the lion's tail lying flat on the ground, which is still visible as (presumably) a pentimento and which we may assume to have been replaced with the half-raised tail that seems to have been intended as thrashing, in line with Van Mander's description, quoted by Hellinga[16], of the lion as a symbol of vigilance — sleeping little, with constantly blinking eyes and thrashing tail. While this first change could still be ascribed to the artist, that is much less likely with a second. This involves the addition of the motto SOLI DEO GLORIA, the last two words of which were placed on the paint, already dry, of the cloth to the right of the arms of Amsterdam while the first word was written in the wet paint with which the cloth to the left of the arms was extended, probably for this very purpose. The motto 'soli Deo gloria' (cf. the Epistle of the apostle Jude, verse 25) is by itself not enough to point the way to any particular client. Mr Pieter Fischer of Amsterdam has been kind enough to tell us (letter of 10 October 1983) that this motto appears to have been used increasingly often in Holland from the 1620s onwards, in particular by orthodox Calvinists. In this connexion it is interesting that one of the persons portrayed in the *Night watch*, the cloth maker and merchant Herman Jacobsz. Wormskerck (1589/90–1653), who was an orthodox and ardent amateur theologian, gave the name 'Soli Deo gloria' to the house (today no. 166) on the Herengracht that he acquired in 1642; it still bears the same name (see J.E. Elias in: *Jaarboek* . . .

Amstelodamum 40, 1944, pp. 139–140). It would however be rash to draw any conclusions from this as to who might have commissioned the *Concord of the State*.

Looking at the picture again, one has to note more points of vagueness than there are interpretations. First of all it is unclear what the passage in the strongest light means — the cloth hanging down from the mound flanked by wings in the centre, and stretching out to the throne on the left. Van Regteren Altena[5], on the basis of the row of armorial bearings along the edge, cited an allegorical etching by Simon Frisius of 1618, entitled 't Arminiaens Testament' and relating to the suppression of the Remonstrants (the liberal Calvinists, who were opposed to a strong central authority) and their followers in a number of towns, mostly in the province of Holland, by Prince Maurits. Here, along the bottom edge, a long drapery — with behind it seven women with palm branches and on it the arms of the seven provinces — is supported by a lion in the middle and two winged figures to either side, according to the inscription 'den bandt der vrye Vereende Nederlanden' (the band of the free United Netherlands) referred to in the explanatory text as 'den Oranjen band met de Geunieerde Provintien daar aan gesnoert' (the Orange band with the United Provinces attached thereto). Other prints on the same events present the Remonstrants as a threat to concord (depicted as seven arrows in a bundle), and their defeat as the work of Justice under the motto 'Eendracht maeckt Macht' — Unity is strength — (cf. among others H.E. Greve, *De tijd van den tachtigjarigen oorlog in beeld*, Amsterdam 1908, p. 131). In itself, therefore, the connexion made by Cornelissen and Van Hamel between concord under threat and the political and religious conflict between the two parties standing for provincial autonomy and central authority respectively is not unreasonable. But to this must be added at once that the cloth seen in Rembrandt's picture simply cannot be interpreted as a 'band', and — especially — that it carries the arms not of the seven provinces but (so far as they are recognizable) of towns in the province of Holland, with those of Amsterdam shown largest and most prominent. This also makes it less clear what the lion lying on the cloth is meant to represent; is he (though largely lacking the mane of an heraldic lion, which is always used for such allegories) the lion of the United Netherlands who is usually — for instance in the great seal of the States General — depicted with a crown, sword and a bundle of seven or 17 arrows symbolizing concord? Here the left paw rests on a few arrows, not tied together in a bundle (so that concord is disrupted!), and there appear to be only five of them. Moreover, the lion is chained on both sides. Should this be understood as meaning that the lion, though alert, is powerless because unity has been destroyed? And this then prompts the question of whether the powerlessness of the lion is due to the attitude of Amsterdam, under whose arms one of the chains is shackled, and of the empty throne, to which the other is attached. And whose is the empty throne — is it that of the sovereign, coveted by the House of Orange? Is the woman, Dame Justice, seen leaning somewhat dishevelled over the back of the throne, intended as a complaint about some wrong? The only clearly positive element in this part of the scene seems to be the clasped hands that link the arms of the towns; though they were used as a symbol of concord, particularly in the 16th and first quarter of the 17th century, they must also be seen here as a sign of the unity between the towns of the province of Holland. It may be commented, besides, that the choice and number of the armorial shields of the towns of Holland are remarkable; there were 46 towns in Holland, among which formally speaking Dordrecht occupied first rank. There must have been a special reason, not enshrined in tradition, for the prominent place given to Amsterdam in the series portrayed. Besides the eight shields visible today there were a number, seen upside-down, along the front edge of the cloth before the foreground was altered in connexion with the painting-in of the strip along the bottom of the panel. While a change in the number of shields, as described above, is remarkable, the full number can never have equalled that of the towns of Holland. What meaning underlay this choice remains unclear.

Equally unclear is the meaning of what is happening to the right of and behind the lit cloth, and how it relates to the latter. One of the four riders in the foreground — the one in armour, with a long jousting lance — has the three S. Andrew's crosses of the arms of Amsterdam on his saddlecloth, which would seem to indicate that this group, and presumably also the wall of riders behind him, represent the city of Amsterdam. However, the fact that the dress and weapons of these figures give for the most part an archaic effect poses the problem of how they relate to the town. Bille[9] postulated a connexion with the Batavian forefathers — as these were later to play a role in the decoration of the Amsterdam Town Hall — but it is precisely the express allusion to Amsterdam through the use of the city arms that makes this unlikely. It is also unclear what relation the self-contained group of soldiers on the right bears to the army moving off to the left further back, below the bastions; the latter seem to form a whole with the riders galloping away towards the left behind the cloth and giving the impression of rushing to join the battle vaguely visible in the left background. Indeed the interpretation offered by Six[17] that the picture shows that Amsterdam was tardy in defending the State

does so far seem the only rational — perhaps too rational — explanation for the diversity of groupings and movements of armies depicted.

It is even quite unclear who the enemy is in the battle waging at the left. One can only suppose that it is meant to be Spain and the Southern Netherlands, which enjoyed Spanish protection, and that the soldiers firing cannon from the fortification — which might stand for the united northern provinces — form a single party with the riders moving off to the left. Finally the central motif, consisting of a weatherworn oaktree and palm fronds that together with other foliage stand in or behind an object encircled with iron bands, does little to make matters plainer. Possibly the nearly leafless oak is, as Van Gelder[20] suggested, an emblematic image of 'constantia' or even — as in the 1551 edition of Alciati's *Emblemata* — of 'concordia'. But the combination with palm branches — the palm of victory? — is not a common one (even though the palm can sometimes signify 'constantia', see: D.W. Jöns, *Das 'Sinnen-Bild'. Studien zur allegorischen Bildlichkeit bei Andreas Gryphius*, Stuttgart 1966, p. 211 note 5), and what relevance there is in the motto (added at a late stage) of 'soli Deo gloria' is still hard to make out.

One can perhaps read the scene as alluding, especially in the left foreground, to the lack of unity and justice. The oaktree and palm fronds rising above this might then, taken together with the soldiers, mean that victory — in war and in dissession — can be won only by unity and steadfastness, and not by bastions (shown further back), and remind one of Starter's motto about the strength of a State lying more in united and well-armed citizens than in strong fortresses.

One cannot of course tell whether the allegory was more readily understood by Rembrandt's contemporaries than it is by us. One may think that this was not the case, and that this was the very reason why the sketch was never used for its intended purpose. This cannot be more than speculation, and the same is true of the idea that it was only when it was decided not to make use of the sketch that Rembrandt incorporated the top and bottom strips of the panel in this composition.

5. Documents and sources

In the inventory of Rembrandt's possessions drawn up on 25 and 26 July 1656 described as 'de eendragt van 't lant vanden selven [Rembrandt]' (Strauss *Doc.*, 1656/12, no. 106).

6. Graphic reproductions

None.

7. Copies

None.

8. Provenance

— In Rembrandt's possession in July 1656 (see *5. Documents and sources*).
*— Bought with the coll. Consul Joseph Smith, Venice, by George III of England in 1762; described in a copy of the list of these purchases, made probably around 1815, as no. 30: '[Rembrandt] An entry seems of Charles Vth with the Arms of Amsterdam in Chief with the other Provinces. board 26–33½ [= 77.2 × 101.1 cm]' (A. Blunt and E. Croft-Murray, *Venetian drawings of the XVII and XVIII centuries in the collection of Her Majesty the Queen at Windsor Castle*, London 1957, pp. 19–20).
On the evidence of the next item, soon resold.
*— Sale London (Hobbs), 23–24 February 1764, 1st day no. 86: 'Rembrandt. An emblematical Piece, representing the uniting of the 7 Provinces, painted in a very singular Manner. Width 3 feet 4 inch, height 2 feet 6 inch [= 77.2 × 103.6 cm]' (5. 5s. 0d).
— Sale Amsterdam 6ff July 1768 (Lugt 1697), no. 74: 'Een zinnebeeldige Historie, op de Republiek van de Vereenigde Provintien, in 't graauw door Rembrant, op P. h. 29 duim, breed 38 duim [= 74.5 × 97.6 cm]' (An emblematical history piece, on the republic of the United Provinces, in grisaille by Rembrant) (10 guilders 10 stuivers to Zaayer).
— Coll. Joshua Reynolds, sale London (Christie's) 11–14 (postponed to 13–17) March 1795 (Lugt 5284), 3rd day no. 73: 'Rembrandt. An allegorical design of the confederation of the United Provinces, a spirited and singular composition' (18. 7s. 6d).
— Coll. Benjamin West, sale London (Christie's) 23–24 June 1820 (Lugt 9830), no. 70: 'Rembrandt. An Allegorical Subject, probably allusive to the expulsion of the Spaniards under Duke Albert from the Low Countries in 1597; a richly coloured sketch, 29 in. by 39 [74 × 100 cm]' (81. 18s. 0d to Samuel according to an annotated copy in the library of the Victoria and Albert Museum).
— Coll. Richard Westall, sale London 11–12 May 1827, 2nd day no. 144: 'Rembrandt. Allegorical Representation of the Emancipation of the United Provinces (262. 10s).
— Coll. Samuel Rogers, London (Christie's) 28 April–10 May 1856, 5th day no. 607: 'Rembrandt. The emancipation of the United Provinces: an allegorical composition of many figures, composed with masterly power, in grisaille . . . From the Collections of Sir J. Reynolds and B. West' (63.- to Newman).
— Purchased from dealer J. Nieuwenhuys, Brussels, on 20 March 1865 by the museum's director, A.J. Lamme, who was probably on his way to Paris to attend the Pourtalès sale that was to take place on 27 March (as Mr Guido Jansen of the Museum Boymans-van Beuningen has kindly informed us). This was one of the acquisitions paid with the insurance monies paid after a fire in February 1864 at the Schielandshuis, the old home of the Boymans collection.

9. Summary

In both the handling of light and space and in the brushwork this monochrome painting bears beyond any doubt the stamp of authenticity. Strips about 6 cm deep along the top and bottom were given a treatment with grounding at the outset, but were not painted-on until a later stage when — in part evidently in connexion with this — changes were made, mostly in the foreground, the central middle distance and parts of the sky.

This grisaille gives the impression of having been a sketch, though for what purpose is not clear; the idea that the extending of the composition and the changes that this involved were done only when the

work had ceased to be looked on as a preparatory sketch can be no more than guesswork. An exact dating is difficult; similarities with the Berlin *John the Baptist preaching* (no. A 106) would suggest a date not long after 1635, while a resemblance of motifs with the *Night watch* (no. A 146), completed in 1642, is not argument enough for putting it in the early 1640s. It does however appear possible that some time elapsed between the completion of a first version and of the work in its final state; the inscription with the date 164(.) — which is on the bottom strip painted in a late stage, and cannot it is true be looked on as authentic — may nonetheless give accurate information about the date on which the picture was finished.

What the picture shows is puzzling from many viewpoints. The civic arms depicted — so far as they are recognizable, those of towns in the province of Holland with Amsterdam the most prominent — are hard to reconcile with the title known from Rembrandt's inventory of 1656, which suggests that it has to do with the concord between the various provinces. The notion of unity is clearly expressed in the linked hands between the shields — and perhaps also in the windblown oaktree — but the fact of the arrows beneath the lion's left paw lying loose (instead of bound together in a bundle) would seem to suggest the opposite. The figure of Dame Justice on the left makes a plangent rather than triumphant impression, and it is unclear what the throne on which she leans in an odd pose represents. To judge from the three S. Andrew's crosses from the arms of Amsterdam on the saddlecloth of one of the riders in the group on the right, the latter have something to do with that city, and the same must perhaps be assumed for the mass of riders immediately behind them. What relationship these would then have to the other riders making a sortie to the left of centre, and to the fortification, is hard to tell.

REFERENCES

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2 J. Smith, *A catalogue raisonné of the works of the most eminent Dutch, Flemish and French painters* VII, London 1836, pp. XIV, 82.

3 E. van de Wetering, 'De jonge Rembrandt aan het werk', *O.H.* 91 (1977), pp. 27–65, esp. 39–41 note 43.

4 W. Schöne, 'Rembrandts Mann mit dem Goldhelm', *Jahrbuch der Akademie der Wissenschaft in Göttingen* 1972, pp. 33–98.

5 I.Q. van Regteren Altena, 'Retouches aan ons Rembrandtbeeld III-IV', *O.H.* 67 (1952), pp. 35–50, 59–67.

6 E. Haverkamp-Begemann, 'Purpose and style: oil sketches of Rubens, Jan Brueghel, Rembrandt', in: *Stil und Überlieferung in der Kunst des Abendlandes* III, Berlin 1967, pp. 104–113, esp. 110.

7 Tümpel 1986, p. 227, cat. no. 116.

8 F. Schmidt-Degener, 'Een voorstudie voor de "Nachtwacht": de "Eendracht van het Land"', *Onze Kunst* 21 (1912), pp. 1–20.

9 C. Bille, 'Rembrandts Eendracht van het Land en Starters Wt-treckinge van de Borgery van Amsterdam', *O.H.* 71 (1956), pp. 24–34.

10 Schwartz 1984, pp. 220–223.

11 C. Vosmaer, *Rembrandt Harmensz. van Rijn. Sa vie et ses oeuvres*, The Hague 1868, pp. 215–217.

12 F. Schmidt-Degener, 'Het genetische probleem van de Nachtwacht, III', *Onze Kunst* 31 (1917), pp. 1–32, esp. 28–30.

13 F. Schmidt-Degener, 'Rembrandt's Eendracht van het Land opnieuw beschouwd', *Maandblad voor beeldende kunsten* 18 (1941), pp. 161–173.

14 C. Hofstede de Groot, 'Meeningsverschillen omtrent werken van Rembrandt, IV', *O.H.* 30 (1912), pp. 178–180.

15 F. Schmidt-Degener, 'Het genetische probleem van de Nachtwacht, I', *Onze Kunst* 26 (1914), pp. 1–17, esp. 11–12 and reproduction on p. 9.

16 W.G. Hellinga, *Rembrandt fecit 1642*, Amsterdam 1956, esp. pp. 30–37.

17 J. Six, 'Rembrandt's Eendracht van het Land', *Onze Kunst* 33 (1918), pp. 141–158.

18 J.D.M. Cornelissen, *Rembrandt. De Eendracht van het Land*, Nijmegen 1941.

19 J.A. van Hamel, *De Eendracht van het Land 1641*, Amsterdam [1945].

20 J.G. van Gelder, 'Rembrandt and his time', *The Art Institute of Chicago. Rembrandt after three hundred years: A symposium — Rembrandt and his followers*, Chicago 1973, pp. 3–18, esp. 8–9.

A 136 Landscape with a stone bridge

[late 1630s]

AMSTERDAM, RIJKSMUSEUM, INV. NO. A 1935

HDG 939; BR. 440; BAUCH 543; GERSON 196

1. Summarized opinion

A well preserved and authentic painting, unsigned and undated, which may be dated in the late 1630s.

2. Description of subject

In a flat landscape a river runs from the right foreground into the distance. Alongside the water, on the left, is a patch on which stands a gabled house that, to judge from a hanging sign, is an inn. Before the inn stands a horse-drawn cart, in which a number of men and women are seated. A single-arched stone bridge spans the river. Extending on from this a path runs parallel to the picture plane, on which there are a few figures including a man driving a cow. Across the river there is a meadow on which cattle are grazing. Behind the path, farmsteads and a haystack lie in among trees of varying height. Close to the bridge a wooden fence runs close to the bottom of the tallest tree. The trees continue to the left of this, along the bank behind the bridge. On the far right a churchtower with steeple projects above the trees.

On the river two small boats with men punting them can be seen, one in the foreground and the other just beyond the bridge.

The sky is lightest to the left, where there is some blue in it; above and to the right there are dark clouds. Bright light falls from the left on the group of trees and on the farmhouse close to the bridge, on the bridge and just on the path to the left of it, where a man walks bent with a stick over his shoulder. The remainder of the landscape lies in shadow.

3. Observations and technical information

Working conditions

Examined on 7 February 1974 (S.H.L., E.v.d.W.) in daylight and good artificial light, out of the frame, with the aid of an X-ray film covering virtually the whole of the painting.

Support

DESCRIPTION: Oak panel, grain horizontal, 29.5 × 42.3 cm (not counting a batten glued to the lower edge). Single plank. Back slightly bevelled on the lefthand side and bottom, not at all at the top and on the right. Along the bottom the back is somewhat dilapidated and has been plugged with radioabsorbent material (see *X-Rays*).

SCIENTIFIC DATA: Dendrochronology (Prof. Dr J. Bauch and Prof. Dr D. Eckstein, Hamburg) showed 176 annual rings on the right and 169 rings on the left, mean curve 203 annual rings heartwood + 7 rings of sapwood; the latest annual ring of heartwood can be dated 1627. Earliest possible felling date 1636; given the age of the tree, a date of 1642 or later would be more likely[1].

Ground

DESCRIPTION: A light yellowish ground shows through in the thin brown areas, most clearly in the dark area of sky where the underlying ground is visible through the scratchmarks from hard bristles.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

Paint layer

CONDITION: Generally well preserved. At the bottom edge the paint has been worked up a little. Retouches can be found in the sky just above the middle, over the bridge. There is very slight paint loss in the inn on the left. Craquelure: none seen.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: The application of paint is marked by a direct manner of painting, with the brushstrokes clearly apparent and often done wet-in-wet. The dark passages are painted thinly in a warm brown, while lighter areas are thicker; the highest lights have a distinct impasto character that helps to show the structure of the trees and branches and of the fencing. In the water in the foreground the brushstrokes are long and horizontal. They are shorter in the pathway, and besides horizontal strokes there are small strokes of dark paint to suggest the unevenness of the surface. In the trees, where there are numerous shades of green and brown, the dark areas have been painted thin and fluidly, with especially on the right areas where a translucent underpainting has been exposed. The trees that catch the light are done with small, short strokes and dabs in various shades of green and yellow. The top edge of the bridge is marked with a crisp edging of light, as is the small figure on the path left of the bridge. The figures of men and animals in the half-shadow are shown roughly, though their movement is invariably clearly characterized.

The sky above the bridge shows some blue, merging into opaque white and grey areas and, to the top and right, into a dark grey brushed freely in varying directions with the underlying ground making a marked contribution to the colour. The darkest parts are a little more opaque still, which makes them distinct from their more thinly-painted surroundings (which may have become more translucent with the passage of time).

SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

X-Rays

The thickly painted highlights show up light in the radiographic image, and in general the radioabsorbency is in agreement with the tonal values seen at the surface, even though in the sky it is not always in line with the degree of lightness seen at the surface (the result of differences in the thickness of the paint used and in its white-lead content). The churchtower on the right has clearly been painted over the paint of the sky.

Patches showing up light in the sky correspond to patches on the back of the panel, while the light spots along the lower edge match stoppings in the back of the panel (see also *Support*).

Signature

None.

Varnish

No special remarks.

4. Comments

The handling of paint in this work matches, in its broad features, that in the other Rembrandt landscapes, the Krakow *Landscape with the Good Samaritan* of 1638 (no. A 125) and the Braunschweig *Landscape with a thunderstorm* which we tentatively date as *c.* 1640 (no. A 137). The paint is applied thinly in the dark areas and thinnest in the sky, while it is thicker in the lighter passages and tends to impasto in the highlights. Compared to the works just mentioned, the Amsterdam painting does however have a generally somewhat freer brushwork, and at many places has been done wet-in-wet.

In subject and composition the painting differs from the other landscapes in that this one shows an almost flat countryside, with the spatial arrangement of the planes achieved through subtle shifts in placing and scale and through contrasts of light and shade. Allowance made for this, the distribution of volumes in space, and the lighting, are very like those in the other landscapes both of

Fig. 1. Panel 29.5 × 42.3 cm

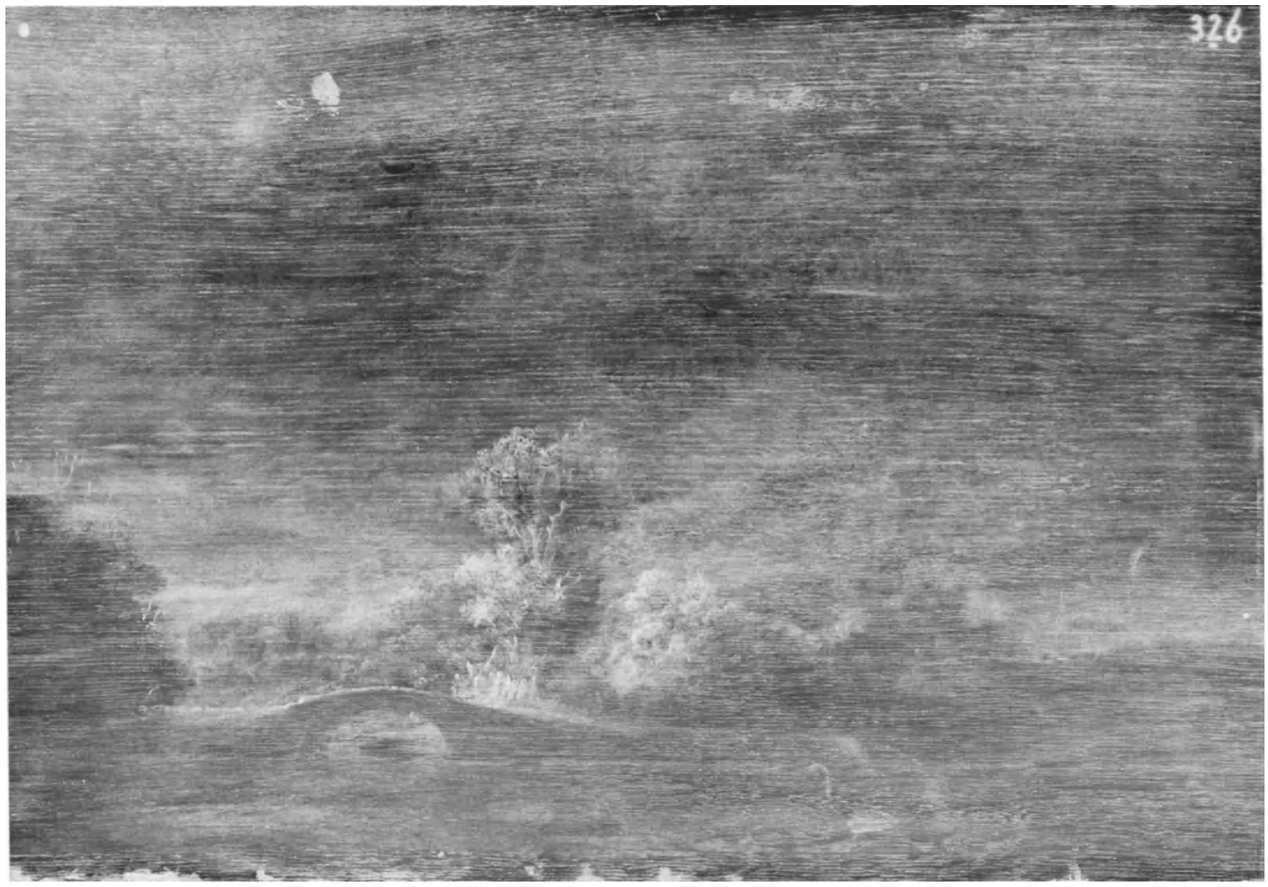


which also have a brightly illuminated middle ground and a dark foreground and distance. What distinguishes the Amsterdam landscape from the ones at Krakow and Braunschweig is mainly the treatment of lit trees. Instead of the vigorous and almost sketchy rendering in the Krakow picture and the subtle rhythm of flat strokes suggesting lit edges in that at Braunschweig, no. A 136 uses in corresponding passages a dense system of tiny curved highlights and longer irregular lines to indicate branches, carefully varied in scale and intensity and effectively suggesting the structure of trees seen at various distances. A comparable treatment is to be found in the unsigned *Landscape with a seven-arched bridge* in Berlin (no. C 118); there however we consider it derived from rather than identical with that in the Amsterdam picture and indicative of a follower — we think Govaert Flinck — rather than of Rembrandt himself. In the case of no. A 136, the extremely consistent three-dimensional construction of the composition, achieved mainly by an effective chiaroscuro, bespeaks Rembrandt's authorship. In particular, the strongly-contrasting and somewhat fragmented edge of light on the bridge brings to mind the painting at Braunschweig, and the function this motif fulfills in both compositions supports the idea that, for all their differences in subject-matter, both pictures are by the same hand — that of Rembrandt.

The Amsterdam landscape is unsigned, and there is no unequivical indication that a part of the panel that might have borne the signature has been lost. It is however not impossible that something has been lost along the bottom (which consists of sapwood and is somewhat damaged) (see *Support*). Whether there have been reductions at the top and right (where there is no bevelling on the back) it is impossible to say — a cow (?) that is almost cut by the frame on the right might indicate this, but with landscapes in particular one does meet panels that have been sawn to suit (and then not bevelled anew along that side) without there being any question of a subsequent reduction (cf. nos. A 137 and C 120).

Some authors have given the painting a relatively early date. Hofstede de Groot[2] put it just before the Krakow *Landscape with the Good Samaritan* of 1638, and Stechow[3], Gerson[4] and Cynthia Schneider[5] agreed. Plainly the thought that a more realistic vision of

Fig. 2. X-Ray



landscape would precede a more imaginary one had a certain obviousness about it and tended to obscure the fact that a more realistic type of landscape is not found in Rembrandt's etchings until 1641 (cf. B. 225, B. 226 and B. 233); moreover, the composition of the Krakow painting dated 1638 is strongly traditional in its design. A dating in the late 1630s , as suggested by Bode[6] and subsequently by Rostworowski[7], therefore seems more likely for reasons of style. This conclusion is borne out by the result of dendrochronological examination, which resulted in a felling date of the oak tree of 1636 at the very earliest — thus allowing for the painting to have been executed no earlier than 1638 — but more probably somewhat later.

Though the motif depicted in no. A 136 is very reminiscent of the countryside with a small river that is so common in the surroundings of Amsterdam, with the Bullewijk, the Holendrecht, the Waver and the Winkel, no topographical clue is provided by the situation shown. Lugt[8] identified the churchtower as that of Ouderkerk-on-Amstel, but it is questionable whether in this painting Rembrandt was reproducing a situation taken from reality. It is far more likely that it is a credible combination of motifs that, despite their realistic nature, form a 'paysage moralisé', as this had developed in the Southern Netherlands during the 16th century and was continued in Holland during the 17th (H.-J. Raupp in: *Jahrbuch der Staatlichen Kunstsammlungen im Baden-Württemberg* 17, 1980, pp. 85–110). A central theme in these landscapes is the pilgrimage of life; man wanders through a country full of allusions to the vanity and sinfulness of earthly life towards his ultimate goal — damnation or salvation. In Rembrandt's *Landscape with a stone bridge*, the antithesis between the inn in the left foreground and the distant church on the right is intentional. The protagonist appears to be the sun-lit traveller who approaches the bridge, his back bent with fatigue — a motif copied by Ferdinand Bol (see Introduction, Chapter II, fig. 46). He is heedless of the inn to his right where, in the shadow, a carriage with more luxurious travellers has come to a halt — a motif that recurs in the Berlin *Landscape with a seven-harched bridge* attributable to Govaert Flinck (no. C 118) and is frequently met with in landscapes by Jan van Goyen, Salomon van Ruysdael and their followers. The

Fig. 3. Detail (1 : 1)



solitary traveller seems to be heading for the bridge and, should he cross the water, will reach a sunlit fence and a huge tree with some leafless branches; the first perhaps, and the latter certainly, allude to Death (according to Ecclesiasticus 14:19: '. . . Thou shalt die the death. As of the green leaves on a thick tree, some fall, and some grow; so is the generation of flesh and blood, one cometh to an end, and another is born' — a text quoted in connexion with Vanitas symbolism at the time). Such a reference to death is enhanced by the adjacent hay-stack (cf. a number of equally topical texts, especially Isaiah 40, 6–7). The traveller may or may not finally reach the dimly visible church in the distance but there is a fair chance he will: as late as 1711 Jan Luyken described the bridge as an 'overgang van dezer aarde, Tot in het zalig Hemelrijk' (J. Luyken, *De Bykorf des Gemoeds . . .*, Amsterdam 1711, p. 10). This reading of the scene is susceptible of modifications and invites supplementary interpretations — e.g. of the two boats — but on the whole it should correspond fairly well with the 17th-century view of landscape painting[9].

5. Documents and sources

None.

6. Graphic reproductions

None.

7. Copies

None.

8. Provenance

— Coll. Lapeyrière, sale Paris 14ff April 1817, no. 46 (1505 francs to Huybens).
— Coll. James Gray, Versailles, 1863.
— Coll. Marquess of Landsdowne, Bowood, 1883.
— Coll. James Reiss, sale London (Christie's) 12 May 1900, no. 63, where bought by the museum with the aid of Dr A. Bredius and the Vereniging Rembrandt.

9. Summary

In approach and execution the painting closely resembles landscapes that can without any doubt be attributed to Rembrandt; it differs from them mainly in the treatment of lit trees. The use made of chiaroscuro and the resulting suggestion of depth however justifies the attribution to him. It is his first painted landscape based on the flat Dutch countryside near Amsterdam, though the lighting is no less dramatic and full of contrast than that in other more imaginary painted landscapes. A date in the late 1630s, just after the *Landscape with the Good Samaritan* of 1638 in Krakow (no. A 137), seems the most likely. The scene may be read as an image of the pilgrimage of life, leading past death to salvation.

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. 260–261. See however *New findings 1987*.
2 HdG 939.
3 W. Stechow, Dutch landscape paintings of the seventeenth century, London 1966, p. 57.
4 Gerson 197; Br.-Gerson 445.
5 C. Schneider, 'A new look at *The landscape with an obelisk*', *Fenway Court 1984*, Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum, Boston 1985, pp. 6–21, esp. 10.
6 W. Bode, *Bilderlese aus kleineren deutschen Galerien II, Die Groszherzogliche Galerie zu Oldenburg*, Vienna 1887, p. 34.
7 M. Rostworowski, *Rembrandta przypowieść o milosiernym Samarytaninie* (Rembrandt's parable of the Good Samaritan), Warsaw 1980, pp. 106, 141 note 17.
8 F. Lugt, *Wandelingen met Rembrandt in en om Amsterdam*, Amsterdam 2nd edn 1915, p. 126.
9 J. Bruyn, 'Toward a scriptural reading of seventeenth-century Dutch landscape paintings', in: P.C. Sutton et al., cat. exhibn. *Masters of 17th-century Dutch landscape painting*, Amsterdam-Boston-Philadelphia 1987/88, pp. 84–103, esp. 97–98.

A 137 Mountain landscape with a thunderstorm [*c.* 1640]

BRAUNSCHWEIG, HERZOG ANTON ULRICH-MUSEUM, CAT. NO. 236

HDG 942; BR. 441; BAUCH 547; GERSON 200

Fig. 1. Panel 51.3 × 71.5 cm



1. Summarized opinion

A fairly well preserved, authentic painting with a possibly reliable signature, that can in all probability be dated around 1640.

2. Description of subject

On the left a town with a church is perched halfway up a mountainside which has clumps of trees here and there. A river runs alongside the town, forming a wide waterfall. A little lower down, the river runs through the two tall arches of a bridge that has a tower-like structure above its centre support; it then drops sharply down to form another waterfall more to the right before forming two branches, one of which runs to the left while the other disappears out of the picture to the extreme right. At the foot of the mountain in the centre, a watermill lies in shadow among trees. Behind this a road leads to the bridge higher up, and on this a cart is seen just disappearing behind a clump of trees on the left. The foreground is a flat terrain with a few plants right at the front on the left and plants with red flowers on the right. A little to the right of centre on a path running to a ford, a rider on a light-grey horse and a boy beside him are seen from behind. To the left of the mill horses are being driven, while on the extreme right a ferry is carrying cows across the river where, on the other side, there is a farm with men busy around a well. A few tall trees grow alongside the river bank, and behind them stretches a wide valley with fields and meadows bordered on the right by a range of hills.

On the right and in the centre the sky is mostly filled with dark thunderclouds; on the left a break in the clouds has a little blue showing through. Shafts of light shine obliquely down through lighter patches in the sky, and parts of the town on the mountainside, the bridge and the trees to the right of it are brightly lit. The foreground lies in shadow, with the landscape behind it in a varying light.

3. Observations and technical information

Working conditions

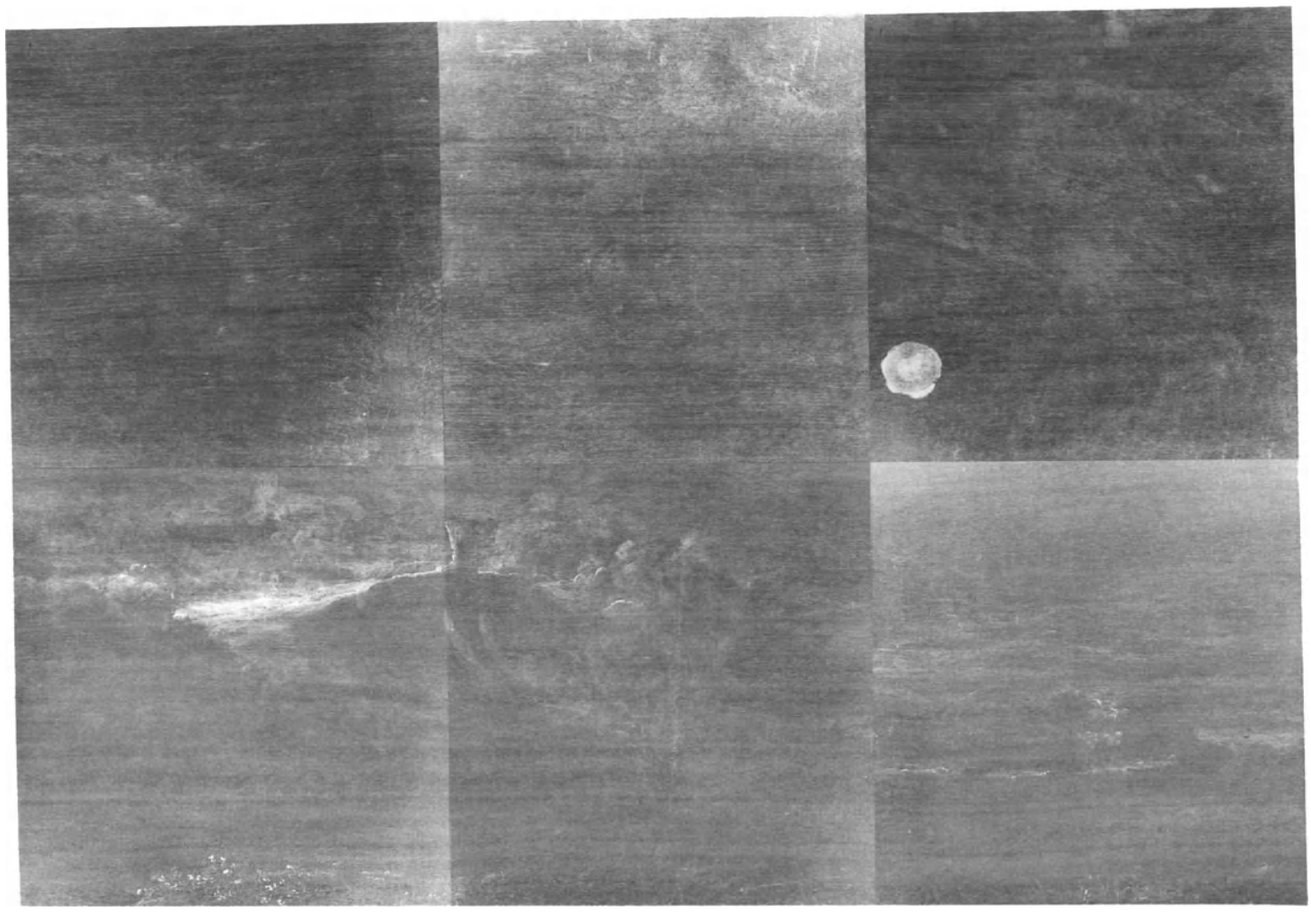
Examined in October 1968 (J.B., B.H.) in good daylight and in the frame. Four X-ray films, covering the whole of the painting, were received later from the museum.

Support

DESCRIPTION: Oak panel, grain horizontal, 51.3 (± 0.2) × 71.5 (± 0.2) cm. Thickness uneven, varying from *c.* 1.1 cm (lower left) to *c.* 0.7 cm (upper right). Single plank, with a split at about 17 cm from the bottom. Back covered with brown paint; there is irregular bevelling along three sides, widest at the bottom, narrower on the left and very vague on the right, while the top edge is unbevelled.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: Dendrochronology (Prof. Dr J. Bauch and Prof. Dr D. Eckstein, Hamburg) gave on the left 191 annual rings heartwood measured, dated 1360–1550. The panel could not however be measured fully because of damage at the edges. It came from the same tree as that of the *Bust of a man in oriental dress* in Amsterdam (no. C 101); the statistical average felling date of the latter, found to be 1625 at the earliest, thus also applies to the panel of no. A 137.

Fig. 2. X-Ray



Ground

DESCRIPTION: Yellowish brown, as seen in the sky where the underlying ground is exposed through the hard brushstrokes, and in numerous patches in the fore- and middle ground, especially at the rocks by the bridge and on the road leading to it.
SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

Paint layer

CONDITION: There is some paint loss and wearing in the foreground — the detail has been virtually lost in the horse on the road. In many areas, but especially in the slope below the bridge, in the slopes and trees on the peaks in the mountain area and in the valley and slopes in the distance, what was presumably originally a greenish paint has, to judge by its crumbled appearance, suffered a form of disintegration and is now grey. Craquelure: in the thicker dark browns there is a quite fine and fairly regular pattern of small cracks; apart from this, virtually no craquelure is to be seen.
DESCRIPTION: In the shadow areas to the front a translucent brown has been set down, in which the roads, clumps of trees, houses, ferry and small figures have been drawn in dark brown. The vegetation, wholly in the foreground, is depicted with spots and strokes of light green, ochre yellow and black, while on the right dabs of red are also used, to show blossoms. A similar light green is used in the lit tips of trees on the further side of the river and in the trees to the right of the bridge, which are otherwise in a light ochre brown and grey. This greyish paint, which also occurs in the slope below the bridge, in the valley and on the slope in the distance on the right and, especially, on the slopes of the high mountains on the left, appears (as has already been remarked under CONDITION above) to have disintegrated. A relatively thick paint has been used for the lit land beside and behind the bridge, in subtle tints of light yellow and ochre. The sides of the structure on the bridge and of the parapet that catch the light are indicated with thick paint in incisive strokes; the light yellow is occasionally mixed with a little pink. The town itself is depicted in thinner browns and greys, with some pink. The valley and hillsides in the distance on the right have, besides the grey already mentioned, some browns and greys set down with varying thickness and suggesting a great wealth of detail in the roads, fields, clumps and rows of trees.

In the sky the dark clouds are brushed in grey, with the underlying ground affecting the tone. The shafts of light and the light breaks in the clouds are painted more thickly and cover more fully.
SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

X-Rays

As might be expected from the paint surface, only the lightest, thickly-painted areas beside and in the bridge, together with the dabs of paint used for the foreground vegetation, show up light.

Signature

At the lower right, on the plank of a fence and in dark paint, <*Rembrandt.f.*> (followed by what are perhaps the vestiges of a date 16..) in very small letters. The *R* is open on the left. The shape of the letters is unfamiliar, though the signature's

Fig. 3. Detail (1 : 2)



authenticity is difficult to gauge because of the unusually small scale.

Varnish

No special remarks.

4. Comments

The painting is marked by an extremely effective and homogeneous execution. While thin and mostly translucent in the dark areas (with vivid drawing in dark brown of the roads, trees and other shapes in shadow), the paint is thicker and opaque in the lighter passages, with a subtle variation in tone and thickness in the lit areas and grazing lights on the terrain, trees and buildings. The colour-scheme is dominated by the contrast between cool greys and grey-browns with yellow and some pink in the light accents, and the browns of the shadow parts. In the latter the brushwork has, where the indication of forms is concerned, an almost graphic quality — summary but sure. In the lit areas a fine brush defines the shapes with a varied rhythm matched to the nature of the form and the distance at which it is seen, yet always with great directness. The contrast effect and brushwork combine to provide an image with strong spatial cohesion, in which the wealth of detail — extending right back to the fields, trees and villages in the valley on the right — remains subordinate to the interplay of light and shade. The result so strongly resembles Rembrandt's signed

Krakow *Landscape with the Good Samaritan* (no. A 125), that it is impossible to doubt his authorship. The signature, its writing almost too small, can contribute only little to this conclusion.

Placing the painting within the chronology of Rembrandt's production is not however all that simple. If there ever was a date following the signature it has become wholly illegible, and the dendrochronology evidence for the felling date of the tree from which the panel came does not help either — the date is so early that one has to suppose that the panel lay unused for a number of years. The panel was, to judge from the absence of bevelling along the top edge, trimmed down; it seems likely that the original format matched that of the panel of no. C 101 which came from the same treetrunk (see *Support*, SCIENTIFIC DATA), and which has the same length but is some 3.3 cm wider. This reduction in size could have been made later on, but it seems probable that the panel was cut down before it was painted on. This would confirm the impression that landscapes by Rembrandt and his followers which in a number of instances (cf. nos. A 136 and C 118) were painted on panels adjusted for the purpose, were for them something of a sideline. This would also explain why in Rembrandt landscapes — as we know them from a handful of paintings, more numerous etchings and a great many drawings — it is always difficult to detect any logical development of the kind one would expect to see in a professional landscape painter.

The similarity to the Krakow landscape of 1638 lies mainly in the function of the dramatic lighting as a means of articulating the wide expanse, and in the treatment of the vividly sketched foreground areas and of the meticulous details (mostly done in thicker paint) in the lit distance. There are however differences between the two that make one hesitate to place the Braunschweig landscape too close to that in Krakow; they involve mainly the handling of paint, which in no. A 137 shows more differentiation and suggests a subtler variation in atmospheric brightness and, especially, the composition. While the Krakow landscape falls as it were into two halves — the woodland path in shadow on the right and the mostly lit valley lying further off to the left — that are not all that effectively joined one to the other, a far greater degree of unity has been achieved in the Braunschweig work. This is on the one hand because the flat foreground stretches across the full width and thus gives the whole composition a single, stable base, and on the other because the lighting, though having its dramatic climax on the mountainside on the left, nevertheless continues so convincingly into the lit areas of valley on the right that it ensures the cohesion of the whole three-dimensional image. In this imaginary space the eye travels by a variety of zigzag routes from front to back; the road which

Fig. 4. Detail with signature (infrared photograph, enlarged)



leads from the foreground into the distance does not, as in the Krakow painting, form a diagonal accent in one of the two bottom corners that gives access to only one half of the composition. Gently accentuated by the rider, integrated in colour and shape into the halflight, it starts virtually in the centre and leads to a point where various axes of movement meet. One cannot help feeling that the Braunschweig painting, not only pictorially but from the composition viewpoint as well, represents a more mature and presumably rather later stage than the one in Krakow. The difference between the two can also be interpreted as meaning that in the Krakow work the influence of a Flemish compositional scheme — ultimately going back to Pieter Bruegel — can be more immediately sensed than in the Braunschweig painting. However, the way the latter is filled with evidence of human activity can certainly also be regarded as recalling this same type. That similar applications of the type, and even of similar details, were in the years around 1640 not confined to Rembrandt can be seen from a curious landscape in East Berlin done by Pieter de Molijn (1595–1661) and dated 1639 (Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Gemäldegalerie, panel 41 × 58 cm, cat. 1931, no. 193; cf. W. Stechow, *Dutch landscape painting of the 17th century*, Washington 1966, fig. 269). There, the appearance of two tower-like structures that are recognizable as roadside tabernacles suggests that this is also what Rembrandt intended.

There is little in Rembrandt's work from which one could gauge more closely the distance one must assume to separate the Krakow painting of 1638 from that in Braunschweig. Among the dated etchings one can find a 'realistic' landscape type, almost topographical in character, combined with a dramatic lighting, in the etching of *The three trees* of 1643 (B. 212) (fig. 5), which in its wealth of contrasts of light and variations in tone comes closer in character to Rembrandt's painted landscape than any other of his etchings. It even shows (in reverse) a remarkable similarity to the Braunschweig landscape in the way volumes are distributed over the picture, in the approach to the foregound and the relation between

Fig. 5. Rembrandt, *The three trees*, 1643, etching (B. 212) (reproduced in reverse)



the various planes, in the chiaroscuro and the treatment of the sky with shafts of light piercing the clouds (though in this etching the subject is not an imagined hilly landscape but a Dutch polder scene). It may not be too bold to place the Braunschweig landscape before this etching of 1643 — in which the spatial construction based on chiaroscuro used in the painted landscapes is combined with the attention to Dutch landscape developed in the etchings and drawings — and at some remove from the Krakow landscape of 1638. The indication of *c.* 1640 must then be seen as no more than approximate.

In its composition and the motifs depicted the painting combines a number of features that occurred earlier in the Krakow *Landscape with the Good Samaritan* (no. A 125) and the Amsterdam *Landscape with a stone bridge* (no. A 136); with both of these it also has in common the central theme of the pilgrimage of life (see the relevant entries under *4. Comments*). Here, it is the rider in the central foreground who ventures into a land where — as in the Krakow picture — the transience of life is suggested by the streaming river and its waterfalls, and also by a water mill (a motif that Flinck used in his 1637 *Landscape with a bridge and ruins* in the Louvre and his 1638 *Landscape with an obelisk* in the Stewart Gardner Museum, no. C 117; Sumowski *Gemälde II*, nos. 718–719). Farmers transporting their cattle represent the futility of human activities, but the road uphill, a road towards salvation, leads to a city — the 'future city' (Hebrews 13:14) — which, bathed in light, awaits the blessed. Unlike the city in the Krakow picture, which is situated in the valley on the left, it is elevated, as it is in many landscape pictures of the 16th and 17th centuries — and for obvious reasons. As late as 1711, Jan Luyken uses the same metaphor when he says with reference to 'Het Alpisse Gebergte':

Al is den opgang hoog en steil,
Men doet het om een Eeuwig Heil.

(Though the ascent be high and steep, / It is done for one's eternal salvation; J. Luyken, *De Bykorf des Gemoeds*, Amsterdam 1711, p. 246). Similarly, Luyken gives us cause to consider the bridge and the cart approaching it — just as the corresponding motifs in the Krakow picture — as respectively an access to heaven and the carriage of life on the road of piety (ibidem pp. 10 and 82 respectively)[1].

5. Documents and sources

None.

6. Graphic reproductions

None.

7. Copies

None.

8. Provenance

— Probably already in the collection of the Dukes of Braunschweig, in the gallery at Salzdahlem, in 1710 under Duke Anton Ulrich (1633–1714)[2]. Described in: Chrêtien Nicolas Eberlein, *Catalogue des Tableaux de la Galerie Ducale a Salsthalen*, Braunschweig 1776, under no. 58 (Premier Cabinet): 'Paul Rembrant van Ryn. Paysage couvert de nuages épais, à travers lesquels le soleil éclaire une Ville située à mi-côté d'une montagne. Le reste du Paysage n'est que foiblement éclairé. Sur bois, de 2 pieds 6 pouces de large, sur 1 pied 9 pouces de haut [= 72.8 × 51 cm].'
In the Napoleonic period moved to Paris (seal on back reads: Musée Napoléon).

9. Summary

The approach and execution of this painting so resemble the general character of Rembrandt's work from the years around 1640, and especially the Krakow *Landscape with the Good Samaritan* of 1638 (no. A 125), that there can be no doubt as to its attribution. The even greater wealth of detail and, in particular, the even greater degree to which the chiaroscuro suggests spatial continuity seem to indicate that the painting is more mature and must be dated a little later. There is something to be said for putting it around 1640, preceding the 1643 etching of *Three trees* (B. 212) in which a very similar disposition of volumes and chiaroscuro is used in a subject that comes closer to reality.

REFERENCES

1 J. Bruyn, 'Toward a scriptural reading of seventeenth-century Dutch landscape paintings', in: P.C. Sutton et al., cat. exhibn. *Masters of 17th-century Dutch landscape painting*, Amsterdam-Boston-Philadelphia 1987/88, pp. 84–103, esp. 97.

2 A. Fink, *Geschichte des Herzog-Anton-Ulrich-Museums in Braunschweig*, Braunschweig 1967, p. 42.

A 138 The Visitation

DETROIT, MICH., THE DETROIT INSTITUTE OF ARTS, ACC. NO. 27.200 CITY OF DETROIT PURCHASE

HDG 74; BR. 562; BAUCH 70; GERSON 203

1. Summarized opinion

A well preserved, authentic work, with a signature and date of 1640 that have been subsequently reinforced.

2. Description of subject

The subject is taken mostly from Luke 1:39–42; the episode is immediately preceded, in verses 26–38, by the Announciation to the Virgin Mary, when the angel Gabriel tells her that her cousin Elisabeth is also pregnant with a son. 'And Mary arose in those days, and went into the hill country with haste, into a city of Juda; and entered into the house of Zacharias, and saluted Elisabeth. And it came to pass, that, when Elisabeth heard the salutation of Mary, the babe leaped in her womb; and Elisabeth was filled with the Holy Ghost; and she spake out with a loud voice, and said, Blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb.'

The meeting between Mary and Elisabeth is shown here taking place on the steps of Zacharias's house. A negro maidservant, standing on tiptoe, is helping Mary off with her wide travelling-cloak; she has just lifted the hood part of this from Mary's head. Mary lays one arm around the shoulder of Elisabeth, who embraces her with both arms and is obviously saying to her the words attributed to her by the Bible; as she does so, she looks up towards a shaft of light that falls from the right, enveloping the two women. One of her hands is raised from Mary's shoulder in an emphatic gesture. On the left Zacharias is coming down the steps from his house; his head is bare and he holds his cap in one hand while with the other he supports himself on the shoulder of a boy standing on a lower step. The entrance to the house is in the form of an arched porch, on walls with deep profiles and, to the left, a half-column with an intricately shaped capital. On the extreme left climbing plants grow against the house. On a low wall of crumbling masonry sits a peacock and, further to the front and a little lower down, two peahens with young. In the right foreground the slabs of the steps merge into plant-covered terrain. A flat earthenware dish and a vase of flowers stand at the foot of a low wall on the extreme right.

In front of Mary and Elisabeth a white dog stands looking towards the right where a man — presumably Joseph — climbing up towards the house-steps is seen leading an ass. Beyond these figures, a landscape is wrapped in dusk. In the distance there is a road with a row of houses to the right of it, the nearest of which is marked by a hanging signboard as an inn. In front of this there are two figures, while further to the left a man leads a horse or ass; further away still three more small figures can be made out, to the right of a massive arched bridge. Behind this is a town, with at the centre of it a solid, monumental building with a squat tower. The dark sky above the town merges upwards into a diffusedly-lit mass of cloud that is much further to the front and forms part of the main scene. It hides the righthand outline of Zacharias's house from view, and continues down to the left to above Elisabeth's head; presumably this indicates the presence of the Holy Ghost.

3. Observations and technical information

Working conditions

Examined in September 1972 (S.H.L., E.v.d.W.) in good artificial light and out of the frame. Four X-ray films, together covering the whole of the picture, were received later.

Support

DESCRIPTION: Panel, Spanish cedar (*cedrela odorata;* information kindly provided by Dr P. Klein, Hamburg), the top shaped in a flattened arch; grain vertical, 56.6 × 47.8 cm, thickness *c.* 1 cm and rather thinner on the lefthand side than on the right. Single plank. Back bevelled on the right and left to a thickness of 0.5 cm, practically no bevelling at the bottom. An irregular bevel, with a width of up to 4 cm, runs along the curved upper edge, which is evidence that the arched top is original; this is confirmed by an old copy (see *7. Copies*, 1). Three rows of small blocks are glued to the back, with horizontal battens let into the top and bottom rows. A vertical crack *c.* 8.5 cm long runs down from the top edge, slightly to the left of centre.
SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

Ground

DESCRIPTION: One gets the impression of a light ground. In many shadow areas there is a light yellow-brown to be seen, and a cooler tint shows through in the grey of the sky above the town.
SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

Paint layer

CONDITION: Generally very good. There are a few small retouches in the sky and, equally minor, repairs along the upper edge. In the architecture above Zacharias to the right there are two partially touched-in scratches. Craquelure: this occurs only in a small patch in the steps close to the peacock's tail, with a vertical-horizontal pattern.
DESCRIPTION: The paint is to a great extent thin and evenly applied, with the thickest passages occurring, with some relief, in the most brightly lit areas and at some places in the costumes and vegetation. The grain of the cedar panel is in general scarcely visible, if at all. The handling of paint is very varied, ranging from sketchlike in the figures of Joseph and the ass, done with thinner paint, and the less thinly-painted view of the town, to highly detailed in the figures of Mary and Elisabeth. It is striking how even in the foreground figures that are outside the direct fall of light an extremely subtle rendering has been achieved with often minimal contrasts of colour and tone. A small pentimento can be noted at Zacharias's right hand, the upper contour of which originally ran a little higher up; another appears above the hood of the travelling-cloak that is being lifted from Mary's head, and that initially extended further up. As the X-rays show, the clouds above Elisabeth and Mary reached at an early stage to just above their heads; the dark parts of the architecture seen there now must have been painted later.

A number of strong, contrasting colours are used in the figures of Mary and Elisabeth: a little purplish red in Elisabeth's garment with yellowish sheens of light on the folds and a vivid red in the undersleeve, set off against the strong blue-green in the shine on the upper part of Mary's clothing. Towards the right there is the sequence of a yellowish white in the lit tail of Elisabeth's headdress behind Mary's back, pink in her hand with outspread fingers with their yellowish edgings of light, and sea green in the lining of Mary's cloak. Mary's headdress consists of a small, bright yellow-white cap with a bright red band. Softer and more mixed browns and greenish greys are used in the outside of Mary's cloak with its supple folds, and in her skirt; Elisabeth's headdress is worked up meticulously with small strokes of yellowish, brownish and greyish paint and dots and strokes of blue-green and yellow. The difference in age between the two women is expressed in the worn face of Elisabeth, shown with numerous loosely-placed strokes and spots, compared with the head of Mary modelled smoothly with blended brushstrokes.

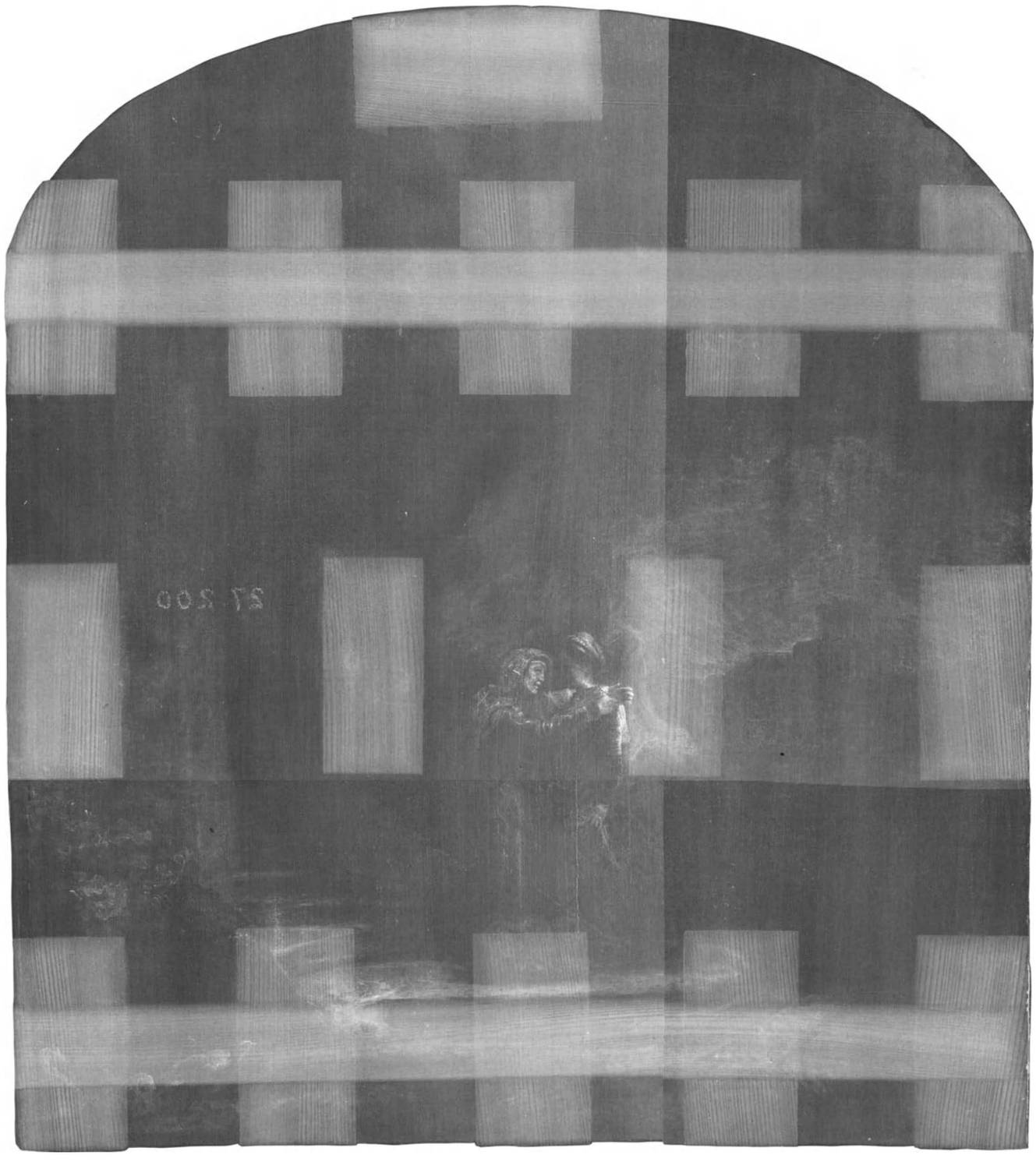
The figure of Zacharias, the boy, the little negro maidservant and the white dog are executed with quite thin paint that here and there only half covers the ground; the same red as is seen in Elisabeth's gown shows through in the dog, which would seem to indicate that the dog was painted at a later stage on top of the red of the garment. The working-up of the clothing, done mostly in browns, black and greys, is much less thorough than in the standing female figures in the centre, and the folds and patterns, shown with casual strokes, reveal a draughtsmanlike element that— especially in the case of the little negress — provides a transition to the graphic treatment of the

Fig. 1. Panel 56.6 × 47.8 cm



surrounding area. The architecture of the house exhibits a similar treatment and palette; in the column on the left the colour (a mix of brown and grey-green) is somewhat intensified and the soft sheens of light help to suggest form and material. The steps and slabs are executed in alternating translucent brown and opaque grey, with black and dark brown for the finely-drawn edges and joins. The vegetation on the left is shown, over partly translucent brown, with rapid and fairly

Fig. 2. X-Ray



thick strokes in greens and yellow, with here and there scratches to render the twigs and with a few blossoms in red. The peacock is painted with similarly thick strokes and licks of grey and ochre-coloured paint, with a rather stronger ochre and a blended green in the tail; the peahens and young are in subdued yellows, greys and browns.

The colour-scheme in the foreground is warm and varied through the use of translucent passages. In the background the

Fig. 3. Detail (1 : 1)



gamut is reduced to rather cooler and more subdued, relatively dark greys and browns, with a little muddy pink in the walls and roofs of the town. The treatment of Joseph and the ass has very much the character of a brush drawing; the numerous small lines that mark the outlines of roofs and walls, on the other hand, have been produced mainly through reserves being left between small fields of somewhat thick and evenly-brushed paint. In the sky above the town the paint is thin and applied with small, easy strokes through which a cool, light tint can be sensed; the whole has a lively and somewhat fluffy appearance. The cloud in the foreground is done more opaquely, in the lowest passages with a deep dark brown that to the upper right is increasingly mixed with a very finely spread grey.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

X-Rays

The radiographic image is dominated to a great extent by the cradling on the back. The image of the picture matches what one would expect from the paint surface — there is appreciable radioabsorbency only in the few lit areas in the main group, which show a pattern of small brushstrokes, and in the left foreground. The most interesting feature is that a group of confused brushstrokes that show up vague and light and belong to extensions of the cloud continue to the left to immediately above the heads of Elisabeth and Mary. This shows that the lower border of the cloud was initially lower than it is today.

Signature

At bottom centre on the edge of the wide step, in thin letters and figures (now only partially and vaguely visible) that have apparently been subsequently gone over with a darker brown <*Rembrandt. 1640.*>. The dark brown letters and figures are written with thin and somewhat rounded strokes. Along some of the letters, particularly the *d*, there is a thin, light edge that might give the impression that in the original signature a suggestion of letters chiselled in the stone was being attempted. The absence of an *f* between the signature and date is unusual.

Varnish

No special remarks.

4. Comments

The Detroit *Visitation* of 1640 is one of the paintings that define the picture of Rembrandt's manner of

Fig. 4. Detail (1 : 1)



Fig. 5. Detail (1 : 1)



painting in this period. It is well preserved and its shape, with a flattened arch at the top, can be regarded as original. The biblical account is brought to life in a scene rich in imagination that at some places is lent an illusion of tangible reality by the introduction of succinctly characterized details. This together with the quality of the brushwork — direct, efficient and where necessary refined — is wholly in keeping with the image one has of a fullyfledged, authentic work. It has obviously been thoughtfully painted, working from a lay-in to which, as the work proceeded, no major changes seem to have been made, and with a noticeably economic use of paint. A small but interesting alteration was made in the area immediately above the figures of Elisabeth and Mary where, as may be seen from the X-ray, the lower part of the mass of cloud stretching to above their heads was at a later stage painted over with a dark niche or window-shutter and darkly-tinted areas of wall to either side of this. The purpose of this change will have been to heighten the stress on the lit heads of the two women by simplifying and raising the contrast of the immediate surroundings. A strange feature of this otherwise so carefully done painting is the total nonchalance with which, above and to the right of the boy's head, a vestige of the originally wider mass of cloud has been left visible.

If, as we have said, this painting can be seen as typifying a certain phase in Rembrandt's work, it is due particularly to the relaxed style of painting in large parts of the picture, combined with a high finish in the central figures in which, moreover, a number of strong colours (bright red and blue-green, yellowish white and pink) have been placed side-by-side. As a whole it marks a high point in the development towards a relaxed virtuosity and warm tonality that began in the second half of the 1630s, and gets away from the heavier and more solid execution of earlier narrative pictures staffed with small figures, such as the Passion series. The widely varying treatment, ranging from sketchy in the surroundings to meticulous using thick paint in the few lit and colourful passages, cannot be found in any other work to quite the same extent. On the other hand, the composition contains a number of familiar components. As Wheelock[1], for instance, has already remarked, a formula used in constructing this picture that was also applied, with variations, in works from the 1630s is the combination of a vertical element in the building rising to one side with a horizontal in the steps occupying the foreground. The L-shape that this produces frames a distant vista. We find this in paintings from earlier years in, for example, *The angel Raphael leaving Tobit and his family* of 1637 in Paris (no. A 121), and *The risen Christ*

Fig. 6. Detail with signature (enlarged)



Fig. 7. A. Dürer, *The Visitation*, woodcut



appearing to Mary Magdalene of 1638 in Buckingham Palace (no. A 124) where the main lines are made up of landscape elements and the women returning to Jerusalem have a linking function comparable to Joseph and the ass in the present work. A modest counterweight to the grouping of verticals on the left is, in the *Visitation*, provided by the low wall just visible on the right, which closes off the picture area on that side and forms a repoussoir against the landscape. A component like this also occurred before, for example in the 1636 *Susannah at the bath* in The Hague (no. A 117), and was originally used in the Paris painting already mentioned where it was however painted out. The composition and three-dimensional effect of the *Visitation* also gains its structure from the diagonal fall of light, which as so often (and very comparably, once again, in the Paris work) is linked with a manifestation of the divine. While in the etching of *The presentation in the Temple* from around 1639 (B. 49) Rembrandt was still showing the presence of the Holy Ghost by means of the dove in a shaft of light, he has here, curiously enough, depicted Elisabeth's being filled with the Holy Ghost only by a mass of cloud, diffuse at the top and darkly swirling downwards to above her head.

Valentiner[2] was the first to comment that Rembrandt had, in a number of components of the picture, drawn inspiration from Dürer's woodcut from the *Marienleben* (fig. 7) of which he had in 1638 bought no less than nine sets at the sale of the collection of Gommer Spranger in Amsterdam (Strauss *Doc.*, 1638/2). In Dürer, too, the meeting between Mary and Elisabeth takes place, in contrast to the biblical account but in line with a widespread iconographic tradition, in front of the house of Elisabeth and Zacharias. Specific similarities also appear in the placing and action of Zacharias, whom Dürer has standing in the doorway with his cap in both hands, and in the presence of the dog. The family of peacocks that Rembrandt shows in the left foreground does not however come from this source. In view of the varying meanings attached to the peacock — idleness, pride, immortality or (in early Christian art) Christ himself — it is not always clear in which role it is appearing. The fact that Rubens too showed a peacock (a male, with tail displayed) precisely in his *Visitation* (in the lefthand panel of the triptych of the *Descent from the Cross*, now in Antwerp Cathedral) does suggest that the motif had a specific significance in this context.

5. Documents and sources

Probably identical with 'Rembrant van Rijn groetenisse van Maria aen Elisabeth, no. 48 op 800. guld.' (Rembrant van Rijn Mary's greeting of Elisabeth, no. 48 [valued] at 800 guilders) listed in a collection of his paintings by Hieronymus van der Straten, magistrate and burgomaster of Goes (in Zeeland), and included in the valuation of his estate after his death in 1662 (Goes Municipal Archives. Goes Court of Chancery, fol. 11 recto; published by H. Uil, 'Het Huis de Oliphant te Goes', *Historisch Jaarboek voor Zuid- en Noord-Beveland. Heemkundige kring De Bevelanden* 4, 1978, pp. 95–116; Strauss *Doc.*, 1662/21). The Rembrandt was one of the most highly valued pieces in this remarkable collection.

6. Graphic reproductions

1. Engraving by John Burnett (Musselburgh near Edinburgh 1784 – Stoke Newington, near London 1868; worked in London from 1806), inscribed: *Rembrandt Pinxit — J. Burnett Sculpsit / The Salutation*; appeared in Foster's *British Gallery of Engravings from Pictures . . .*, London 1813.

7. Copies

1. An old copy, on a panel with arched top, worked in a 17th-century manner with bevelling on all sides; coll. Lord Sackville at Knole near Sevenoaks, Kent.

8. Provenance

*— Coll. Hieronymus van der Straten, magistrate and burgomaster of Goes (d. 1662); see *5. Documents and sources.*
— Coll. Prince Eugene of Savoy (1633–1736). It is not known from where he acquired the painting; it is however known that, probably during the Spanish War of Succession (i.e. before 1715), he visited the Amsterdam art dealer Jan Pietersz. Zomer (S.A.C. Dudok van Heel in: *Jaarboek . . . Amstelodamum* 69, 1977, pp. 104–105, with a reproduction of a drawing by Pieter van den Bergen depicting this visit, Amsterdam, Rijksprentenkabinet; on the Prince Eugene collection, see M. Braubach in: *Festschrift für Herbert von Einem*, Berlin 1965, pp. 27–48). The painting is catalogued in the German version (published only very much later) of a lost *Catalogue des Tableaux trouvés dans l'Hoirie de S.A. Sérénissime le grand Prince Eugène de Savoye* compiled after Eugene's death; cf. J. von Retzer, 'Gemäldesammlung des Prinzes Eugen von Savoyen', *Miscellaneen artistischen Innhalts*, Vienna 1782, no. 122.
— Sold in 1741 with the bulk of the collection by Prince Eugene's heir, his niece Maria Anna Victoria of Savoy, to Carlo Emanuele III of Savoy, King of Sardinia, Turin. Perhaps taken away by French officers during the French occupation of Piedmont.
— In Paris early in the 19th century. Stamps on the back relate to the North Paris customs office and to the dealer R. Lerondelle of Paris (information kindly supplied by the museum).
*— Taken to England by Sebastien Érard (1752–1831), a French manufacturer and inventor of musical instruments, in 1808[3].
— Coll. Robert, 2nd Earl of Grosvenor, from 1812. Sold by Hugh Richard Grosvenor in 1913.
— Coll. Baron Alfred Charles de Rothschild (d. 1918), Halton Manor.
— Bought by dealer M. Knoedler & Co., Ltd in 1924, and acquired by the museum in 1927.

9. Summary

In its directness and effectiveness, where finesse and a sketchy treatment are most successfully combined, the painting forms a high point in Rembrandt's oeuvre in the years around 1640. In the main lines of the setting the composition may be compared to earlier works such as the 1637 *Angel Raphael leaving Tobit and his family* (no. A 121) and the 1638 *Risen Christ appearing to Mary Magdalene* (no. A 124). It has long been known that Rembrandt drew inspiration, for a number of elements in the picture, from Dürer's woodcut of the same subject.

REFERENCES

1 Catalogue of exhibition *Gods, saints and heroes, Dutch painting in the age of Rembrandt*, Washington, Detroit, Amsterdam 1980/1, p. 146.
2 W.R. Valentiner, *Rembrandt und seine Umgebung*, Strasbourg 1905, pp. 93–94.
3 F.T. Kugler, *Handbook of painting. The German, Flemish, Dutch, Spanish and French schools*, London 1846, p. 255, J.A. Farington, *The Farington diary* V, London 1925, p. 134.

A 139 Self-portrait

1640

LONDON, THE NATIONAL GALLERY, INV. NO. 672

HDG 550; BR. 34; BAUCH 316; GERSON 238

1. Summarized opinion

A moderately well preserved, authentic work bearing perhaps a basically reliable signature and date of 1640.

2. Description of subject

The sitter is seen half-length, with the body turned three-quarters to the right and the head a little more towards the viewer, on whom the gaze is fixed. He has curling hair, a fuzzy blond moustache and a tuft of beard below the lower lip. He leans his right arm on a sill parallel to the picture plane, with his left forearm hidden behind it.

He is dressed in a costume of 16th-century style, the head covered with a (fur?) cap with the edge sledged and the underside decorated with ornaments linked by small chains of cords. Between the open front panels of a tabbard we see a doublet which has decorated borders running along the top edge across the chest and over the upstanding collar. A cross, half-visible, hangs on his chest on a band. Under the doublet he wears a finely-pleated shirt with an embroidered edge at the neck. An edging of fur runs round the neck of the dark tabbard, and strips of a glossy material decorate the puffed upper sleeves. A hanging tail of the tabberd is draped over his right arm.

The figure is placed before a neutral rear wall, and catches light falling from the left; the lighting of the surroundings is diffused.

3. Observations and technical information

Working conditions

Examined in May 1968 (B.H., E.v.d.W.) in good daylight and artificial light, and out of the frame. Prints of nine X-rays, together covering the whole painting, were received later plus photographs taken during restoration in 1964/65.

Support

DESCRIPTION: Canvas, transferred to another canvas, subsequently lined and recently marouflaged on to a synthetic panel, 93 × 80 cm not counting a strip of lining canvas of 9 cm wide that projects at the bottom. The top is semi-circular interrupted by a straight edge in the centre and the upper corners filled out by the lining canvas to make a rectangle. Both these spandrels and the strip projecting at the bottom have been folded over the edge of the synthetic panel[1]. In the imprint of the original canvas shown in the X-rays nailholes can be seen along the edges, including the curved sections at the top — it was obviously attached to a stretcher with an arched top at some time. There are however only vague traces of cusping along the righthand edge, the middle section of the top edge, and along the bottom; from this it may be deduced, with some caution, that the canvas was originally rectangular. At that stage it probably showed the picture with an arched top provided by either the frame or the painted spandrels — a drawn copy attributed to Ferdinand Bol (see *7. Copies*, 1; fig. 5) reproduces the picture with such a framing. The fact that the curved top edge of the original canvas is broken by a straight section would then indicate that some of this, *c.* 3 cm deep, must have been lost. The original dimensions would have been about 96 × 80 cm. (Fig. 1 shows the painting in its present frame, i.e. without the extension at the bottom and with the arched top that is a little narrower than the preserved, interrupted semicircle of the original canvas.)

SCIENTIFIC DATA: The cusping already described along the bottom varies in pitch from 8.3 to 12 cm, and extends some 12 cm into the canvas. The occasional traces seen along the top stretch only *c.* 6 cm into the surface, which supports the idea that the canvas has been cut down. Threadcount: 15.4 vertical threads/cm (15–18) and 17.9 horizontal threads/cm (17–19).

The greater number of horizontal threads and their more regular density show that the warp direction is probably horizontal; this can accord with the fact that there is no appreciable distortion to left or right, assuming that the canvas was taken from a horizontal strip prepared at one and the same time over a considerable width.

The threadcount and weave characteristics match those of the canvas for the 1641 *Portrait of the preacher Cornelis Claesz. Anslo and his wife* in Berlin (no. A 143) so closely that it is possible that they are from the same bolt.

Ground

DESCRIPTION: Not observable with certainty; a reddish bole colour can be seen at the edges, but not elsewhere.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

Paint layer

CONDITION: During restoration in 1964/65 numerous old retouches and overpaintings were removed, such as those along the righthand contour of the face, hair and cap described by MacLaren[2]. The photographs taken at the time of the restoration show that at all events the whole of the background, especially along the edges and in the thinly-painted darkest passages, has suffered badly. There are damages in the dress, too, including the tail of the tabbard. Carefully placed retouches point to some wearing in the face. Yet the painting, though worn and flattened by the transfer to a new canvas[1], gives the impression of having survived reasonably well in the essential areas. Craquelure: for the most part an irregular, evenly spread craquelure of the kind normal for a 17th-century canvas. Besides the fairly fine cracks in the face there are also a few long cracks, mostly either horizontal or vertical.

DESCRIPTION: The painting is marked, particularly in the head and adjacent areas of costume, by a very meticulous and delicate treatment that in the sleeves and draped tail of the tabbard changes to a broad and more dynamic manner of painting, with the falls of the folds rendered with long, supple brushstrokes. In general the paint is set down quite thinly (the weave of the canvas is apparent everywhere), and the colouring has subdued, warm tints.

The background is painted very thinly, with strokes that are still vaguely visible, becoming a little thicker at the lower right by the contour of the figure where the greyish paint seems to be placed over black. The face is painted evenly without any relief in the surface, using tiny brushstrokes. The structure of the eyes is shown with uncommon accuracy, with a strong three-dimensional effect. The moustache is suggested very effectively, with thin light browns and a few lighter strokes. The hair is executed in a warm brown, with one or two scratchmarks low down on the left. Some short strokes of dark paint are set over the contour of the cap, suggesting a hairy surface structure like that of the fur collar in which spiky longer strokes of a dark paint have been placed; possibly not all of these are autograph. The upstanding collar of the doublet and the pleated shirt are done very delicately and subtly; the edge of the latter has a somewhat indistinct appearance, perhaps due to the fact that it has been partly placed over a light underpainting that follows a different course (see *X-Rays*). The clothing is otherwise rendered in black and tints of grey, brown and ochre yellow, with the lighter tints set down with firm, easy strokes and giving an impression of sheens of light. The outline of the sleeve on the right is painted over the background with free strokes. The indication of the hand is no more than cursory; it appears to have survived well.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

X-Rays

The radiographic image is marred by the light pattern of the stretcher with its cross-battens, but is otherwise reasonably legible and for the most part coincides with what one would expect from the paint surface. There is a striking subtlety in the

Fig. 1. Canvas 93 × 80 cm



Fig. 2. X-Ray



Fig. 3. Detail (1 : 1)



Fig. 4. Detail with signature (reduced)



image of the head, especially the eyes and nose the brushwork of which must have been done with great precision from the outset. In the part of the doublet collar that catches the light, on the other hand, there are wide, light brushstrokes that show this detail to have been broader in the underpainting, and further to the right; later it was evidently overpainted at the front with the paint of the shadowed chin. There has been a further change lower down to the right, where four slightly curved light shapes on the sill of the balustrade show that at an earlier stage the fingers of the left hand were rested on this. In connexion with this, the contour of the left arm was probably further to the right than it is today, but this cannot be checked in the X-ray since at this point the background has been strengthened with paint that shows up light. The presentday contour was then determined, over the latter, by the paint of the clothing.

Signature

At the bottom right on the sill, in dark paint <*Rembrandt f 1640*>. The letters and figures are firmly written and their shape looks familiar enough. The way most of them are linked is however most unusual, and so is the way the upstrokes (of the *m* and *n*) detach themselves from the downstrokes at a remarkably low point. These deviations may perhaps be attributed to a later redrawing of the whole inscription, though there are no clear traces of an underlying one. Until cleaning in 1964/65 there was a flourish between the name and the *f*. Below the name, apparently in a slightly different hand, there is the word *Conterfeycel*, which MacLaren[2] says may have been painted over an earlier inscription. There is no known analogy for this addition, and although it appears old it is probably, as MacLaren also thought, not authentic.

Varnish

No special remarks.

4. Comments

Though the painting is in a far from perfect state and even (especially where the extreme top is concerned) not entirely intact, the effect it has on the viewer is strong enough for it to count as a high point in Rembrandt's production around the year 1640. The treatment combines an extremely refined handling of detail, in the carefully modelled face and the collars of the tunic and shirt, with a free manner of painting in the clothing where browns and greys suggest colours, sheens of light, form and material and where the contours — animated but hardly ever sharp — help describe the volume. The result is a homogenous picture in which the figure appears in subdued light and the atmospheric effect is enhanced by softly merging nuances in the background. The sometimes very meticulous manner of painting and the measured degree of contrast throughout the painting, which to a great extent determine the overall aspect, are not found again to this extent or in this combination in any of Rembrandt's work. The fact that it is quite convincingly from his hand is evident mainly from the nature of the very controlled brushwork and the effect this creates. This effect epitomizes a subtle balance between atmosphere and plasticity that Rembrandt was aiming at around 1640; it was already anticipated in painted portraits from 1639 in Kassel and Amsterdam (nos. A 129 and A 131) and becomes especially evident in, for instance, the 1641 portraits of the Bambeeck/Bas couple in Brussels and Buckingham Palace (nos. A 144 and A 145). Plastic form is now, both in the head and broadly painted hand and in the clothing, devoid of all emphasis; everything has been subordinated to a strong effect of depth, and this gives the individual appearance a remarkably strong presence.

It has, since Bode[3], Phillips[4] and Veth[5] commented on it in 1905, always (and rightly) been assumed that impressions of two 16th-century Italian portraits have been worked into this self-portrait, where Rembrandt depicts himself with one arm, clad in a voluminous sleeve, resting on a balustrade. These are the *Portrait of a man* by Titian in London, known in the 17th century as a portrait of Ariosto and until 1641 in the collection of Alfonso López in Amsterdam, and Raphael's *Portrait of Baldassare Castiglione* in Paris that was, on 9 April 1639, sold in Amsterdam with the collection of Lucas van Uffelen of Antwerp and bought by Alfonso López (C. Hofstede de Groot in: *Jb.d.Pr.Kunsts.* 15, 1894, pp. 180–181). It was after the latter that Rembrandt made his wellknown sketch now in Vienna (Ben. 451). A second testimony of his reaction to both or — more probably — to one of the two works is in the etched *Self-hportrait* of 1639 (B. 21) in which, just as in the London painting though facing left, he is seen with one arm under a wide cloak and resting on a wall; the head is however turned more towards the viewer. As De Jongh[6] has said, it would seem that in

Fig. 5. Copy 1. Rembrandt workshop, brush and grey ink, black and red chalk, 17.8 × 12.8 cm. Washington, D.C., National Gallery of Art, Rosenwald Collection



the etching only the *Ariosto* served as a prototype — the motif of the body turned almost in profile behind a wall comes from this, as does the bulge in the outline of the further side of the body; the strong, diagonally-directed effect of depth in the prototype is lessened by the head being turned almost square-on, though the obliquely-set cap provides a markedly assymetrical motif. It seems as if Rembrandt, when he recorded the *Castiglione* — or his memory of it — already had this asymmetric composition in his mind's eye; by changing the positioning of the cap and the placing of the figure, he gave Raphael's composition a structure quite different from that seen in the original. What has passed from Raphael's prototype into the 1641 London *Self-portrait* thus appears to relate not so much to the composition (where one cannot recognize the symmetrical silhouette of the *Castiglione*) as to the structural clarity of the head, the subdued colouring and the pictorial subtlety. As to the contribution of Titian's *Ariosto*, one finds no trace of his pastel blue, though one can recognize the diagonal placing of the figure and the atmosperic effect of the space behind the balustrade.

The composition of the 1640 *Self-portrait* heralds the readoption of the device of a painted frame, of the kind Rembrandt had already used in the 1634 drawn *Portrait of a man (Willem Jansz. van der Pluym?)* in New York (Ben. 433). In the 1641 portraits of the Bambeeck/Bas couple (nos. A 144 and A 145) the bottom of this framing was to serve the same function, as in the London portrait *Self-portrait*. The pose of Titian's figure, too, was to play a role, most clearly in the 1643 *Portrait of a young man with a falcon* in the coll. Duke of Westminster (Br. 224).

It may be supposed that Rembrandt did not unintentionally give his self-portrait the appearance of portraits of two famous Italian literati; but it is not easy to work out what his purpose was. De Jongh[6] has, with an eye particularly to Titian's *Ariosto*, assumed that Rembrandt was not just indulging in 'aemulatio' of Titian, but was also, in the battle for supremacy between poetry and painting depending on the primacy of hearing or sight, acting as a champion of painting. More generally, one can imagine that Rembrandt was wanting to present himself and his art as part of a tradition of ideals based on the literature and ethos of antiquity, as embodied in Ariosto and Castiglione. There is a less plausible interpretation by Schwartz[7], who believed that by taking up Arisoto's pose Rembrandt was trying to emphasize his role as a courtier. At all events the painting is difficult to see as a simple *tronie* — it is more likely a portrait in 'antick' dress (i.e. inspired by earlier fashion). The probably 17th-century inscription 'Conterfeycel' that the painting bears (see *Signature*) is most unusual, though in this context to some extent understandable. A painting described in the inventory of the estate of the art dealer Johannes de Renialme in 1657 as 'Rembrants Contrefeijtsel antijcks' (Strauss *Doc.*, 1657/2, no. 292) must, if not actually this painting, have been a work of the same type.

The painting must have influenced Govaert Flinck and Ferdinand Bol — the former was no longer and the latter was perhaps still working in Rembrandt's studio in 1640; both drew on it as a prototype for portraits of various sitters. A drawing attributed to Bol reproduces the painting with the probably original arched top, though the figure is too large in the frame (see *7. Copies*, 1; fig. 5). In painted portraits of himself and others Bol used it as a model not only in its completed state but also in an earlier form in which the fingers of the left hand were still resting on the sill in a manner not uncommon in 16th-century Netherlandish portraits. This is true for two works, probably self-portraits, of which one is undated (canvas 93 × 83.5 cm, exhb. Oshkosh, Wisconsin 1968, no. 5, lent by the Knoedler Gallery; Blankert *Bol*, no. 62, pl. 62) and the other signed and dated 1647 (canvas 101 × 88.3 cm, fig. 6; previously Knoedler Gallery, New York; Blankert op. cit., no. 61); both of them give some idea of the line that the contour of the left arm in Rembrandt's *Self-portrait* must have followed before he altered this passage. Bol went on to apply the formula in

Fig. 6. F. Bol, *Self-portrait*, 1647, canvas 101 × 88.3 cm. U.S.A., private collection



variations of all kinds in a number of other works, certainly not all of them self-portraits (illustrated by A. Bredius in: *Burl. Mag.* 42, 1923, pp. 72–83; cf. Blankert op. cit., nos. 60, 63 and 64; Sumowski *Gemälde* I, nos. 135 and 138; and the etching dated 1645, Hollst. III, no. 12). Flinck based a *Self-portrait* dated 1643 (Von Moltke *Flinck*, no. 434; Sumowski *Gemälde* II, no. 680) on Rembrandt's painting, as well as the composition of two drawn portraits from the same year — that of a man, now in Weimar, and of a woman, now in Rennes (Von Moltke op. cit., nos. D 139 and D 175; Sumowski *Drawings* IV, nos. 867 and 866); both of these show an added curtain. One gets the impression that in the main the pupil was admiring the formula as such, and adopted it with no thought for the idea it encapsulated.

5. Documents and sources

None.

6. Graphic reproductions

None.

7. Copies

1. Drawing, brush and grey ink, black and red chalk, 17.8 × 12.8 cm, Washington, DC., National Gallery of Art, Rosenwald Collection. The figure stands relatively larger in the (original?) framing with an arched top (Sumowski *Drawings* I, no. 142; our fig. 5). The drawing must be dated as probably soon after 1640, and would seem to belong to a group of drawn copies evidently done in Rembrandt's workshop (see also nos. A 112, A 114, A 116 and A 120 under *7. Copies* in those entries); it was attributed by Sumowski to Ferdinand Bol.

8. Provenance

— Coll. General Dupont, Paris (either Pierre Comte Dupont de l'Etang, 1765–1840, or his elder brother Dupont-Chaumont, 1759–1838, both of whom served under Napoleon).
— Bought from the heirs the Comte, Vicomte and Baron de Richemont after an exhibition in Paris in 1861.

9. Summary

Though the painting, which probably originally had a semicircular top a little higher than it has today, has suffered somewhat, it nonetheless represents a high point in Rembrandt's work from around 1640. A tendency already apparent in portraits from the 1630s towards an atmospheric unity of figure and surroundings is here even more marked. The influence of Titian's supposed *Portrait of Ariosto* to a considerable extent dictated the pose and composition using a sill, while that of Raphael's *Portrait of Castiglione* is felt in the colouring and the clear rendering of form. In choosing this unusually fully worked-up pose and the 'antick' dress Rembrandt was, more than in the earlier self-portraits regarded as *tronies*, seeking to demonstrate the status that was due to him and his art.

The composition was borrowed on various occasions by Ferdinand Bol and Govaert Flinck as a prototype for portraits, including self-portraits. Bol, who in 1640 was probably still working in Rembrandt's studio, must also have known the painting in an earlier state apparent from the radiograph in which not only the right hand was seen but also the fingers of the left, resting on the sill.

REFERENCES

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4 C. Phillips, 'The "Ariosto" of Titian', *The Art Journal* 67 (1905), pp. 1–10.
5 J. Veth, 'Rembrandtiana I: Rembrandt's wijze van adopteeren', *Onze Kunst* 4, 2nd half-year (1905), pp. 79–90. Idem, 'Rembrandts Anpassungsart', *Kunst und Künstler* 4 (1906), pp. 231–242.
6 E. de Jongh, 'The spur of wit: Rembrandt's response to an Italian challenge', *Delta. A review of arts, life and thought in the Netherlands* 12 (1969), no. 2, pp. 49–67.
7 Schwartz 1984, pp. 214–215.

A 140 Portrait of Herman Doomer (companian-piece to no. A 141) 1640

NEW YORK, N.Y., THE METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART, ACC. NO. 29.100.1
BEQUEST OF MRS H.O. HAVEMEYER, 1929. THE H.O. HAVEMEYER COLLECTION

HDG 642; BR. 217; BAUCH 385; GERSON 230

Fig. 1. Panel 75 × 55.3 cm



1. Summarized opinion

A well preserved and authentic work, reliably signed and dated 1640.

2. Description of subject

The sitter is seen to the waist with the body turned three-quarters to the right, and the head slightly towards the viewer. His hair is short, and he has a straggly moustache and beard. He is dressed simply in a broad-brimmed dark hat, a flat, white pleated collar, a brown doublet closed by a row of buttons, and a black cloak that hangs over the further shoulder and arm and to the left is wrapped in front of his body beneath his curved right arm. Light falls onto the figure from the left, creating a cast shadow towards the right on the rear wall; the latter is in shadow in the lower lefthand corner as well.

3. Observations and technical information

Working conditions

Examined in April 1969 (J.B., B.H.) mostly under artificial light and in the frame; a radiograph of the head was available, and a copyfilm of this was received later. Examined again in March 1983 (E.v.d.W.).

Support

DESCRIPTION: Oak panel, grain vertical, 75 × 55.3 cm, thickness *c.* 1.6 cm. Single plank. Back bevelled on all sides over a width varying from *c.* 4 TO 5.5 cm.
SCIENTIFIC DATA: Dendrochronlogy (Prof. Dr J. Bauch, Hamburg) showed the panel to be a radial board. At the bottom to the right of the core are 177 annual rings heartwood measured + 1 ring on the sap side and 2 rings on the heart side counted; left of the core 158 annual rings heartwood measured + 1 ring on the sap side and 10 rings on the heart side counted. Not datable. The wood is from the same tree as the panels onto which, around 1635, the canvas of the Berlin *John the Baptist preaching* (no. A 106) was stuck and on which the 1639 Rotterdam *Portrait of Aletta Adriaensdr.* (no. A 132) and the 1644 London *Christ and the woman taken in adultery* (Br. 566) were painted.

Ground

DESCRIPTION: A light brown shows through in thinly-painted dark areas of the background.
SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

Paint layer

CONDITION: Appears excellent. Craquelure: none seen.
DESCRIPTION: In general the paint is applied fairly evenly, thinnest in the darker parts of the background where the grain of the panel is occasionally visible, and thickest in light parts of the head and collar. In the head, which has lively modelling, the brushstrokes in both the lit areas and the shadows (which tend to the translucent) are mostly merging, with the transitions between them soft and fluid. The range of colours in the lit passages is fairly varied, with warm tints used in the sensitively handled eye areas — a red-brown, for instance, in the borders of the eyelids. Strong accents in dark paint are placed in the eyes along the upper limit of the iris, in the nostrils (especially that on the left, where it is set in a stroke of ruddy brown) and in the broad mouth-line. Curved brushstrokes are used to work up the translucent dark parts of the hair along the ear, which is seen half in shadow and given quite accurate modelling. The eyebrows, moustache and beard are drawn finely in dark paint and a few tiny strokes of light paint over a mid-tone. Beneath the beard this tone merges almost imperceptibly into that of the shadow on the collar. The latter's contour against the background, too, is kept vague at this point; the collar here is in thin paint set over that of the background. The lit parts of the collar, on the other hand, comprise thick white paint laid down in long strokes, alternating with strokes of a thinner grey for the folds; at the lower edge the layering of the material is rendered with a rugged paint surface and fine strokes of brown and black. The animated structure of the collar forms an effective counterpoint to the sober treatment of the clothing below, the doublet painted in opaque browns and the dark cloak, where the paint is applied broadly and evenly. This area is enlivened by black lines giving the seams and join of the doublet, and by subdued shadows; both make a great contribution to the plastic rendering of the body. The hand, part-hidden beneath the cloak, is dealt with very cursorily. At the outline of the figure the black of the cloak is occasionally set over the paint of the background, and at the upper right also some way over the grey paint of the shadowed edge of the collar, which was evidently painted first. The lit areas of background consist of a carefully-done grey in which here and there the underlying light-brown ground helps to give a blended effect; a thinner dark brown-grey is used along the top edge and in the shadows at the bottom.
SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

X-Rays

Because of the varying depth of the paint, the image of brushstrokes in the radiographic image of the head is more pronounced than visual examination of the paint surface would suggest. In the lefthand part of the hat, particularly, there is a clear image of the flame-shaped grain pattern of the panel, which as has been said is a radial board.

Signature

At the lower right in the cast shadow of the figure, in a dark brown-grey <*Rembrandt*/ *f* 1640>. The thinly-written letters make an impression of authenticity. The placing of the *f* together with the date below the name is unusual, though it is occasionally found (cf., for example, no. A 72).

Varnish

No special remarks.

4. Comments

Their sober directness of presentation sets the portrait of Herman Doomer and its companion piece Baertje Martens (no. A 141) apart among the portraits done by Rembrandt in and around 1640, the general impression of which is determined to a great extent by patrician portraits in which the generally much larger size, rich clothing and occasional inclusion of architectural elements emphasize the prestige of the sitter. Portraying this ebonyworker and his wife gave no reason to adopt such features.

In the closely observed and vividly modelled heads the paint is usually thin and applied with fine and often somewhat merging brushstrokes. In the man's portrait a rather stronger range of colours is chosen than in the woman's, where the colour of a yellowish white used for the highest light on the forehead shifts downwards into subtle combinations of flesh colours, pink and greys. In both cases the atmospheric coherence of the whole has in the heads been ensured in Rembrandt's characteristic way of avoiding sharp lines of transition; dark accents are

Fig. 2. Detail (1 : 1)



Fig. 3. X-Ray



Fig. 4. Detail with signature (1 : 1)



always surrounded or half-covered by a middle tone that forms the transition to lighter areas. Only in the contours of the figures or of light items of clothing against dark is there a linear element to be seen. Coupled with these similarities between the two pendants there is however a difference in design. As Rembrandt often does — cf. in particular the 1633 *Portrait of a man rising from his chair* in the Taft Museum, Cincinnati (no. A 78) and the associated woman's portrait in New York (no. A 79) — he has chosen here for the man's portrait a lightish background against which the face, seen partly in shadow, provides a contrast; in the woman's portrait, where the face is turned more towards the light, the background has a darker tone and the artist has furthermore turned the figure almost square-on so that the light falling from the left will not flatten the plastic relief of the features. As a result, the outline of the figure in the man's portrait plays a more important role than it does in the woman's. It exhibits a typically rembrandtesque quality, with a rhythm of its own, yet at the same time invariably suggesting the solidity of the form it describes. Here, too, sharpness is mostly avoided and atmospheric unity with the surroundings maintained. Because of the pronounced shape of the hat and the animated character of the collar the accent in the man's portrait lies wholly on the head and its immediate surroundings; the structure of the collar, in which the paint is thick and sometimes rough-textured, contrasts effectively with the flat-brushed and subdued brown of the doublet.

In the woman's portrait the accents are placed rather differently and more sparingly. As we have said, the colourscheme in the face is rather more subdued, and the contour of the figure as a whole less emphatic, though on the right there is an effective transition from a rounded to an angular line. The almost frontal pose is more static than that in the man's portrait, and this is accentuated further by the strictly horizontal top edge to the chairback which, in the absence of a cast shadow such as there is in the other portrait, helps to anchor the figure in the picture space. The sensitively-done face is set off against the collar, the geometric form of which is interrupted by the gap at the front. The dark costume is worked up in closely similar tonal values, and given rather more detail than that of the man. Most of all, however, there is here a second centre of interest in the lit hands. As the X-ray shows, a handkerchief that was originally seen to the right of the hands was later painted-out; at the same time, possibly, the lit part of the hand on the left was widened to show the wrist. Compositionally, this means that the light area low down was shifted somewhat to the left and reduced in size, thus losing in importance. This effect is also brought about by the depiction of the hands, the fingers of which are either masked by the other hand or intersected by the edge of the picture so that neither hand has its form fully developed.

In their limited range of colour and their simplicity, coupled with great refinement in the gradations of chiaroscuro, these portraits show a certain resemblance to other work from around 1640, in particular the London *Self-portrait* of that year (no. A 139). The pose in the man's portrait also calls this picture to mind, though it was used in Rembrandt's workshop as early as 1635 (cf. no. C 108), and it would be going rather too far to see in it the pose of Titian's '*Ariosto*' (which was one of the prototypes for Rembrandt's *Self-portrait*; see that entry) as Schwartz[1] has done. Tümpel[2], on the other hand, believed he could detect in the composition of both portraits, and in the woman's smile, the influence of Frans Hals — an idea for which there is not enough specific evidence. The (admittedly somewhat spindly) signature on the man's portrait inspires confidence as to its authenticity and there can be no doubt at all that Rembrandt was the author of both paintings. As to the dating, there is sufficient evidence that the date of 1640 on the man's portrait is in agreement with the general similarity already mentioned with the London *Self-portrait* of that year. Dendrochronology does not yield any precise indication as the two other panels made from the same tree were used as far apart as *c.* 1635 and 1644 (see *Support*, SCIENTIFIC DATA). However, Govaert Flinck — who used works by Rembrandt as prototypes long after he had left the latter's workshop — obviously knew of the composition of the man's portrait when he painted his *Portrait of a man* dated 1641 in the coll. Thyssen-Bornemisza at Lugano (Von Moltke *Flinck*, no. 259 pl. 37; Sumowski *Gemälde* II, no. 695), which also includes a reminiscence of the *Portrait of Nicolaes van Bambeeck*, also dated 1641 (no. A 144). There can, then, be hardly any doubt that Rembrandt's portraits of Herman Doomer and his wife were done in 1640 as suggested

by the inscription on the man's. Smith's[3] quoting the date of the man's portrait as 1646 must have been due to a misreading.

For one and probably two generations the two portraits were owned by descendants of the sitters. So far as their subsequent history can be reconstructed from documents, inscriptions on prints after the man's portrait and sales catalogues (see *8. Provenance*), they were sold by the widow of a grandson who died in 1726 (if not in fact earlier by the grandson himself), and then before about 1730/35 came into the coll. A. Cousin in London; when this collection was sold in 1750 the paintings became separated. By that time the identity of the subjects was no longer known; a print after the man's portrait made when it was still in the Cousin collection speaks of 'Rembrandt's father', and the woman's portrait was, after it was acquired in the Julienne sale in Paris in 1767 for the Russian Empress Catherine II, catalogued accordingly around 1775 as 'La Mere de Rembrant' (it was not the only painting in S. Peterburg to be described as such!). The man's portrait must in or soon after 1750 have returned to Holland, where there was still some idea of the identity of the sitter; in 1757 it was auctioned as the portrait of 'the Painter Domer' (which, taken literally, would have to mean Herman's son Lambert Doomer), but the knowledge of it probably went further than that — when it subsequently came to England again it was, according to a print datable after 1769, said to portray 'Rembrants Frame Maker'; Herman Doomer did indeed work in ebony, and he may (though this is not known) have supplied frames to Rembrandt. When the painting, after having been again in Holland from 1791 to 1802, came into French ownership it was called 'Le doreur de Rembrandt', as it was also known to Smith[3]. Working from a written inscription 'Domer' on an etching by Isaac Jansz. de Wit (see *6. Graphic reproductions*, 5), Vosmaer[4] recognized the subject as the painter Doomer. The correct identification followed when Hofstede de Groot[5] discovered Baertje Martens' will of 23 May 1662 (see *5. Documents and sources*); he was then able, thanks to the existence of two copies in the Devonshire Collection (figs. 5 and 6), to identify the companion-piece in Leningrad[6]. At about the same time Neumann[7] came to the same conclusion on the grounds of the similarity in the dimensions and manner of painting. Finally came the discovery of the signature of Lambert Doomer on one of the two copies at Chatsworth, published by Martin[8]. From a combination of these facts it follows that Lambert, named in the will as inheriting the originals, himself made at least one pair of the copies that — again under the terms of the will — he was to provide to his brothers and sisters. (When the mother died in 1678 there were still three sisters living.)

Research by I.H. van Eeghen[9] has provided a number of facts about the life of Herman Doomer and Baertje Martens. He came from Anrath in Germany and was 23 years old when, in Amsterdam in 1618, he married the one year younger Baertje Martens, born in the town of Naarden. He gave his occupation as worker in ebony — a specialist trade, since handling this wood demands particular skills. This hardwood was in fact imitated in (dyed) whalebone, and Doomer worked in this as well: in 1641, together with his oldest son Mattheus, he successfully applied for a patent on the 'art of moulding whalebone', which was done using metal formers[10]. He died in 1650, 28 years before his wife; both were buried in Amsterdam.

5. Documents and sources

The painting and its companion-piece, no. A 141, were mentioned in the will of Baertje Martens, made in Amsterdam and dated 15 July 1654, 23 May 1662 and 3 September 1668 (Strauss *Doc.*, 1654/13, 1662/3 and 1668/7 respectively). A fourth and final will dated 30 June 1677 has not survived[9]. The mention in the 1662 will runs: '. . .dat hare zoone Lamber Doomer sal nae sich nemen en behouden de conterfeijtsels van haer Testatrice en haere man, door Rembrandt van Rhijn gedaen, des dat hy yder van syne broeders en susters van deselve copy levert te sijnen coste . . .' (. . .that her son Lambert Doomer shall take and keep the portraits of her, the testatrix, and of her husband, made by Rembrandt van Rhijn, provided that he shall supply each of his brothers and sisters with copies thereof at his expense . . .). This provision is followed by other instructions aimed at keeping both the originals and the copies in the family. When Baertje Martens died (she was buried in Amsterdam on 6 January 1678) four of the seven children of her marriage to Herman Doomer were still living — Lambert and three sisters.

An inventory made in Amsterdam after Lambert Doomer's death on 2 July 1700 on the basis of a will executed on 4 May (of the same year, apparently) describes under no. 38: 'Twe contrefaictsels van des Overledens Vader en Moeder door Rembrand van Rhijn geschilderd en geprelegateert aen Hermanus Vorster' (Two portraits of the deceased's father and mother, painted by Rembrand van Rhijn and bequeathed to Hermanus Vorster) (A. Bredius, *Künstler-Inventare* I, The Hague 1915, p. 76). Hermanus Vorster was a son of one of Lambert Doomer's sisters[9].

6. Graphic reproductions

The fact that the prints listed below, apart from no. 5, follow the original in many details rules out the possibility that they were made after one of the copies listed below. In the case of the prints by Dupuis and Dixon (1 and 3 below) the subtle rendering would suggest that they are based directly on the original; Chapman's fairly coarse mezzotint (2 below) seems to have been made after an intermediate prototype, and from what is said in the inscription this was the engraving by Dupuis; Hertel, too, who is not known to have been active in England, probably worked from Dupuis' engraving or a similarly accurate reproduction. The direct relationship one can assume between the Dupuis and Dixon prints and the original provides us with the names of two 18th-century owners of the latter, Ant. Cousin and the Duke of Ancaster.

1. Engraving by Nicolas Gabriel Dupuis (Paris 1698–1771), inscribed in a later state: *Rembrandt pinx. — N. Dupuis jun. Sculp / London / Ex Museo An: Cousin / sold by Salomon Gautie at y^e^ Crown & Pearl under y^e^ great Piazza Covent Garden* (fig. 7). Reproduces the picture very faithfully in reverse. Since Dupuis the Younger is

Fig. 5. Copy 1. L. Doomer, *Portrait of Herman Doomer*, canvas 65 × 54 cm. Chatsworth, Devonshire Collections



Fig. 6. A 141 copy 1. L. Doomer, *Portrait of Baertje Martens*, 1644, canvas 65 × 54 cm. Chatsworth, Devonshire Collections



known to have worked in England a number of times in his early years, one may assume that the print was made not later than 1730/35.

2. Mezzotint by R. Chapman (?–?) inscribed: *Rembrandt pinxit. — R. Chapman fecit. / Rembrandts Father / From a Capital Painting of Rembrandt / in Possession of Mons.r An. Cousin* (Charrington 36). Reproduces the picture rather coarsely in the same direction as the painting, probably on the basis of Dupuis' print no. 1 above. From the fact that the painting's owner is named as 'Mons.r An. Cousin' it must perhaps be deduced that he was a Frenchman living in London.

3. Mezzotint by John Dixon (Ireland 1720/30–London 1804) inscribed in the second state: *Rembrandt pinx.t — Dixon fecit / Rembrandts Frame Maker / Done from an Original Picture, in the Collection of his Grace the Duke of Ancaster — Publish'd According to Act July 7, 1769* (Charrington 44). Reproduces the picture very faithfully in the same direction as the painting.

4. Etching by Johann Georg Hertel (Augsburg, 18th century) inscribed: *Rembrandt. pinxit. — I.G. Hertel exc. A:V:*. Reproduces the picture rather coarsely in the same direction. Seems to have been done from the print by Dupuis (no. 1 above) rather than after the original.

5. Etching by Isaac Jansz. de Wit (Amsterdam 1744–Heerlen 1809) inscribed in pen and ink (in the impression in the Amsterdam Print Room): *Rembrand: Pinxit: Domer; J: dWit Jansz Fecit.* Shows the picture clumsily as a bust and in reverse. Probably based on copy 2.

Smith[3] mentions a mezzotint by Johann Gottfried Haid (Kleineislingen or Salach 1710 — Vienna 1776), but such a print is not mentioned elsewhere in the literature and is unknown to us.

7. Copies

If the instruction in the wills of Baertje Martens (see *5. Documents and sources*) was in fact carried out, Lambert Doomer would have supplied three pairs of copies of the pendants. Two copies of each are known today, of which only one pair is by him.

1. Canvas 65 × 54 cm, Chatsworth, Devonshire Collections, inv. no. 144 (examined November 1987, E.v.d.W.). Signed <*Domer*> (fig. 5). In view of Doomer's signature and the date of 1644 on the companion-piece (fig. 6; see no. A 141, *7. Copies*, 1), there can be no doubt about Doomer's authorship. The picture shows the same sitter similarly dressed but seen slightly more from the front and reduced to a bust; the hat has a taller crown and a less curling brim. These differences may be taken as typical of the latitude 17th-century usage left for 'copies'. They may also reflect an attempt on the painter's part to align the relationship between the two pendants by rendering the two sitters at roughly the same angle — instead of Rembrandt's threequarters view of the man and nearly frontal pose of the woman — and using the same tone for their respective backgrounds. (The fact that Doomer deviated so markedly from what appears to have been normal practice in Rembrandt's workshop may be one more reason for doubting whether he ever was a direct pupil of Rembrandt; see P. Schatborn in: *Simiolus* 9, 1977, p. 50.)

2. Canvas 66.5 × 57 cm, Braunschweig, Herzog Anton Ulrich-Museum, cat. no. 256. Reproduces the picture — possibly because of a later reduction — in a framing tighter on all sides but especially at the top. It otherwise uses the original fairly faithfully, if somewhat cursorily. This copy perhaps formed a pair with a copy of the woman's portrait that in 1909 was in the coll. Pichou in Paris (see no. A 141, *7. Copies*, 2). It seems doubtful whether the picture is of 17th-century origin.

8. Provenance

All owners recorded here where already mentioned by Hofstede de Groot[11] though in a different, evidently incorrect sequence. — Bequeathed by Baertje Martens to the painter Lambert Doomer (1624–1700), third son of her marriage with Herman Doomer (see *5. Documents and sources*). According to Lambert's will executed on 4 May 1700, bequeathed to his nephew Herman Vorster, minister, lastly at Schoonhoven (d. 1726). Neither the latter's will, made in Schoonhoven on 11 December 1725, nor that

Fig. 7. Engraving by N.G. Dupuis (reproduced in reverse)



of his widow Anna Maria Brest who inherited from him, made in Amsterdam on 12 June 1741, makes any mention of the paintings[9]; the information below shows that at the time of her death in 1768 she no longer owned them.
— Coll. Antoine (or Anthony?) Cousin, London, from no later than *c.* 1730/35 (see *6. Graphic reproductions*, 1 and 2); together with the companion-piece evidently in the Anthony Cousein (sic!) sale, London 8–9 February 1750 (Lugt 714), first day no. 53: 'Rembrandt. A Man's Head, 3 qrs' (£55.13s.0d). The companion piece (our no. A 141) was under no. 54 as: 'Rembrandt. A Woman's Head, its Companion' (£43.1s.0d).
— Coll. H. Wolters, sale Amsterdam 4 May 1757 (Lugt 961), no. 61: 'Het Pourtrait van de Schilder Domer, zynde een Borststuk levensgrote, door Rembrant'. Without the pendant.
— Coll. Duke of Ancaster (see *6. Graphic reproductions*, 3). Evidently Duchess Dowager of Ancaster sale London (Christie's) 16–18 May 1791 (Lugt 4734), no. 84: 'Rembrandt — A portrait' (£49.7s to Tapant).
— Coll. Van Eyl Sluyter, Amsterdam; 'Helsleuter' sale, Paris 25 January 1802 (Lugt 6352), no. 145: 'Rembrandt van Rhijn. Peint sur bois, haut de 27, lar. de 20 p. [= 72.9 × 54 cm]. Un Tableau de la plus grande magie d'exécution, et l'un des ouvrages précieux et étudiés de ce célèbre coloriste. Il représente un buste d'homme jusqu'à la poitrine, le visage de trois-quarts et coiffé d'un large chapeau rabattu, portant une courte barbe roussâtre, qui se détache sur une fraise de mousseline à gros plis; son habillement brunâtre contribue à donner à l'ensemble un effet de vérité qui produit l'illusion. Parmi les nombreux portraits qui sont sortis du chevalet de Rembrant, on a toujours distingué celui de son doreur comme le plus heureux. Sous tous les rapports de l'art, il joint au faire le plus admirable, une harmonie de teinte qui le dispute à la nature, et cet agréable fini qu'il a employé avec tant de succès dans le fameux ouvrage que l'on voit de lui chez M. de Smeth à Amsterdam [cf. our no. A 77], qui est, sans contredit, son chef-d'oeuvre' (5005 francs to Urique).
— Coll. Mme Gentil de Chavagnac. Not in the sale of that collection in Paris, 20–21 May 1854, as is explained in the preface to the catalogue: 'Ceux qui ont été admis à visiter autrefois la collection de Mme de Chavagnac regretteront peut-être de ne plus y retrouver le tableau de Rembrandt connu sous le nom du *Doreur*. Des considérations personelles l'ont décidée à s'en défaire dans ses dernières années. Cette précieuse toile figure aujourd'hui dans le cabinet de M. le comte de Morny'.
— Coll. Duc de Morny, sale Paris 31ff May 1865, no. 68 (155 000 francs to Salamanca of Madrid).
— Coll. Duchess of Sesto, Madrid 1882[11].
— Dealer W. Schaus, New York.
— Coll. H.O. Havemeyer, New York. Bequest of Mrs H.O. Havemeyer, 1929.

9. Summary

On the grounds of approach and execution this portrait and its companion-piece in Leningrad (no. A 141) can be regarded as authentic Rembrandt works. The signature and date of 1640 on the man's portrait appear to be genuine and the paintings' similarity with Rembrandt's 1640 *Self-portrait* in London (no. A 139) is in accordance with that date. The two portraits are probably painted on very similar panels — that for the man's portrait is an intact radial board, while that for the woman's, though planed (and backed), probably is as well to judge from the grain pattern. There is a strong resemblance, too, in the handling of paint. As one also sometimes finds in Rembrandt's portraits from the 1630s, the man's shows a rather lighter background and more pronounced contours than the woman's, and the woman is seen almost square-on.

The identity of the sitters, the ebony-worker and framemaker Herman Doomer and his wife Baertje Martens, was rediscovered around the turn of the 20th century. The portraits were still together when they were owned by the couple's son the painter Lambert Doomer (d. 1700); the latter was required by his mother's will to provide his brothers and sisters with copies. A pair of free copies done by him are at Chatsworth.

REFERENCES

1 Schwartz 1984, p. 217.
2 Tümpel 1986, p. 216.
3 J. Smith, *A catalogue raisonné of the works of the most eminent Dutch, Flemish and French painters* VI, London 1836, no. 334; cf. nos. 288 and 335.
4 C. Vosmaer, *Rembrandt. Sa vie et ses oeuvres*. The Hague 1877, p. 205; idem, 'De schilder Domer', *Kunstkroniek*, new series I (1879), p. 2.
5 W. Bode and C. Hofstede de Groot, *Rembrandt* IV, Paris 1900, no. 275.
6 M.C. Visser [= C. Hofstede de Groot et al.], *Die Urkunden über Rembrandt . . .*, 1st supplement, The Hague 1906, no. 251a [NB: this is the only authentic document in this publication, otherwise intended as a joke].
7 C. Neumann, *Rembrandt* I, 2nd edn Kiel 1905, p. 250.
8 W. Martin, 'Rembrants portretten van Herman Doomer en Baartjen Martens', *Bulletin van den Nederlandschen Oudheidkundigen Bond*, 2nd series 2 (1909), pp. 126–129.
9 I.H. v[an] E[eghen], 'Baertjen Martens en Herman Doomer', *Amstelodamum. Maandblad* . . . 43 (1956), pp. 133–137.
10 P.J.J. van Thiel, 'Hollandse lijsten van balein', *Miscellanea I.Q. van Regteren Altena*, Amsterdam 1969, pp. 104–110, esp. 108.
11 HdG 642.

A 141 Portrait of Baertje Martens (companion-piece to no. A 140) [1640]
LENINGRAD, THE HERMITAGE MUSEUM, NO. 829

HDG 643; BR. 357; BAUCH 500; GERSON 231

Fig. 1. Panel 75.1 × 55.9 cm



1. Summarized opinion

A well preserved, authentic work that can be dated in 1640.

2. Description of subject

The sitter is seen to just below the waist, with the head and body almost square-on though turned a little to the left. She is seated in a chair part of the back of which can be seen on the right, and the ends of the armrests on either side of the figure (very vaguely on the left). Her elbows rest on the arms of the chair and her left hand is folded over the right in her lap. She wears a small white cap, a pleated collar tied loosely round her throat and revealing a little of the high neckline of a shirt, a dark bodice closed with a row of buttons, and a pleated skirt; the latter two are seen between the open panels of her 'vlieger' overgarment, which has fur edging along the front opening and at the shoulder-caps. A simple strip of braid runs along the shoulder-caps, over the seam down the middle of the sleeves and around the bottom edge of the sleeves, where there is a narrow white cuff. Light falls onto the figure from high on the left; the rear wall is lit faintly only on the right.

3. Observations and technical information

Working conditions

Examined in August 1969 (J.B., S.H.L.) in moderate daylight and artificial light, out of the frame; the published reproduction of an X-ray of the hands was available subsequently[1]. Examined again in the spring of 1983 (E.v.d.W.).

Support

DESCRIPTION: Oak panel, grain vertical and curving somewhat to the left in the lefthand half, 75.1 × 55.9 cm. Planed to a thickness of 0.2 cm and stuck to an oak panel that has been cradled. A small piece (2.9 cm high and 2.3 cm wide) of the upper righthand corner of the original panel has been broken off, and another (h 5.5 cm, w 2.5 cm) at the bottom right. Both have been stuck back onto the panel carrying the original support. The pattern of grain just mentioned suggests that the original panel was a radial board, as is known to be the case with the companion-piece (see no. A 140 under *Support*).
SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

Ground

DESCRIPTION: A light yellowish brown lies exposed in unpainted strips (with a maximum width of 0.9 and 1 cm respectively) along the upper and lower edges of the panel (on this, see Vol. I p. 13), as well as in a small discontinuity on the left in the collar, slightly at the hairline, in the shadow along the nose, by the eyebrow on the right and here and there in the shadow parts of the background.
SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

Paint layer

CONDITION: Quite good in the essential areas, slight damage in the background. A good 5 cm below the upper edge there is (especially on the left) a series of retouched patches of paint loss; above this the background is a darker brown across the full width — possibly the paint here was at some time in the past covered over for a longish period by a frame so that it has darkened more than elsewhere (see also *4. Comments*). In the upper left background there have also been splintered paint losses along the grain, which at that point runs down obliquely towards the left; here, there have been quite large retouches in light and darker brown. Along the edge of the panel on the right, and running diagonally down to the left, there are thickened streaks of paint or varnish some 1 to 2 cm in length. Craquelure: fine vertical cracks in the forehead, and some even finer ones in the nose.
DESCRIPTION: In general the paint is applied thinly and with care; most relief is to be found in the dark accents in the eyes, nostrils and mouth-line, and in long strokes used to supply details in the cap and clothing.

In the head the highest light is concentrated in the forehead, done in a somewhat yellowish flesh tint that in the centre is rather thicker and tends more to white. To the left and right of this some pink has been used. Downwards the intensity of the light falls off somewhat, from the cheeks and nose — painted in a warmer flesh colour, some pink and greys and with a few matt catchlights — to the chin where there are more greys, sometimes placed over a thin pink. In the more brightly lit side of the face on the left a thin brown has mainly been used for the shadows; above the forehead and to the right the greys are accompanied by a translucent brownish tone where, at the hairline, at the temple and along the nose, the ground has been left slightly visible. In the eyebrows a thin grey has been placed over the ground with precise strokes. As here, sharp borders have been avoided everywhere in the face. The very subtly rendered eyes have black accents, placed in the pupil and above along the iris embedded in a warm, flat grey used for the latter (on the left the ground again makes some contribution), and in strokes of thin brown and grey used to indicate the eyelids. These strokes are here and there overlapped with touches of flesh colour; the flesh tint of the lower lids penetrates a little into the grey of the irises. The nostrils, in a dark brown, are merged into the surrounding shadow done in a slightly lighter brown that merges into grey in the cast shadow on the right. A thin brown is also used for the mouth; the corners become vague into the grey shadows. Towards the light the mouthline is marked in red, and the brown on the lower lip is mixed with some pink and white.

The cap is painted in a variety of greys, with the highest lights at the top of the head and lower left against the cheek. The border with the face is drawn on the right with long merging brushstrokes of brown, which above the hair becomes short and rather angular strokes of brown; left of the face a grey-white is used. Outside the lowest part of the cap's left contour a light shape shows through the dark paint of the background and indicates that at the underpainting stage the edge of the cap was here set more to the left. The top edge of the shirt and the collar are for the most part treated quite broadly though effectively, in whites and greys with browns and greys in the shadows. The costume further down is worked more thoroughly, in dark greys with fine sheens of light in a rather lighter grey and details drawn in black; the fur is rendered in brown, translucent here and there and worked up with strokes of brown-grey.

In the quite roughly worked hands the flesh tints are laid down rather more thickly than in the head, with varied and mainly broad strokes placed alongside and overlapping each other; the arteries are traced with a little grey-white. In the hand on the left, by the wrist, one can detect underlying brushstrokes that run crosswise.

The back of the very broadly indicated chair, on the right, is in a flat dark brown, while the vaguely-lit end of the armrest on that side is shown with a brown-grey. In the right background, along the contour of the figure and above the chair, there is an opaque grey; elsewhere, a thin, darker grey is brushed over the brown ground, which shows through at many places.
SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

X-Rays

The X-ray of the hands[1] shows on the right, beneath the hand, a cluster of loose radioabsorbent brushstrokes; evidently the woman was at an earlier stage holding a somewhat crumpled handkerchief, possibly done only in the underpainting. Alongside this, in the hand on the left, one can see an interruption in the light image of the back of the hand that runs parallel to the present edge of the sleeve and to the underlying

Fig. 2. Detail (1 : 1)



Fig. 3. Detail (1 : 1)



strokes that are apparent at the surface in the intervening zone (see *Paint layer*, DESCRIPTION). These features taken together suggest that this hand was initially more covered by the dark sleeve.

Signature

At the lower left, by the elbow, in dark brown <*Rbrandt/f.*>. The scirpt is firm but so irregular as to rule out authenticity. The contraction of the name is, moreover, most unusual.

Varnish

No special remarks.

4. Comments

See under the entry for the companion-piece, no. A 140. To that must be added that the suspicion that the panel was, at the top, so closely framed for a long time that a strip of the paint was masked (see under *Paint layer*, CONDITION) is borne out by the fact that in the catalogue of the Julienne sale in 1767, and in that of the coll. Catherine II, the painting was described as about 7 cm less in height that it is today.

5. Documents and sources

See entry no. A 140.

6. Graphic reproductions

None.

7. Copies

For the testamentary provisions on these, see no. A 140, *5. Documents and sources*.

1. Canvas 65 × 54 cm, Chatsworth, Devonshire Collections inv. no. 145 (examined November 1987, E.v.d.W.). Signed and dated at lower left: *Domer (f 16)44* (see A 140 fig. 6). Cf. W. Schulz in: *O.H.* 92 (1978), pp. 69–105, esp. 95 no. I. The picture shows the same sitter similarly dressed but seen slightly more from the side — and thus at approximately the same angle (in reverse) as the sitter in the companion-piece — and reduced to a bust. For an interpretation of these differences, see no. A 140 under *7. Copies*, 1. Bredius concluded from them that this was not a copy after Rembrandt's original, but rather an independent product by Lambert Doomer, and pointed in this context to a passage in Baertjen Martens will of 23 May 1662 saying 'en sal daerenboven oock voor hem behouden het Conterfeijtsel van haer Testatrice, door hem selffs gemaeckt' (and he will moreover [i.e. apart from Rembrandt's originals] keep the portrait of her, the testatrix, made by himself) (A. Bredius, 'Rembrandtiana', in: *O.H.* 28, 1910, pp. 2–3). According to W. Schulz (op. cit., p. 95), this work was more likely identical with a picture of Baertje Martens in her kitchen cleaning fish, painted by Lambert Doomer, mentioned in his will and in the inventory of his possessions, both drawn up in 1700.

2. Canvas, dimensions unknown, illustrated by: W. Martin, *Bulletin van den Nederlandschen Oudheidkundigen Bond*, 2nd series,

2 (1909), p. 127, at that time in the coll. Pichou in Paris. Judging from the reproduction, it shows the original framed much more tightly at the top, and the facial type and expression are poorly caught. Possibly this copy formed a pair with a copy of the man's portrait at Braunschweig (see no. A 140, *7. Copies*, 2).

8. Provenance

— In the possession of Lambert Doomer, subsequently in that of Hermanus Vorster, the son of one of his sisters (see no. A 140, *5. Documents and Sources* and *8. Provenance*).
— Together with its pendant in coll. Antoine (or Anthony?) Cousin, London, from no later than *c.* 1730/35 (see no. A 140); evidently in the Anthony Cousein sale, London 8–9 February 1750 (Lugt 714), 1st day no. 54: 'A Woman's Head, its Companion — Rembrandt' (£43. 1s 0d).
*— Coll. De Julienne, sale Paris 30 March — 22 May 1767 (Lugt 1603), no. 132: 'Rembrandt van Ryn. Un très beau & bon Tableau peint sur bois qui porte 25 pouces 3 lignes de haut, sur 19 pouces 3 lignes de large [= 68.1 × 51.9 cm]. Il représente un Portrait de femme vue de face & à mi-corps, elle est assise, les mains l'une dans l'autre; son habillement est noir garni d'hermine; sa coëffure est composée d'une cornette blanche, elle porte au col une fraise' (1155 livres to Remy, one of the auctioneers or, according to a note in a copy in the R.K.D., to 'Le Prince de Gallen'). Probably, together with no. 128: 'La mère de Rembrandt' (Br. 361) purchased by D.A. Golitsyn, Russian *chargé d'affaires* in Paris from 1765 to 1768, who bought for Catherine II[2].
— Coll. Empress Catherine II of Russia. *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. in The Hermitage Museum, Leningrad), no. 98: 'Paul Rembrant. La Mere de Rembrant Beau Portrait, bien de couleur et de la plus belle expression. Demi figure, Sur bois. Haut 15½ V [erchokk] Large 12 V [= 68.8 × 53.3 cm]'.

9. Summary

See entry A 140.

REFERENCES

1 Y. Kuznetsov in: *Rembrandt Harmensz. van Rijn. Paintings from Soviet Museums*, Leningrad [*c.* 1971], no. 12.
2 V. Loewinson-Lessing in: ibid, pp. 7–8.

A 142 Saskia as Flora

1641

DRESDEN, STAATLICHE KUNSTSAMMLUNGEN DRESDEN, GEMÄLDEGALERIE ALTE MEISTER, CAT. 1979, NO. 1562

HDG 609; BR. 108; BAUCH 264; GERSON 226

Fig. 1. Panel 97.7 × 82.2 cm



1. Summarized opinion

An authentic work, reasonably well preserved in vital areas, and probably reliably signed and dated 1641.

2. Description of subject

A young woman is seen in dark surroundings, square-on and knee-length, and is lit from above and slightly to the left. The upper body leans slightly and the head rather more to the left, and her right hand holds a red flower (a carnation) towards the viewer, on whom her gaze is fixed. The left hand, fingers slightly apart, is held against her breast. A dark cap with a shiny gold ornamented band across the front is worn over curling hair that falls in loose locks over the forehead and in one long lock across the front of the lefthand shoulder. Her low-cut red velvet dress has sleeves reaching to just below the elbow that are, as may be seen from the lefthand one, decorated at the bottom and further up towards the shoulder with crosswise slashed bands. Beneath this garment she wears a white pleated shirt covering her bosom to the right and with cuffs projecting slightly below the sleeves of the dress. On the left the shoulder and breast are covered with a brownish, green-striped shawl of transparent material through which one sees the zigzag upper edge of the shirt; this is kept in place in front of the body by her left hand held against her breast, while on the right it is draped over her upper arm. She has long eardrops with pear-shaped pearls, and around the neck wears a red glistening cord (a chain of coral?) and a pearl necklace with a jewelled pendant; at the wrist on the right there are two bracelets. A gold chain with stones encircles her waist, and a second is draped diagonally down from the left across the folds of her skirt. On the left a few flowers including (according to information kindly provided by Dr S. Segal, Amsterdam) an opium poppy lie on a vaguely-lit table.

3. Observations and technical information

Working conditions

Examined in May 1970 (B.H., E.v.d.W.) in good light and out of the frame. An X-ray film of the head (by Dr M. Meier-Siem, Hamburg) was available later.

Support

DESCRIPTION: Oak panel, grain vertical, 97.7 × 82.2 cm, thickness *c.* 2 cm. Single plank. Back bevelled, in part irregularly, along all four sides; the width of bevelling along the top is about 6 cm and on the right *c.* 4 cm, on the left it ranges from 5 cm at the top to 2 cm at the bottom, and along the bottom from *c.* 5 cm at the left to *c.* 6 cm at the right. A crack 13 cm long runs from the top edge, a little to the right of centre, where the panel has been strengthened at the back.
SCIENTIFIC DATA: Dendrochronology (Prof. Dr J. Bauch and Prof. Dr D. Eckstein, Hamburg) showed a radial board, undatable.

Ground

DESCRIPTION: A tint tending to yellow-brown, visible only in thin places in the arm and fingertips on the right and showing through in the right background, appears to belong to the ground.
SCIENTIFIC DATA: Kühn[1] found chalk in the ground.

Paint layer

CONDITION: So far as can be judged through a thick layer of yellowed varnish, the painting is reasonably well preserved in the vital areas. The background has been overpainted, in a broad zone all round the figure, with a thickish brown paint; this is heaviest around the head, where a pentimento growing through may have given cause for the overpainting (see DESCRIPTION). The black cap, too, seems to have been overpainted, as have — to judge by the craquelure — parts of the hair below and along the headband and on both sides of the face. The contours of the shoulders and arms have probably been somewhat affected by the overpainting of adjacent areas of background. A few restorations can be seen in the left arm and immediately above the chain round the waist. The X-ray shows slight paint-loss in the forehead. Craquelure: shrinkage cracks are found in the overpainted parts of the background, with heavy cracking in the parts close to the head and light cracking in the hair. The face has a fine craquelure with a horizontal and vertical pattern.
DESCRIPTION: A relief is found to a slight extent in the head, rather more in the quite thickly painted jewels, and especially in the red flower in the woman's hand. The grain of the panel is visible virtually everywhere. Outside the overpainted areas, the background is on the right in a somewhat translucent brown done with a visible brushstroke; towards the top this becomes a more opaque grey-brown that is also found on the left in the areas of background furthest out.

The lit parts of the face are painted heavily in pale flesh tints with short and readily-followed brushstrokes, while the shadows along the chin and jaw and in the neck have similarly thick greyish tints applied with longer strokes; along the underside of the chin strokes of a lighter grey indicate a reflexion of light. A fairly thick, reddish grey-brown is used for the shadow under the nose. Highlights are applied on the tip of the nose and the chin, and some red in the cheeks, most so on the right in the transition to shadow. The eyebrows are scarcely indicated. The borders of the eyelids are done carefully, with red. Both eyes are treated the same — round pupils in black with a dot of light in white at the upper left, dark-rimmed grey irises, and a thickly painted, even white of the eye with highlights. The bright red lips are separated by a mouth-line in quite thick black, and the lower lip has no clear border at the bottom. The parts of the hair where the original treatment has survived — the curls on the forehead and that hanging down over the lefthand shoulder — are vague but suggestive, as is the shiny headband painted deftly in yellow-brown with light yellow catchlights. It can be seen from the paint relief that at an earlier stage the woman had a taller headdress: today this area forms part of a background that has, as we have described, been overpainted; this does not however preclude the reduction in the size of the headdress having been an autograph change.

The pearl of the lefthand eardrop is shown in various shades of grey with a white catchlight; the other eardrop is done in grey-brown. In the neck and breast area, where the pale flesh colour merges fluidly into the greyish shadow, the cord (or coral chain?) is done crisply in a variety of red tints, while the pearls are painted relatively precisely in grey with thick white catchlights; a translucent brown placed on top of the skin colour indicates the shadow cast by the pearl necklace.

The hand on the right is painted fairly smoothly, with mostly horizontal brushstrokes and fine nuances of tone that give a convincing suggestion of the modelling. The paint is very thin at the fingertips (and possibly a little worn); the shadows between the fingers are in dark brown, and reflected light from the dress on the little finger is shown in red. The strokes on the wrist and arm follow the curve of the shape; the spatial relationship shown by the hanging loops of the bracelets is highly effective. In the lefthand arm and hand the flesh colour runs from a pale tint in the forearm and wrist to ruddy and widely varying tints in the hand; in the wrist the brushstrokes partly follow the form, alternating with short strokes that enhance the modelling. The brushwork is relaxed in the lit parts of the hand; strong strokes of dark grey mark the shadows, and the three fingers furthest to the right have reflexions of light shown in red. The flower is depicted with a heavy bright red and dark red impasto, worked up with touches of yellow and white.

The pleats in the shirt are executed in grey-brown and off-white, with long brushstrokes, and the upstanding neckband with touches of a thick white where it catches the light. The transparent material of the shawl is rendered in subdued browns and yellows with green stripes, and the edge of the shirt that shows through it is shown by a zigzag line of brown. The short, broken-up folds in the velvet overgarment are shown with loose strokes of subdued red and shadows in deep black; the sleeve on the left is given sheens of light done in an ochre-yellow. The projecting shirt-cuff is worked up with dabs of thick white and bordered at the bottom by the cast shadow on the arm, done in a reddish brown and drawn last. The rendering of the table on the left is rather indistinct, and that of the blooms and leaves lying on it quite lacking in form.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: Kühn[1] described four paint samples as containing white lead, bone black, yellow ochre, yellow lake and Kassel brown; in the flower he found red lake, and in the overgarment red lake and a little vermilion.

X-Rays

In the X-ray available for part of the head and the adjacent part of the background to the left, the image of the lit areas is patchy with chaotic brushstrokes especially around the eyes and the lower parts of the face. This may perhaps be due to a rather carelessly applied overpainting. Part of the background shows up fairly light; the reserve left for the head is bordered at the top approximately in line with the pentimento of a taller headdress noted at the paint surface. Within this reserve there is a light curved zone that roughly coincides with the present upper edge of the head.

There has been modest paint-loss in the forehead; cracks in the paint layer around the head apparent at the surface are also visible in the X-ray.

Signature

At bottom left by the edge of the painting, in dark grey and with the first four letters barely or no longer legible <....*randt. f 1641*>. What has survived shows a relaxed and spontaneous script, and makes a reasonably convincing impression of authenticity.

Varnish

A fairly thick layer of yellowed varnish.

4. Comments

Though to some extent exhibiting fresh features, no. A 142 offers so many characteristic traits of Rembrandt's work from around 1640 that there can be no doubt that it is an authentic work that on the evidence of the confidence-inspiring signature and date comes from the year 1641. The way a for the most part — other than, especially, in the pearls — fairly relaxed brushstroke is used with a rhythm typical of Rembrandt to provide subtle modelling of form in flesh areas, clothing and hair, without giving them entirely firm definition, matches a tendency also apparent in commissioned portraits from this period. This applies to some extent to the head in the Amsterdam *Portrait of a young woman (Maria Trip?)* of 1639 (no. A 131), but particularly to the portraits of the Doomer couple in New York and Leningrad from 1640 (nos. A 140 and A 141), and that of Agatha Bas in Buckingham Palace (no. A 145) which like the present work dates from 1641. With the first of these it shares, in particular, the lighting; because of the strong light coming from above and just slightly from the left only a very small part of the face is in shadow, the ridge of the nose plays hardly any role as a plastic element, and the suggestion of plasticity comes mainly from the cast shadow below the nose and the modelling of the area round the mouth and chin. A similar treatment (though with a result that is less attractive because of a certain emptiness) can be seen in the 1643 *Portrait of a woman with a fan* in the Duke of Westminster's collection (Br. 363).

As to the genesis of the painting, it is even evident to the naked eye that the woman's headdress was originally taller, as Bode[2] already commented in 1900. It is not entirely clear whether this was reduced to its present strikingly flat shape by the later overpainting of the background, which runs round the whole of the figure, or whether Rembrandt himself extended the background. The available X-ray allows no definite conclusion, though one can interpret a trace of radioabsorbent paint that shows up in a similar way to the background paint along the first reserve, and follows much the same line as the presentday contour, as a change made by the artist himself to reduce the size of the headgear. An — again equivocal — piece of documentary evidence in this respect is a small pen drawing in Munich (see *J. Copies*, 1; fig. 5) which Kauffmann published in 1919 as an autograph preliminary study for the painting[3]. Valentiner[4] called it an old copy after the painting; Wegner[5] ascribed it tentatively and unconvincingly to Nicolaes Maes, and Sumowski[6] just as unconvincingly to Bol. The drawing is unmistakeably connected with the painting; the most important differences lie in the figure being seen down to the knees, and in a high, round headdress with a band running across the forehead no vestige of which is found in the painting. The drawing bears a spurious signature *Rf*, and the lack of mastery of line rules out an attribution to Rembrandt. One wonders if this might be a scribbled sketch of the painting done by a pupil at a moment when Rembrandt had not yet overpainted the tall headdress. If that were the case, it remains possible that Rembrandt himself later cut down the size of the headdress; it may be that later on this correction became visible, and prompted the subsequent overpainting that today determines the contour of the head and possibly also to some extent that of the rest of the figure. One must, then, asssume that the spurious signature on the drawing is a later addition, as Sumowski said. If however the drawing is (as is not wholly impossible) an old but later forgery, one would have to conclude that the painting left Rembrandt's studio in the state with the tall headdress, and that only a later overpainting brought about the change.

A fresh element in this work, looked at among Rembrandt's paintings from *c.* 1640, is first of all the

Fig. 2. Detail (1 : 1)



Fig. 3. X-Ray

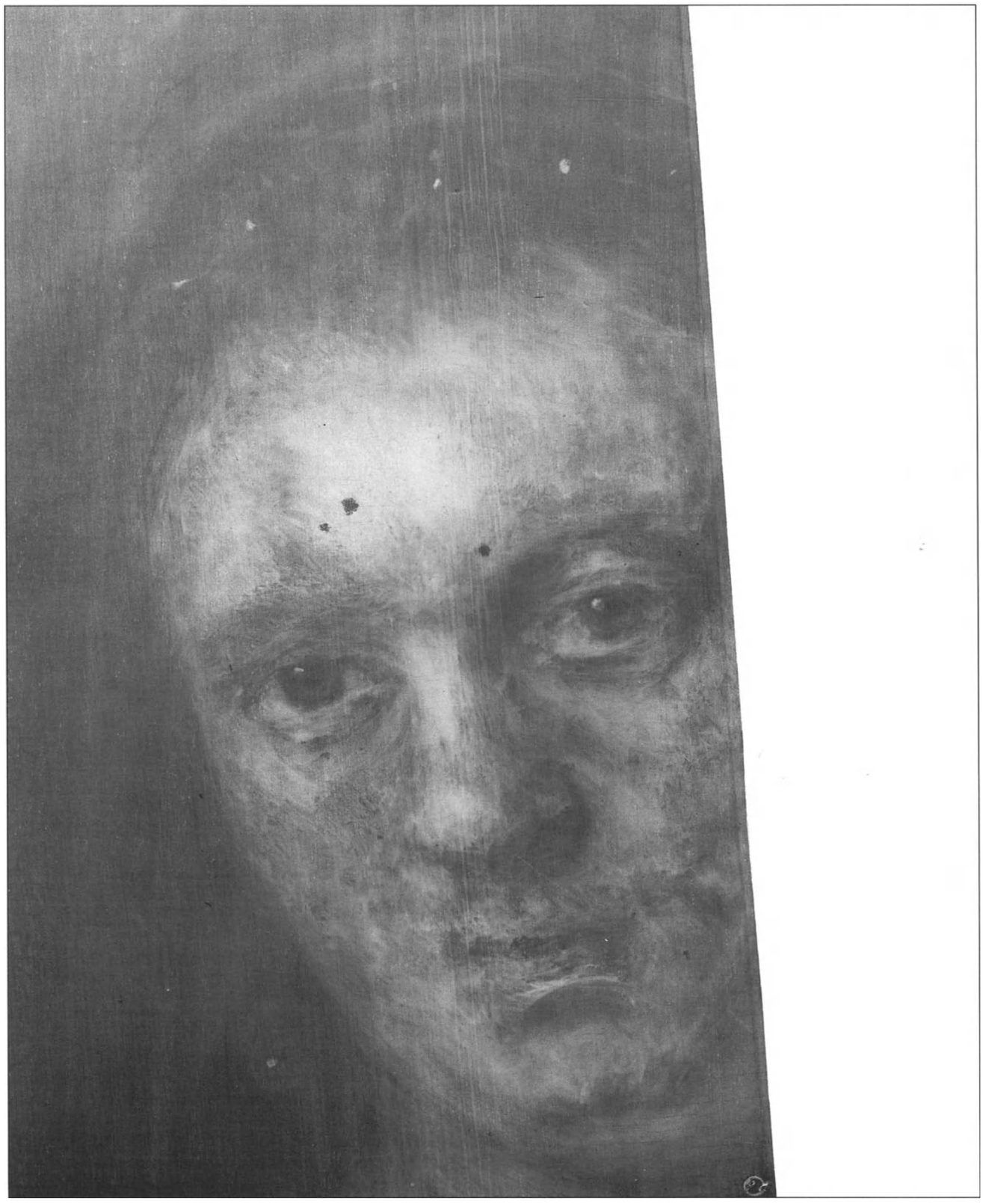


Fig. 4. Detail (1 : 1.5)



colour range. The various tints of warm red in the velvet garment are very dominant, and there is no reason to suppose that matters would have been any different before the partial overpainting. A close analogy for this can be found only in the *Half-length figure of Saskia* in Kassel (no. A 85), which strengthens the suspicion that the latter painting was completed only in the early 1640s. Another new feature is the strong emphasis, in the frontal pose and gaze and the gesture with the right hand, on confrontation between the sitter and viewer (somewhat comparable to the treatment of the *Portrait of Agatha Bas*), and we shall discuss below the likelihood that both these elements have to do with the impression made on Rembrandt by Venetian paintings.

The strong involvement between the woman sitter and the viewer does much to give the painting its character, and prompts the question of its iconographic significance. For a long time the work was regarded as the portrait of a young woman from Rembrandt's circle of acquaintance, in the 18th century it was seen as that of his daughter (see *6. Graphic reproductions*, 1 and *8. Provenance*), and later still it was believed to be of his wife Saskia van Uylenburgh. It is certainly not impossible that the sitter does show the features of Saskia — there does seem to be a facial resemblance to the Berlin silverpoint drawing of 1633 (Ben. 427) — but this does not answer the question of what the picture is intended to convey. The erotic suggestiveness of the shirt-front hanging open, accentuated by the left hand holding the shawl that covers the right breast, and perhaps also of the emphatic offering of a flower to the viewer, show that the painting has to be allotted a more specific meaning. Stechow[7] was the first to point out the link with Titian's *Flora*, now in the Uffizi in Florence and before 1641 for some years in the collection of Alfonso López in Amsterdam (cf. E.M. Bloch in: *Gaz. d. B.-A.* 6th series 29, 1946, pp. 175–186). Despite a difference in pose and direction of the gaze — Titian's figure lacks the direct contact with the onlooker — it seems plausible to think that Titian's *Flora* did indeed form Rembrandt's starting-point, and provides the key to

the painting's iconographic significance. The latter notion has also been advanced by Held[8], who using the significant title 'Flora, goddess and courtisan' argued that Rembrandt's painting has — because of the connotations of the goddess of Spring and flowers — the same meaning as Titian's work, i.e. that of her offering her body, symbolized in the flowers standing for sensual pleasure. It seems doubtful, however, that such a meaning must be interpreted on the personal plane, as Held assumes. It is more likely that Flora should be seen as the actual subject of the painting; Bauch[9] gave it this title and (like Schwartz[10] and Tümpel[11] after him) assumed, probably rightly, that the sitter has the facial features of Saskia. Schwartz links with this the amazing conclusion that Saskia is being depicted as a venal woman, while Tümpel, hardly more convincingly, believes that the fertility that was one of the attributes of the goddess Flora might be an allusion to Saskia's pregnancy.

Though the motif and iconography link Rembrandt's painting with Titian's *Flora*, its composition seems to reveal the impression made on Rembrandt by another Venetian painting — Lorenzo Lotto's 1527 *Portrait of Andrea Odoni*, now at Hampton Court. This work, which in 1660 was to be presented to Charles II of England with the Dutch Gift, was in the later 1630s probably already in the collection of Gerard Reynst in Amsterdam — though the identification with 'Het conterfeitsel van een man op syn anticqs. Halve figuer, seer raer, van Titiaan' (The likeness of a man in the antique style. Half-length, very fine, by Titian), seen in Reynst's collection by Aernout van Buchel on 4 September 1639, is not certain: the phrase 'op syn anticqs' means à l'antique', not 'with his Antiques'; (cf. A.-M.S. Logan, *The 'Cabinet' of the brothers Gerard and Jan Reynst*, Amsterdam-Oxford-New York, 1979, pp. 56–57, 130–132). It is quite possible that Rembrandt found in this the prototype for the head tipped to the left and seen almost square-on, and the pose of the two hands, the outstretched right one of which makes an unprecedented direct contact between sitter and viewer. Though his figure lacks the strong accent on width that marks the Lotto, his painting forms — together with the London *Self-portrait* of 1640 (no. A 139) — strong evidence for the influence exerted by 16th-century Venetian paintings on the artist around 1640. The same is probably true for the colour-scheme, in which a warm red dominates. True, this coloristic character cannot be traced back to Lotto's *Odoni*, but it was probably influenced by other Venetian paintings even though one cannot now point to any particular work that Rembrandt could have taken as his example.

Fig. 5. After Rembrandt, pen drawing 11.1 × 6.2 cm (1 : 1). Munich, Staatliche Graphische Sammlung



5. Documents and sources

None.

6. Graphic reproductions

1. Etching by Anton Heinrich Riedel (Dresden 1763–after 1824), inscribed: *Rembrand p: - A: H: Riedel f: / La Fille de Rembrand.* Reproduces the painting in reverse with no significant changes from its present state. Another print by the same artist, mentioned in Dresden catalogues and by Hofstede de Groot[12] but not seen by us, is dated 1781.

7. Copies

1. Pen drawing 11.1 × 6.2 cm. Munich, Staatliche Graphische Sammlung, inv. no. 1517 (fig. 5). At lower right, a spurious signature *Rf.* A female figure is sketched with would-be brilliant lines, and shows such similarities with no. A 142 that the connexion is unmistakeable. Kauffmann[3] published the drawing as a study for the painting, but the Rembrandt attribution is untenable; tentative attributions to Nicolaes Maes by Wegner[5], and to Bol by Sumowski[6], are likewise unconvincing. The drawing is either the work of a pupil after the painting, or a later forgery (as the false signature would suggest). For the consequences of this, see *4. Comments* above.

8. Provenance

Identified by Hofstede de Groot[12] with: 'Een Pourtrait van een Vrouw met een Roosie in de hand, nooyt beter, of uytvoeriger van hem gesien door den selve [Rembrand van Ryn]. Hoog 2 v. 9 ½ d. breed 2 v. 3½ d. [= 87.6 × 71.9 cm]', coll. G. Bicker van Zwieten, sale The Hague 12 ff. April 1741 (Lugt 537), no. 137. This must be incorrect; the dimensions seem too small, and the present work had moreover already in 1742 been acquired from another private collection.

– Coll. Araignon, Paris. Acquired from this collection in 1742 for the Elector's Gemäldegalerie in Dresden, through the agent De Brais[13]. Described in [J.A. Riedel and C.F. Wenzel] *Verzeichnisz der Gemälde in der Churfürstl. Gallerie zu Dresden*, Leipzig 1771, no. 194: '[Rembrant van Ryn], Die Tochter Rembrants, welche eine Hand auf ihrem Busen hat, und mit der andern eine Nelke hält. Ein Kniestück, Auf Holz 3 Fusz 6 Zoll hoch, 2 Fusz 11 Zoll breit [= 101.9 × 87.7 cm]'.

9. Summary

In terms of both interpretation and execution no. A 142 is so close to a number of Rembrandt works from the years around 1640 that the signature and date of 1641, in themselves confidence-inspiring, merit belief. New features in Rembrandt's style — in the colour-scheme and in the emphasis on contact with the viewer — are probably ascribable to the impression that early 16th-century Venetian paintings in Amsterdam collections at the time made on him. Titian's *Flora* seems to have influenced in particular both motif and subject-matter, and Lorenzo Lotto's *Portrait of Andrea Odoni* the composition. The dominant warm red is probably also due to Venetian influence.

Originally the sitter must have worn a taller headdress; this was overpainted, possibly by Rembrandt himself. At all events, a later overpainting of the background in a broad zone round the figure must -- at least along the top of the head — have to some extent affected the original contour.

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2 W. Bode and C. Hofstede de Groot, *Rembrandt* IV, Paris 1900, p. 27.
3 H. Kauffmann, 'Eine Vorzeichnung Rembrandts zur Dresdener Saskia von 1641', *Repertorium für Kunstwissenschaft* 41 (1919), pp. 34–56.
4 W.R. Valentiner, *Rembrandt. Des Meisters Handzeichnungen* II, Stuttgart-Berlin [1934] (Kl.d.K. 32), p. 416 (under no. 674).
5 W. Wegner, *Die niederländischen Handzeichnungen des 15.–18. Jahrhunderts*, Berlin 1973 (Kataloge der Staatlichen Graphischen Sammlung München I), p. 106 no. 751.
6 Sumowski *Drawings* I, no. 187.
7 W. Stechow, 'Rembrandt and Titian', *The Art Quarterly* 5 (1942), pp. 135–147, esp. 141.
8 J.S. Held, 'Flora, goddess and courtisan', *De artibus opuscula XL. Essays in honor of Erwin Panofsky*, New York 1961, p. 201–218, esp. 218.
9 Bauch 264.
10 Schwartz 1984, fig. 233.
11 Tümpel 1986, cat. no. 107.
12 HdG 609.
13 *Die Staatliche Gemäldegalerie zu Dresden. Vollständiges beschreibendes Verzeichnis der älteren Gemälde...I. Die romanischen Länder*, Dresden-Berlin 1929, p. XX.

A 143 Portrait of the Mennonite preacher Cornelis Claesz. Anslo and his wife Aeltje Gerritsdr. Schouten

1641

BERLIN (WEST), STAATLICHE MUSEEN PREUSSISCHER KULTURBESITZ, GEMÄLDEGALERIE, CAT.NO. 828 L

HDG 620; BR. 409; BAUCH 536; GERSON 234

1. Summarized opinion

An authentic work, reliably signed and dated 1641, that — apart from the loss of the two top corners — is very well preserved.

2. Description of subject

Anslo is seated to the right of centre behind his work table, in a corner of his study, and turns to his wife who sits beside him on the extreme right. The viewer looks slightly upwards at the lefthand side and front of the table. Anslo sits behind the table to the right, in front of a curtained bookcase set against the righthand side-wall and making a right angle with an adjoining bookcase that reaches halfway up the rear wall and of which one sees the lefthand side. The lower bookshelves are deeper than those at the top, so that the side narrows in steps further up. A curtain leaves only the far lefthand part of the bookcase visible.

The table is covered by two cloths — a yellowish-green one with a wide ornamented edge, laid square on the table, reaches down over the middle of the ball-leg that can be seen down to the start of the rail; a heavy oriental rug is thrown at an angle on top of this, and hangs down in a point to the side and in heaped-up folds on the corner of the table at the front. In the middle of the table there is a large, open book lying on a simple reading-slope. In front of this, towards the viewer, there is a closed and unbound book with a curling page, and a loose, curling sheet of paper. Behind the reading-slope stands a large two-armed brass candelabra, with the lower part hidden behind the books; one sees a long vertical shaft, halfway up which a sliding section carries the two arms with their candleholders. An extinguished candle is in the holder on the left, with snuffing-scissors lying on the drip-cup, while the righthand holder has a burned-out stump of candle with no visible wick.

Anslo turns in his armchair towards the right; with his right hand on the armrest he leans to one side, putting his weight on the left elbow, which is supported on the other armrest as he gestures with his outthrust hand towards the book on the reading-slope. His head is turned to speak to his wife, so that it is not quite square-on to the viewer. He is clad in a long, fur-trimmed tabbard worn over a black doublet closed with a line of buttons down the front, and has a simple, stiffly-pleated collar and a broad-brimmed hat.

His wife sits almost in left profile on a folding chair, her head slightly tilted towards the viewer as if her further ear is craned to hear what Anslo is saying. Her eyes follow his gesture towards the open book on the table. Her hands rest on a handkerchief in her lap, which she grasps with the left. She wears a black, fur-trimmed *vlieger*-coat, a pleated collar and a cambric cap.

The light falls from the left and illuminates the lefthand side of the table and the still-life of books, the side of Anslo's face nearest the light and his outstretched hand, and the face and hands of his wife, who is looking directly towards the light.

3. Observations and technical information

Working conditions

Examined in November 1968 (E.v.d.W., S.H.L.) in good daylight and in the frame on the wall. Forty X-ray films together covering the whole surface, and a print of the mosaic, were received later.

Support

DESCRIPTION: Canvas, lined, sight size 173.7 × 207.6 cm (dimensions of canvas according to museum catalogue 176 × 210 cm). Single piece; the upper corners are rounded, and loose segments of wood fill in the spaces between the radiused corners and the rectangular frame.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: Cusping is clearly apparent along all four sides; at the top and bottom this varies in pitch from *c.* 7 to 13 cm and extends some 15 cm into the weave, while that at the left and righthand sides has a pitch between 9.5 and 11 cm and stretches inwards *c.* 17 cm. Along the top, righthand and bottom edges, the X-ray image of the paint layer (or of the topmost layer of the ground) terminates along an irregular border beyond which, for reasons difficult to grasp, the weave of the original canvas shows up with a stronger contrast. Threadcount: 15 vertical threads/cm (13.5–16.5) and 18.8 horizontal threads/cm (17.5–20). In view of the more modest spread in the horizontal threads, and especially because of the width of the canvas, it must be assumed that these are the warp threads. Given the similarity in weave density and characteristics it is quite possible that the canvas comes from the same bolt as that on which the 1640 *Self-portrait* in the National Gallery in London (no. A 139) was painted.

Ground

DESCRIPTION: A light layer appearing yellow can be seen in the upper lefthand corner, and colours the thinly painted areas of the man's and woman's clothing, Anslo's beard and hat, the fringe of the oriental rug, the candelabra and a number of other areas.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

Paint layer

CONDITION: Apart from one or two missing flakes of paint, the painting is in excellent condition. Craquelure: the entire surface shows a clear canvas craquelure. To either side of centre two pairs of parallel cracked lines run vertically from top to bottom, and are probably caused by earlier supporting battens in the stretcher. Similar lines fanning out diagonally through the woman's figure from the top right may have to do with unsatisfactory stretching in the past.

DESCRIPTION: Apart from the woman's face and hands, which are executed meticulously with small brushstrokes, and the highly-detailed candelabra, the whole painting is done broadly and with great élan with brushwork that can be followed almost everywhere, and using both translucent and opaque paints; the latter are applied fairly thickly in the still-life of books on the table and the handkerchief in the woman's lap. At many translucently-painted places the underlying light ground can be sensed.

Anslo's head is in the light painted fairly evenly in flesh colour with some pink on the cheek and wing of the nose and a thick dab of pink for the earlobe. The eye on the left is shaped with lines of black and grey, with small lines of brown showing the creases in the skin. The round black pupil stands in a very thinly done dark-grey iris; on the left below the black line of eyelashes there is a tiny catchlight, on the border between the iris and the white of the eye done in grey. The righthand corner of the eye is coloured with some carmine red, and that on the left with carmine red and a brighter red. The thick eyebrow comprises a narrow curved line and a broad brushstroke in grey-black. The eye on the right is executed in a similar fashion and just as effectively, though with an even more thinly applied paint below the heavy eyebrow. The most striking feature here is the line of eyelashes built up with a variety of strokes and on the right projecting out over the thickish flesh colour; the latter continues down over the cheek much more thinly so that the weave of the canvas contributes to the paint image. At the mouth the very thinly done red of the lower lip is somewhat overlapped by the light brown of the chin area, and in the middle of it the light ground shows through so that a sheen of light is suggested. The top lip is done wet-in-wet with small strokes of red and brown; between the lips the broad gap of the mouth is in black with brown-grey edges. The black beard and moustache are painted with long and mostly curling strokes, and worked up with undulating scratchmarks going down to the ground which shows through everywhere in the beard on the chin. On the left along the cheek the hairs of the beard are rendered with small strokes of black and grey, running with the lie of the hair-growth.

Fig. 1. Canvas 176 × 210 cm

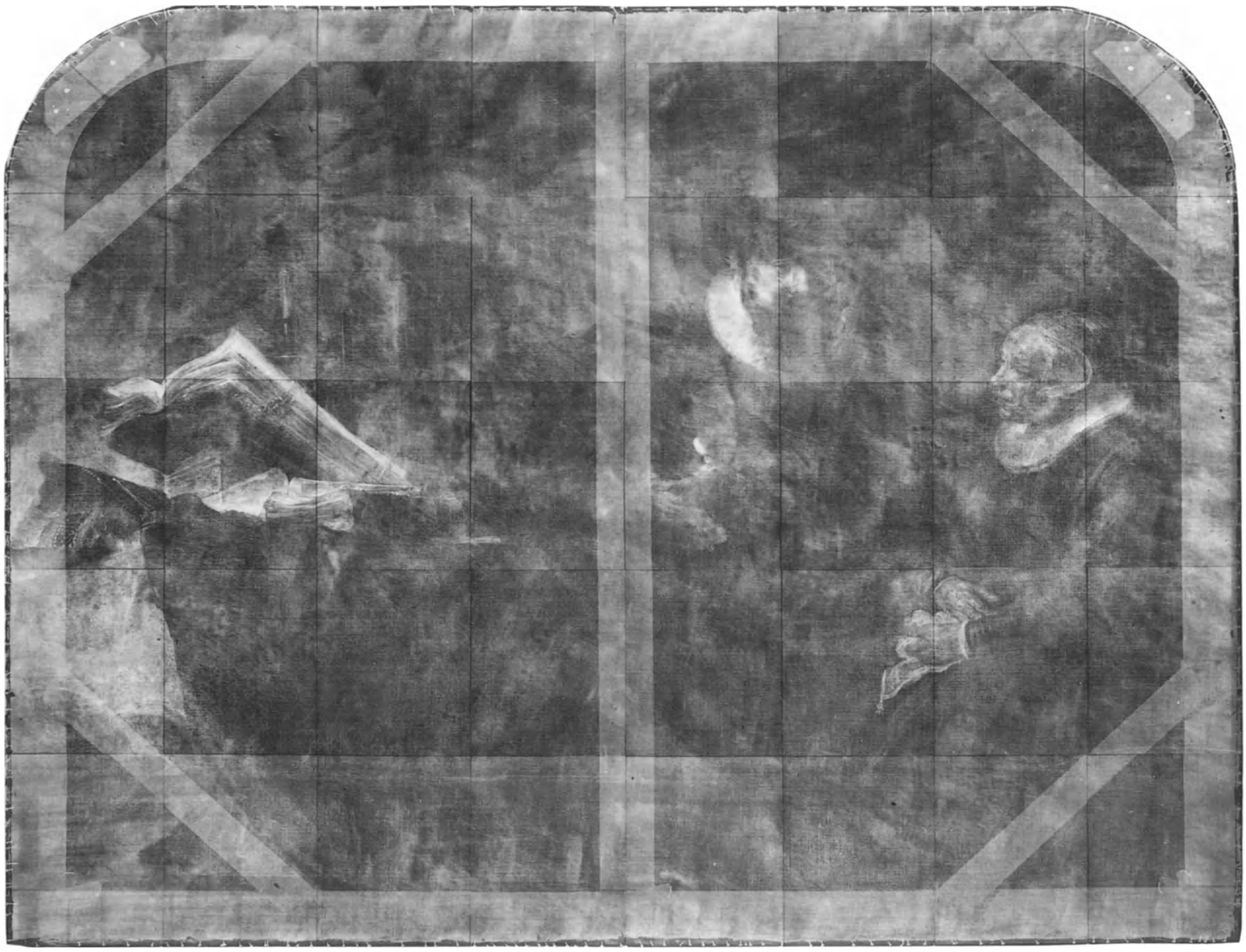


The right hand seen in shadow is done very broadly and with virtually no suggestion of form, in thin brown paint that at the righthand side merges into an opaque grey. The fold in the skin at the base of the thumb is shown by a line of shadow. The outstretched left hand has shadow on the back done in a grey-brown flesh colour, and otherwise executed in a light flesh colour with some red along the edge of the nail of the index finger; the same colour recurs in the folds of skin by the thumb. The tip of the thumb has a pink highlight. The contour of the index finger has been corrected along the top; the little finger has been shortened, as may be seen from the light paint that can be detected running on beneath the dark paint of the clothing.

Anslo's clothing is painted thinly in dark grey and black. The fur is convincingly rendered with brownish and greyish brushstrokes and touches plus a few thicker strokes, all placed so far apart from each other that the underlying light ground everywhere contributes to the effect. It also shines through in the left of the hat, painted with black contours and grey sheens of light. The white collar is given a fair degree of detail, with lines of grey for the pleats and white edgings of light at the ends which also enliven the grey part in the shadows. The collar has been somewhat reduced in size on the right and left.

Anslo's wife's brightly lit face is worked up very thoroughly, with clear modelling. The opaque paint is placed partly over a grey underlayer, with small strokes of red, various tints of pink, yellow and yellow-brown. The ridge of the nose comprises a relatively thick stroke of pink, the clearcut contour of which lies over the brown background. The modelling of the head is achieved by placing fine white highlights and a whitish reflexion of light from the collar on the lower jaw. Round black pupils are set in translucent grey irises, separated partly by a dark outline from the opaque greyish white used for the white of the eye. There are tiny, bright catchlights on the irises, which in the right eye form only a dot while in the left there is a small line parallel with the dark line of the eyelashes. The folds of the eyepouch are shadowed lightly with brown. The light eyebrow consists of some pink and red strokes with a little yellow. Her cambric cap is painted fluently in thin grey and opaque and occasionally thick white and dark grey for the decorative motifs. At the top of the forehead there is a line of opaque yellow running along the

Fig. 2. X-Ray



lace edge of the cap. Thick spots and strokes of white render the edgings of light along the folds at the rim of the white and grey collar.

Her hands are worked up just as thoroughly as the head, and because they are placed differently in the fall of light they are seen rather more in shadow and have greater plasticity. The skin is suggested with small paintstrokes in pink, pink-white and a little light yellow. On the backs of the hands some grey has been mixed into the wet paint. The shadows are in brown and light brown. The lower hand stands out against the white handkerchief with its light grey shadows, whose lace border is suggested with dabs of paint and, at the bottom, with small scratchmarks that expose the grey of the skirt.

The 'vlieger'-style garment is painted broadly and vigorously over a brown underpainting, in which at a number of places the ground shows through, using thin dark greys with thicker light grey sheens of light and thin black shadows in the folds. The brown underpainting is especially evident in the fur, which is painted in brown and grey strokes on top of broader and more heavily impasted paintstrokes that can still be made out in the relief.

The book still-life on the table is given considerable impasto with mostly long brushstrokes in an ochre-coloured paint, and with thinner, dark shadows and whitish edgings of light. The text on the pages is suggested by dark lines. Scratchmarks in the wet paint have been used for the edges of the pages of the book on the slope, and continue beneath the curling page which has been painted over them. The form and material of the shiny candelabra have been subtly yet firmly suggested with white sheens of light. The same care has been expended on the substance of the taller of the two candles, which seems once to have had a flame that is still detectable as a dark, sketchlike brush drawing in the underpainting. The dark area around it may be seen as an autograph retouch of an overgenerous reserve (figs. 12 and 13). The motifs in the heavy oriental rug are shown with broad strokes of black over a grey-brown basic tone. In the light the grey-brown takes on a reddish hue. The ground is especially apparent in the fringe, which is painted with long

Fig. 3. Detail (1 : 1.5)

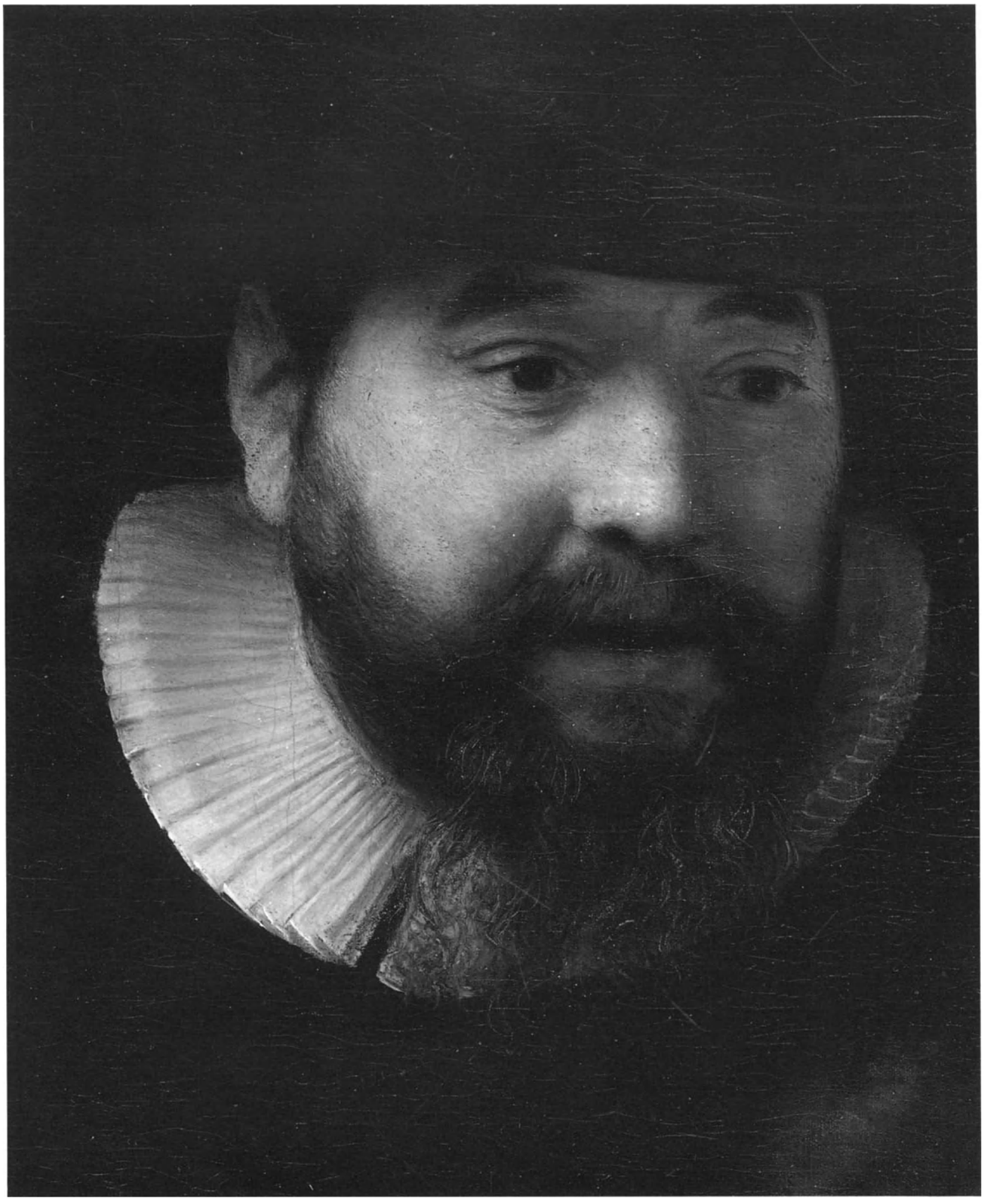


Fig. 4. Detail (1 : 1.5)



Fig. 5. Detail (1 : 1.5)



ochre-coloured and grey-brown brushstrokes. On the left, where the other side of the folded-back rug is seen in the light, the variegated knotting is rendered in green, red and a greenish ochre colour. The tablecloth underneath is painted thickly in ochre colour with green; browns predominate in the wide decorative edge, done wet-in-wet.

The background is in general painted translucently and with a diffuse rendering of form. The wall at the upper left is done in a translucent grey over an underlying layer of brown, in which broad strokes of the yellow ground show through. The grey covers rather more towards the bottom, and is entirely opaque around the still-life on the table. The bookcase is shown mostly in a translucent grey over a translucent brown underpainting. The books are indicated with some ochre colour, while the curtain consists of a more opaque grey, lighter and rather thicker on the folds above Anslo's shoulder. The bookcase against the side wall is executed in similar fashion, with curtains mainly in translucent brown but with a few more opaque areas.
SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

X-Rays

With one or two mostly minor exceptions the X-ray image matches that presented by the paint surface. Changes that may be seen as pentimenti include:
1. The righthand candle-holder originally held a candle of the same length as that now seen on the left.
2. The gap in Anslo's collar has no reserve for it in the white of the collar.
3. Only the thumb of Anslo's outstretched left hand is shown clearly. The contour correction to the index finger noted at the paint surface is seen vaguely, and the shortening of the little finger hardly if at all (this passage coincides, in the X-rays, with the light image of the supporting batten of the stretcher).
4. The two clasps that were originally on the righthand side of the book on the reading-slope, overlapping the fore-edge, have been touched out apart from the plate to which a locking peg has been added, and moved to the lefthand side of the book where one of them is seen.
5. Lines along the sides of the reading-slope seem to indicate that this was once lower, but as the position of the book is not shown one may conclude that the sides had ornamental mouldings.
6. The tablecloth underneath appears as a light area at the angular fold right up to the edge of the oriental rug, indicating that the triangular shadow beside the latter was not originally planned.

Signature

At the lower left on the frame of the table, in dark paint <*Rembrandt. f* (followed by a colon with a third dot alongside the upper one) *1641*>. The energetically written, regular script appears to be wholly authentic.

Varnish

A fairly heavy layer of yellowed varnish slightly hampers observation.

4. Comments

The obvious authenticity of no. A 143, evident from features of style and technique, is amply confirmed by trustworthy 18th-century statements about its provenance and a signature above suspicion. Due partly to its remarkably good state of preservation this major double portrait from 1641 forms, together with the *Night watch* dated a year later (no. A 146), an important benchmark for our knowledge of Rembrandt portraiture in the early 1640s. Both paintings have figures placed in subdued lighting in a fairly complicated space; here Anslo's gesture with his hand plays a role similar to that being made by the captain

Fig. 6. Detail (1 : 1.5)



in the *Night watch*. The low viewpoint from which the table with the books is seen, determines to a great extent the effect the painting makes (see, on this phenomenon in Rembrandt, H. Guratzsch in: *O.H.* 89, 1975, pp. 243–265, where the present work is not however mentioned). This probably has to do with the height at which a large painting like this would normally be hung, as Van de Waal has similarly assumed for the Amsterdam *Syndics of the Drapers Guild* (Br. 415; H. van de Waal in: *O.H.* 71, 1956, p. 67). Also remarkable is the asymmetrical composition, in which the perspective effect of the table and books counterbalances the figures placed in the righthand half of the picture. This must be termed a most unusual arrangement for a portrait composition in this period. Just as with earlier and later group portraits such as the 1632 *Anatomy lesson of Dr Tulp* (no. A 51), the 1633 *Portrait of the shipbuilder Jan Rijcksen and his wife* (no. A 77) and the 1642 *Night watch*, one gets the impression that when composing such large group portraits Rembrandt was to a great extent allowing himself to be guided by the ideas he was developing as an author of history paintings. Indeed, the closest analogy for the composition of this double portrait is to be found in one of his much earlier history paintings, the Melbourne *Two old men disputing* of 1628 (no. A 13) with which there is, apart from differences in format and lighting, a remarkable resemblance (in a mirror image) in the placing of the figures and their relation to a table laden with books.

In its execution the painting is striking through the sureness in the manner of painting coupled with

Fig. 7. Copy 1. J.M. Quinkhard, 1759, canvas 54 × 65 cm. Private collection



Fig. 8. Mezzotint by J. Boydell, 1781 (reproduced in reverse)



a carefully-thought-out distribution of colour- and light-values. The shapes are in general seen large and indicated broadly, in line with the large size of the painting and the effect that will be obtained by viewing it at some distance. Despite this, the heads and in particular Anslo's left hand exhibit an extremely subtle interplay of light, shade and reflexions of light.

In judging the execution allowance has to be made for the fact that the canvas undoubtedly originally had square corners at the top. It is however far from certain that it was a little wider to the right than it is now, as one might infer from both a copy by Jan Maurits Quinkhard from 1759 (fig. 7; see *7. Copies*, 1) and a print by Josiah Boydell from 1781 (fig. 8; see *6. Graphic reproductions*, 1). There are small differences between these two latter works — the relatively steep line given to the righthand contour of the woman's skirt in the print is closer to the original than that in the copy, where the contour has two convexities. The copy and print do not agree in their rendering of the chair she is sitting on; the detail of this is difficult to read in the original. Nonetheless, the print and copy — evidently produced independently of each other — do agree in showing more space between the figure and the righthand edge of the picture, and thus suggest that the original painting has lost a strip some 30 cm wide along that side. This conclusion is however contradicted by the edge of the canvas as described under *3. Support*.

Cornelis Claesz. Anslo (Amsterdam 1592–1646) came from a family of cloth merchants. His father Claes Claesz. (d. 1632), who was earlier believed to have been born in Anslo (i.e. Oslo) in Norway, in fact belonged to an Amsterdam family, as research by I.H. van Eeghen[1] has shown. Besides trading in cloth he was a preacher in the Waterland Mennonites, and in 1615/16 set up in the Egelantiersstraat in Amsterdam an almshouse for destitute old women, the Anslohofje (known since 1969 as the Claes Claesz Hofje Foundation). In 1611 Cornelis married Aeltje Gerritsdr. Schouten (d. 1657). Like his four brothers he followed his father's trade, and in 1617 became a preacher at the Grote Spijker, the church of the Waterland congregation. He published theological writings, amongst other things countering the ideas of his colleague Nittert Obbensz., which were regarded as Socianianism. After living on the Nieuwendijk and Rokin, he became in 1642 the owner of a new house built the previous year on the Oude Zijds Achterburgwal. Cornelis died in 1646; after the death of his widow in 1657 the estate totalled 80 000 guilders, while his seven children had already enjoyed generous gifts when they married.

Rembrandt portrayed Anslo not only in this double portrait but also on his own in an etching (B. 271), dated like the painting in 1641 (fig. 11). A red-chalk drawing showing the figure in the opposite direction, carefully signed and dated 1640, has survived (Ben. 758; London, The British Museum; fig. 10); its outlines have been traced for transfer, so it undoubtedly served as a working drawing for the etching. In the drawing Anslo is depicted with his head turned and sitting behind a table, gesturing with the hand on the left (which in the etching was to be his left hand) towards an open book while the other hand, holding a pen, rests on a book standing upright. A pen-case lies on the table with an inkpot beside it. Already in the first state of the etching an object has been added in the right background that is absent in the drawing; one can also see a nail in the wall behind Anslo. The object has been seen by Busch[2] as a painting taken down from the nail and propped up facing the wall, and interpreted as a significant component in the picture — signifying that God's word should be made known through words and not through images, a regular theme among the Mennonites.

While this drawing in some respects anticipates the composition of the painting, a further drawing also carefully signed and dated 1640 (Ben. 759; Paris,

Fig. 9. Rembrandt, *Portrait of Cornelis Claesz. Anslo*, 1640, red chalk, pen and wash with white body-colour, 24.6 × 20.1 cm (Ben. 759). Paris, Musée du Louvre, Département des arts graphiques (Coll. Rothschild)



Fig. 10. Rembrandt, *Portrait of Cornelis Claesz. Anslo*, 1640, red chalk 15.7 × 14.3 cm (Ben. 758). London, The British Museum



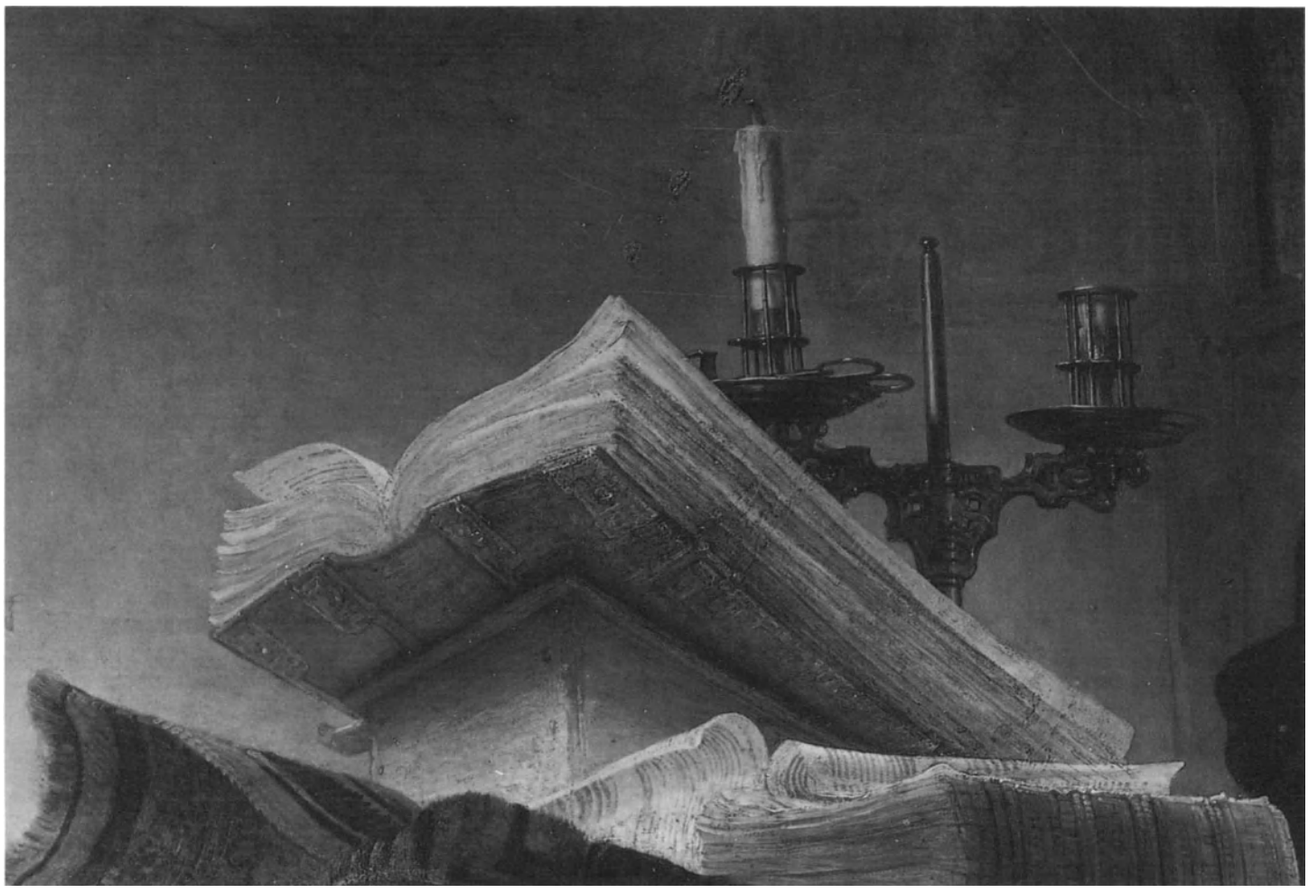
Fig. 11. Rembrandt, *Portrait of Cornelis Claesz. Anslo*, 1641, etching (B. 271) with a poem by J. van Vondel probably written by W. van der Laegh. London, The British Museum



Louvre, coll. Edmond de Rothschild; fig. 9) is even more directly related to it. Done in red chalk, pen and wash with white body-colour the latter drawing (24.6 × 20.1 cm) shows Anslo full-length, sitting in a chair in roughly the same pose as in the painting. Unlike the etching, it shows him stretching his gesturing left arm out in front of his body as he turns his head over his left shoulder, thus producing a spatial pattern of intersecting diagonals. The table, seen from a different angle, is to the left of the figure; on it a book is opened towards the viewer, and has clasps like that in the painting. Besides the fact that in the painting the table hides Anslo's legs, there are other differences: in the painting his head is turned rather less to the right (as it is in the red chalk drawing) while the gesturing hand is placed further to the left, so that the upper body seems to tilt over more and the three-dimensional effect of the figure is even stronger than in the drawing. The figure is made all the more preponderant by the perpective of the table and interior having been altered so that Anslo's chairback is less high.

One may wonder whether Rembrandt in fact needed this drawing, showing Anslo in the pose he was to give him in the painting. Drawings like this are exceptional as a preparation for his painted portraits, and the same is true of drawings for etched portraits. Possibly both drawings were done in advance at Anslo's request, in order to give him an idea of what Rembrandt was intending. Both would then be seen as a *modello*; the fact that both are carefully signed might show that they too were delivered to the cus-

Fig. 12. Detail (1 : 4)



tomer. At all events, they provide us with an unusual insight into the various stages by which Rembrandt's composition came about. L.C.J. Frerichs[3] believed that a sketch with three studies of a girl and a sketch of a woman's head (Ben. A10; the Fogg Art Museum, Cambridge, Mass.) could also be linked with the double portrait, but the woman's head differs too much from the painted portrait of Anslo's wife in the angle of the head, the gaze and details of the cap for it to be seen as a preliminary study.

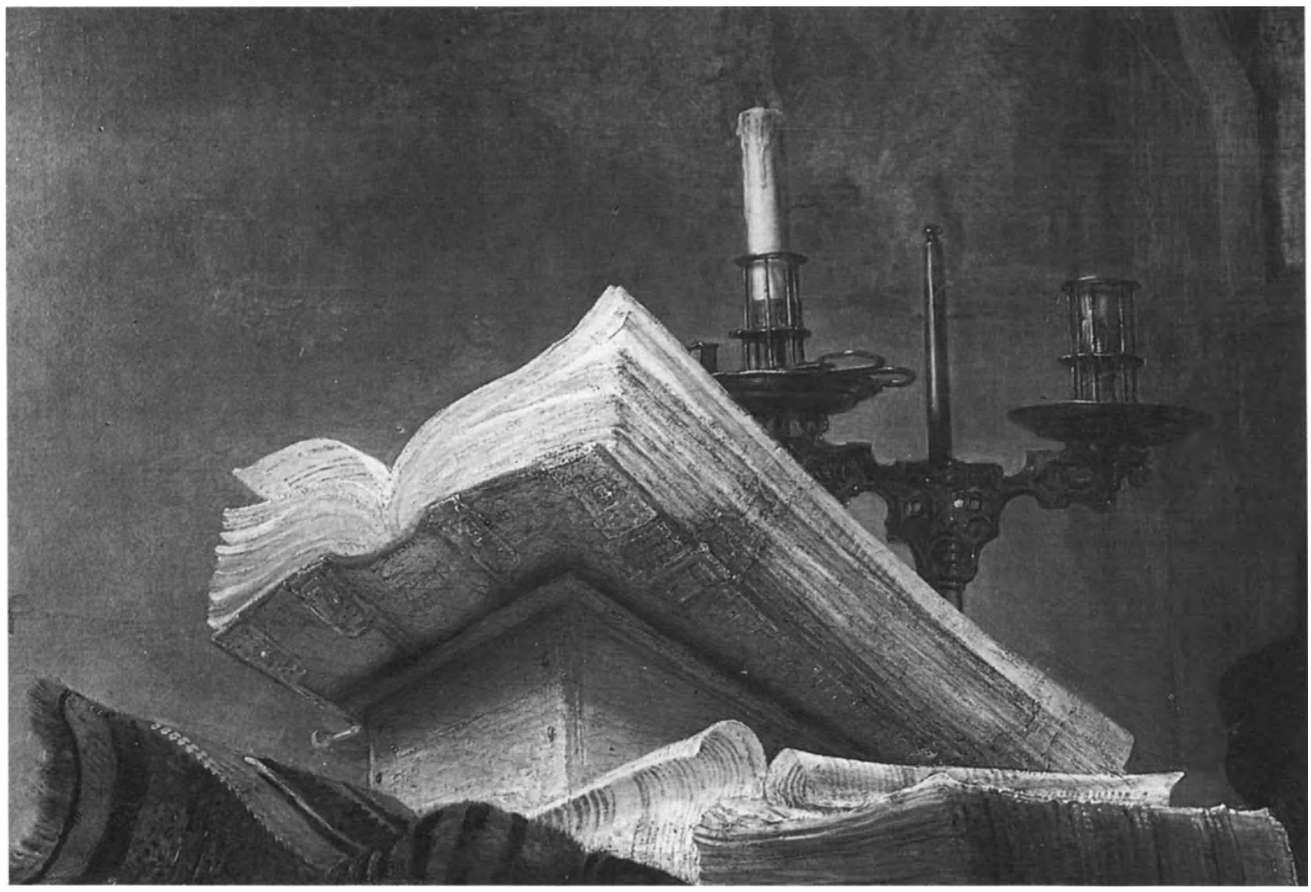
Frerichs did rightly correct the view expressed by J.A. Emmens[4], who like Bode[5] before him saw in the woman a (future) inhabitant of the Anslo almshouse. She quoted, for this, a passage from the history of this institution which in 1767 was inscribed in the records of the almshouse by Cornelis van der Vliet, its governor at the time. The passage says that Anslo preached the gospel not only in public but also to 'zijn vrouw en kinderen; gelijk hij ook dus wonderbaarlijk fraai verbeeld word in voorgemelde schilderij, sprekende tegen zijn vrouw over den bijbel, welke op een tafel bij zig open legt, en waarna zijn vrouw, op eene onnavolgelijke wijze konstig verbeeld word aandagtig en ingespannen te horen' (his wife and children; just as he is most wonderfully portrayed in the aforementioned painting, speaking to his wife about the bible which lies open before him, to which his wife, depicted in an inimitably artful fashion, listens with devout attention). Furthermore this woman is not dressed like a destitute inhabitant of an almshouse, but wholly in line with her position as the wife of a wealthy merchant. J. Six has also commented on this point[6].

For Emmens[4] the question of whether the woman is Aeltje Gerritsdr. Schouten or an inhabitant of the almshouse was not of much importance; what mattered was the fact that she acts as a listener, attentively following Anslo's words. He connected the evident action of speaking and listening to Vondel's well-known quatrain in which he recognized a stock theme linked with the viewpoint (held among Protestants) that word and hearing are superior to image and sight:

Ay Rembrant, maal *Cornelis* stem,
Het zichtbare deel is 't minst van hem:
't Onzichtbre kent men slechts door d'ooren.
Wie Anslo zien wil, moet hem hooren.

(Say Rembrant, paint Cornelis's voice, the visible part is the least of him: the invisible one knows only through the ears. If one wants to see Anslo, one has to hear him.)

Fig. 13. Detail (infrared photograph, 1 : 4)



Working from the supposition that this poem is on the etched portrait of Anslo, Emmens put forward the theory that Rembrandt was in the painted portrait responding to Vondel's challenge to paint Anslo's voice — his invisible words. Though this is an attractive thought, there are two objections to it. First, Emmens' reasoning that the etching, which on the evidence of the 1640 working drawing then already existed in draft, — and hence the poem as well — preceded the painting, for which there was only a preliminary sketch in 1640, is doubtful if one looks on the latter as a *modello*; in this drawing too Anslo is turned towards an (as yet unseen) listener, and his speaking is clearly implied (though hardly more clearly than in the etching!). There is besides the possibility that Vondel's poem was written not about the etching but about the drawing for it. On an impression of the etching formerly in the possession of Emile Galichon[7] and now in the British Museum (fig. 11), Vondel's poem is written in a 17th-century calligraphic hand, this time with the title 'Op de Teeckeninge van Kornelis Nikolaesz Anslo kunstich door Rembrant gedaen' (On the Drawing of Kornelis Nicolaesz Anslo skilfully done by Rembrant). (The calligraphy is, as Mr. A.R.A. Croiset van Uchelen of the Amsterdam University Library kindly informs us, attributable to Willem van der Laegh (1614–1671/72) and datable as 1641–60.) On the back of the mount for the drawing the poem is again written in a contemporaneous hand, but without this title. It is also absent from the first publication of the poem in Vondel's *Verscheyde Gedigten* of 1644 (p. 136; Strauss *Doc.*, 1644/6), the first collection of his lyric poetry, where it has the title 'Op Cornelis Anslo'. If the word 'Teeckeninge' is in fact to be literally understood as meaning a drawing, the poem would precede the etching as Emmens supposed, though not necessarily the drawing for the painting which, as has been said, already incorporated the concept of speech. A second difficulty with Emmens' theory is the question of whether in Rembrandt's time the relationship between customer, painter and poet allowed the painter to react to the poet's comments in the way Emmens thought possible. It is certainly doubful whether Vondel's epigram should be seen as a criticism of Rembrandt's work. Hellinga[8] quite rightly considered that a generally current motif such as the superiority of word over image could not imply any personal criticism. (A Latin poem by Caspar van Baerle in his *Poematum Pars II* of 1646, which following

Fig. 14. Detail with signature (reduced)



Kauffmann's view (in: *Jb.d.Pr.Kunsts.* 41, 1920, p. 55) has been linked with the painting (Strauss *Doc.*, 1646/9) relates to the theologian Gerard Anslo and not Cornelis.)

Emmens[4] suggested, on the basis of an emblem by Roemer Visscher ('Meerder lijdt gheen pijn' — the greater suffers no pain), that the two candles of uneven length referred to the strong Anslo helping his weaker fellows. Klamt[9] rejected this idea and gave the candles and snuffing-scissors a different meaning relating to emblems by Covarrubias ('Ut magis luceat') and Cats ('Liceat sperare timenti'). It is true that the candles received special attention, evident from two changes made to them — that on the left appears to have initially had a flame while the other originally had the same length as the first (see figs. 12 and 13). In the final execution, however, the candles are not alight, whereas the flame is essential to all three mottos quoted. Certainly apposite, and in line with Anslo's Mennonite persuasion, is the meaning of the snuffer (also discussed by Klamt) given by Picinello (*Mundus symbolicus,* lib. 15, cap. 11, no. 94, edn. Cologne 1695, II, p. 26): 'Eodem emblemate correctionem fraternam significare licet, quae prudenti acumine applicata, luxuriantes vitiorum mucos ab anima praescindit' (with the same emblem one may indicate brotherly admonition, which, given prudently, trims away the dribbling wax of the errors of the soul). The 'emunctorium' as an image of the 'correctio fraterna' — in Mennonite terminology 'brotherly admonition' — fits perfectly into the context of the picture. Rembrandt's Anslo speaks to his wife and emphasizes his words with a rhetorical gesture towards the book on the reading-slope — surely the bible — , and his wife looks in the indicated direction. At his instigation she directs her attention to God's word - i.e. she is admonished. The gesture of Anslo's open left hand matches a gesture known from ancient rhetoric, described by John Bulwer (*Chironomia: or, the art of manuall rhetorique*, London 1644, pp. 30–31) as follows: 'The gentle and wel-ordered *Hand*, thrown forth by a moderate projection, the *Fingers* unfolding themselves in the motion, and the shoulders a little slackend, affords a familiar force to any *plain continued speech* or *uniforme discourse*, and much graceth any matter that requires to be handled with a *lofty stile*, which we would faine fully present in a more gorgeous excesse of words.'

The double portrait of Anslo and his wife represents the married couple type of portrait as this had developed by the end of the 15th century, into a picture of a man and woman who in pose and gesture are made to relate to each other and to their surroundings[10]. A prototype, probably from Amsterdam, dating from 1541 is a double portrait (sometimes ascribed to Dirck Jacobsz.) in which the man is speaking to the woman and *Vanitas*-symbols emphasize the transience of earthly concerns (Amsterdam, Amsterdams Historisch Museum, inv. no. A 84; see E. de Jongh, *Portretten van echt en trouw*, Zwolle-Haarlem 1986, no. 11); inscriptions make it clear that this couple are placing their earthly possessions in the service of God through 'het werck van charitate'. Another type followed the example of Alciati (1534), who in his emblem 'In fidem uxoriam' made use of the motif of the 'dextrarum iunctio'. In the North, Rubens in 1610 based his *Self-portrait with Isabella Brant* on it (Munich, Alte Pinakothek, cat. no. 334), and Frans Hals expressed marital fidelity by similar emblematic means in his portrait of an unknown couple (possibly Isaac Massa and his wife) (Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum, inv. no. A 133). Rembrandt's portrait of *Anslo and his wife* has nothing in common with these portraits of couples by Rubens and Hals, probably because these are marriage portraits and thus belong in a category apart with an imagery of its own. Rembrandt's painting, in which the speaking man is delivering a solemn message, is from the iconographic viewpoint close to the 16th-century prototype even though no links between them can be shown. Moreover, the portrait of a couple is here combined with the portrait of a scholar — more specifically of a preacher — of the kind Rembrandt himself repeatedly produced: those of Johannes Wtenbogaert done in 1633 (no. A 80), of Johannes Elison (likewise sitting in front of a bookcase) from 1634 (no. A 98), and — a portrait known to us only from an engraving by Jonas Suyderhoef — of Eleazar Swalmius. In these the sitters are however shown — like Sophonisba (no. A 94) — holding one hand against the chest (for Bulwer's explanation of this gesture see Vol. II, p. 397).

I.H. van Eeghen has demonstrated[11] that the double portrait never hung in the Anslo almshouse, as was assumed for a long time. This belief could have given rise to the idea that the woman represented an inhabitant of the almshouse. The painting is in fact a family group, a category that belongs in the family home. One has to admit that in both its size and the scene depicted it is a somewhat unusual family group. In the almshouse record book from 1767 mentioned earlier Cornelis van der Vliet stated that he owned the painting, which had come to him by inheritance.

5. Documents and sources

For a related poem by Vondel and a description dating from 1767 see *4. Comments* above.

6. Graphic reproductions

1. Mezzotint by Josiah Boydell (Manor House, Hawarden, Flintshire 1752–Halliford, Middlesex 1817) inscribed: *Rembrandt, Pinxit., - Josiah Boydell delin.t & Sculpsit Published May 1st 1781, by John Boydell Engraver in Cheapside London.* In centre the arms (with motto Essayer) of Sir Lawrence Dundas (Charrington 33; fig. 8). Reproduces the picture in reverse and includes a strip on the righthand side as can also be seen in the Quinkhard copy (see *7. Copies*, 1). The obvious conclusion that this strip is now missing from the original is contradicted by observations at the canvas (see *3. Support*).

7. Copies

1. Canvas 54 × 65 cm by Jan Maurits Quinkhard (Rees 1688–Amsterdam 1772) inscribed: *Rembrandt pinxit in majori forma 1641/J M Quinkhard Exemplum ejus 1759 imitatus est* (fig. 7). The original was in 1759 probably already owned by Cornelis van der Vliet, or at all events by his father Jan. The copy too remained in the family for a long time and, as reported by I.H. van Eeghen, was in 1862 owned by a Miss Voombergh, whose mother was a Van der Vliet; after her death in 1866 the copy came to the Anslo almshouse, and is today in Dutch private ownership.

2. The setting is copied in a drawing, pen and brown ink and brown wash over black chalk, 18.5 × 17.2 cm (fig. 15). Formerly London, coll. J.P. Heseltine. Convincingly attributed by Sumowski (*Drawings* I, no. 189) to Ferdinand Bol. It shows a seated man wearing a turban whose pose and gesture are based on Rembrandt's etched *Portrait of Jan Uytenbogaert* of 1639 (B. 281) and who is given a second gesture with the left hand matching that of Anslo.

8. Provenance

- Came by inheritance in 1767 into the possession of Cornelis van der Vliet (*c.* 1704/5–1780), cloth merchant of Amsterdam and governor of the Anslo almshouse, probably through the following family line: via Maria, daughter of the sitters, who in 1642 married Anselmus Hartsen, and bequeathed to their daughter Teuntje, who married Jacobus van Laer, thence to their daughter Cornelia who married Jan van der Vliet; their son was Cornelis. Probably sold after he died in 1780.
- Coll. Sir Lawrence Dundas, sale London 29–31 May 1794 (Lugt 5215), 3rd day no. 37: 'Rembrandt. R. Anslo in his study, conversing with his wife. The Admission of the Light, and Effect of this Picture, are truly magical. The Earnestness with which he is speaking, and the profound Attention of the Woman cannot be too much commended, and are only equalled by the Truth of Colouring and the Simplicity of the Composition. Universally allowed to be one of the finest Efforts of his Pencil. High 5 Ft. 9 In. by Wide 6 Ft. 8 In. [= 178 × 207.2 cm]'. (£546–0–0 to the Earl of Ashburnham). The sitter's initial is wrongly given as 'R', obviously due to confusion with his brother, the cloth merchant Reyer Claesz. Anslo, or more probably with the latter's son the wellknown poet Reyer Anslo (1622–1669).
- Coll. Earl of Ashburnham, sale London 20 July 1850, no. 91 (£4200; bought in).
- Bought from the Ashburnham collection by the museum in 1894.

9. Summary

Because of both its execution and its dramatic approach and the composition employed for this, this double portrait signed and dated 1641 can be regarded as an authentic and important work by Rembrandt. This view is supported by a family tradition recorded in the 18th century, which also shows that the picture represents the Anslo couple and not, as has been believed, the preacher speaking to a destitute woman. The canvas must originally have been rectangular.

The Mennonite Cornelis Claesz. Anslo, a rich merchant and preacher to the Waterland congregation also had his portrait etched by Rembrandt in the same year 1641. There are drawings, signed and dated 1640, for this etching and the painting, which is most unusual; one of these drawings was used as a working drawing for the etching, and both probably served as a *modello* presented to the customer for approval. Vondel wrote a poem on one of these four portraits — possibly the etching or the drawing for it.

The iconography of the painting, in which the man speaks to his wife admonishingly and points to the bible, is unusual and in its intention seems to hark back to a 16th-century type of portrait of a married couple.

Fig. 15. Copy 2. F. Bol, *A scholar wearing a turban*, pen and brown ink and wash over black chalk, 18.5 × 17.2 cm. Formerly London, coll. J. P. Heseltine



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10 B. Hinz, 'Studien zur Geschichte des Ehepaarbildnisses', *Mahrburger Jahrbuch für Kunstwissenschaft* 19 (1974), pp. 139–218, esp. p. 203 note 272.

A 144 Portrait of Nicolaes Bambeeck (companion-piece to no. A 145) [1641]
BRUSSELS, MUSÉE ROYAL DES BEAUX-ARTS, CAT.NO. 367

HDG 734; BR. 218; BAUCH 386; GERSON 232

Fig. 1. Canvas 108.8 × 83.3 cm



Fig. 2. X-Ray



1. Summarized opinion

A well preserved (though probably somewhat reduced) authentic work, carrying the credible date 1641.

2. Description of subject

The sitter is seen down to the waist, the head and body turned slightly to the right with the gaze rather more towards the viewer. He is set in a framing that is somewhat wider at the bottom than at the sides, and at the top — above a small moulding — becomes a flattened arch; light is reflected from the mouldings and from the inside edges of the framing. He leans out over this framing with his bent right arm, and rests his left hand on it. He has fluffy blond hair, a moustache and a lip beard. His black clothing comprises a high-crowned hat with a sweeping brim, a cloak of shiny stuff with velvet revers and braiding, and a doublet closed at the front by a row of buttons. A flat white collar has a broad edging of lace, and his cuffs are also trimmed with lace. His right hand wears a glove of yellowish leather, and grasps the other glove.

The figure is lit from the upper left; behind on the left there is a softly lit flat wall, while on the right and rather closer a stepped wall with deep moulding leads away to the back; a cast shadow is seen vaguely towards the bottom of this latter wall.

3. Observations and technical information

Working conditions

Examined in August 1968 (J.B., B.H., P.v.Th.) in good light and out of the frame, and again in November 1982 (E.v.d.W.). A complete set of X-ray copyfilms covering the whole painting except for the edges beneath the stretcher, and an infrared photograph, were received later.

Support

DESCRIPTION: Canvas, lined, 108.8 × 83.3 cm. Strips of paper are stuck to the canvas along the edges.
SCIENTIFIC DATA: Cusping can be seen along the bottom, with a pitch varying from 7 to 10 cm and extending some 9–10 cm into the canvas; there are very faint traces, with a similar pitch, along the top, but no cusping of any regularity along the sides. Threadcount: 12.3 vertical threads/cm (10.5–13.7) and 13.5 horizontal threads/cm (12.5–14.5). The horizontal threads are more regular and have fewer thickenings than the verticals, so the warp may be regarded as running horizontally.

The absence of cusping to the right and left is explicable if one assumes that the canvas was cut from a fully grounded (horizontal) strip. The virtual absence of cusping at the top might show that the canvas was once not inconsiderably larger there; the degree to which cusping is found along the bottom would not argue against the assumption that there too the canvas has been reduced (for more on this point see below under *4. Comments*).

From a matching threadcount and weave pattern it may be supposed that the canvas came from the same bolt as that used for the companion-piece (no. A 145).

Ground

DESCRIPTION: Not observed for certain. A light brown can be detected at a few places in the shadow area of the background on the right.
SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

Paint layer

CONDITION: A layer of old and yellowed varnish hampers observation. The paint surface gives the impression of having been somewhat flattened during lining; small retouches can be seen in the shadow part of the face. Apart from this, the painting appears to be in good condition. Craquelure: for the greater part fine and regular, and distributed evenly over the whole painting; coarser cracking can be seen in the edge of the hat where, on both the right and left, this has been widened at a later stage over parts of the background painted previously.
DESCRIPTION: The painting shows a remarkably even surface in which relief is limited to the edge of the lace collar and the parts of the gloves that catch the light and are painted relatively thickly; the latter passage is also the only one where the brushstroke can be followed clearly. The canvas weave is more or less visible everywhere, which might indicate a relatively thin ground but could also be due partly to flattening during lining.

The flesh tints in the head are applied evenly, and varied with a little pink in the lit cheek and pink-red on the ridge of the nose, which is heightened further with some white. The shadow of the hat on the forehead is painted in dark brown. The eye on the left consists of a grey iris and clearly outlined black pupil, with on the left a comma-shaped catchlight; the borders of the eyelid above it are shown in red, the upper drawn with a line. Around the eye in the shadow side of the face the colours are subdued to become an ochre and flesh colour; this area has been strengthened later with a greyish brown. The line of the mouth is dark red, and the moustache and beard are done summarily with fine strokes of ochre-coloured paint. The hair is worked up, over a thin brown, with fine strokes of yellow-brown and brown-black to a greater extent on the left than on the right.

The collar is painted flatly with subtly varied whites, with the paint applied thickly at the seams, and the pattern of the lace is drawn with squiggly strokes and dots of black plus a dark brown here and there, and the outer edge with spots of a thick white. In the dark clothing black is used without any evident brushstroke; these passages are enlivened only with discrete sheens of line on the hat-crown and on the folds and braiding on the lefthand side of the cloak. The gloved hand, holding the other glove, is dealt with quite boldly. Broad strokes of yellow-brown set out the plastic structure of the hand and the folds in the two gloves. The other hand, placed in the corner of the frame on the right, is worked up fairly thoroughly, using a little red in the shadows and at the tip of the thumb and index finger. On the left the background is treated in very much the same way as the rest of the painting; a finely distributed yellowish grey, applied without any visible brushwork, merges evenly upwards and downwards into a darker tint. On the right the shape of the vaguely-indicated wall mouldings is shown broadly in brown-grey. The catchlights on the otherwise neutral dark framing surrounding the whole are done in a yellowish paint.

It can be seen, from the infrared photograph, the X-ray and the paint surface, that during work changes were made to the shape of the hat and the line of the shoulder contours. These involve partly corrections to reserves that were originally wider, with strips alongside the outline of the hat and collar being covered over with the paint of the background, and partly reserves that were too skimpy (e.g. by the hair on the right, and at the hat-brim on both sides). The remarkably wide bands seen dark in the IR photograph around the existing crown of the hat and above the collar on the left do not seem to point to substantial corrections, but rather to the broad painting-out of paint used during minor corrections in order to achieve a smooth join with the existing background. The dimensions of the hat-brim, too, have been altered; areas of dark paint showing relatively coarse craquelure (see *Paint layer*, CONDITION) along the edges as they are today are evidence for their having been extended out over parts of the background painted previously. A band that appears vague and dark in the IR photograph along the lefthand edge coincides with a fairly thickly applied grey containing white lead that was placed over the background after the enlargement. Much the same can be said of a correction that made the arched top of the painted framing higher on both left and right.
SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

Fig. 3. Detail (1 : 1)



Fig. 4. Detail with signature (reduced)



X-Rays

The radiographic image confirms what the craquelure along the presentday edges of the hat (see *Paint layer*, CONDITION) made one suspect — i.e. that on both sides the hat-brim originally had a smaller reserve provided for it in the background paint; the same applies to the hair to the right of the head. During alterations, the background was strengthened with a grey containing white lead along the new contour of the hat and shoulder. The same is true of the correction to the arched top, already described, for which on the left (as opposed to the right) a radioabsorbent paint appears to have been used.

Signature

On the right, in the lowest section of moulding in the wall, in dark brown <*Rembrandt. f./ 1641*>. The script seems to lack spontaneity; conceivably the signature was copied from that on the companion-piece, perhaps at the time the two paintings were separated in 1814. At the top, a little left of centre, there is a statement of the sitter's age in dark paint: <*AE 44*>. The latter inscription was discovered in 1956 when the painting was in the Rembrandt exhibition in Amsterdam/Rotterdam.

Varnish

A layer of yellowed varnish hampers observation.

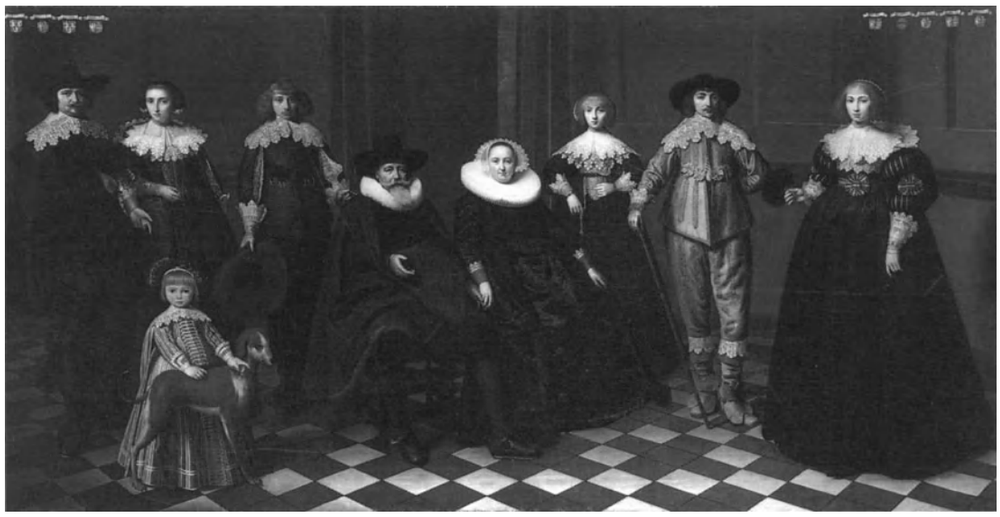
4. Comments

The portraits of Nicolaes Bambeeck and Agatha Bas examplify a characteristic aspect of Rembrandt's manner of painting portraits in the years around 1640. Features that were already typical of the Amsterdam *Portrait of a young woman (Maria Trip?)* of 1639 (no. A 131) and the London *Self-portrait* of 1640 (no. A 139) — a restrained and refined treatment and a unity of atmosphere based on a delicate *sfumato* — are here developed further. This is coupled with the familiar device of having part of the figure furthest to the front in shadow, thus creating a feeling of depth, just as Rembrandt had already done much earlier — e.g. in the New York *Man in oriental dress* and the San Francisco *Portrait of Joris de Caullery*, both from 1632 (nos. A 48 and A 53). In the 1641 portraits this formula is however applied far less emphatically, in keeping with a treatment aimed at more continuity than at strong contrasts. As is usual with portraits painted by Rembrandt as companionpieces, the background in the man's portrait (invariably the lefthand one of the two) is rather more strongly lit than that in the woman's, so that the contrast with the figure is also greater than in the latter.

A new motif has, besides, been introduced — a black framing that is directly incorporated in the picture through the sitter's pose. It is not improbable that these framings were originally painted quite a little wider than they are today. The pictures themselves already encourage this suspicion, as the hands and what they are holding come very close to the edges of the painting, most obviously so in the case of the woman's fan which is partly cut off at the edge. It is thus not surprising that a drawing described below made by Christiaan Andriessen in 1805 (though admittedly sketchy and obviously done from memory) shows both paintings, and the woman's portrait in particular, quite clearly framed wider on all four sides. The idea that both canvases have been reduced gains further support from the fact that the man's portrait shows only extremely vague cusping along the top, and while that at the bottom is a good deal more distinct it is not so pronounced and deep as to rule out some of the canvas having been trimmed off. One must perhaps take it that the painted framing was *c.* 12 cm wider along the top and bottom; the original height of the picture would then have been about 125 cm (perhaps taken from a 2-ell wide bolt of canvas); a strip — narrower but of unknown width — would then probably also have been trimmed from the sides. A reduction in size would have to have taken place after 1805 but before the two paintings were separated in 1814 (i.e. while they were owned by the dealers Nieuwenhuys and Dansaert Engels).

The placing of the figure in the man's portrait is very like that in the 1640 *Self-portrait*, where the artist leans on a stone sill with his right arm; the motif is known to have been taken from Titian's 'Ariosto' portrait, and is here used to produce an illusionistic effect that we have not met before in Rembrandt's work. In Bambeeck's portrait the link between the figure and the part of the frame on which he is leaning is strengthened by his left hand too being placed over the frame, a progression from the *Self-portrait* (where the fingers of the left hand, resting on the sill and still visible in the X-ray, were painted out, as well as possibly part of the left arm that was first — as here in the portrait of Bambeeck — seen foreshortened and projecting sideways). Looking at it in a broader context, one can say that illusionistic framings as used for the portraits of Nicolaes van Bambeeck and Agatha Bas combine two elements: the first is Rembrandt's liking in this period (going back to, or strengthened by, Titian's painting) for sills or balustrades as a depth-creating device; as well as in the *Self-portrait* already mentioned, this is manifest in the etched *Self-portrait* of 1639 (B. 21), in the (subsequently abandoned, but visible in the X-ray) balustrade placed experimentally in front of the figure in the Maria Trip portrait from the same year, and in the etching of a *Man in an arbor* (B. 257) dated 1642 and before that possibly 1640. A painting that might well have been added to this series is the *Young girl*, formerly in the coll. Lanckoronski,

Fig. 5. Dirck Dircksz. Santvoort, *The family of Dirck Bas Jacobsz.*, canvas 136 × 251 cm. Amsterdam Historical Museum



Vienna, dated 1641 (Br. 359), where the figure is placed behind a moulded frame, seen only at the bottom, on which she rests both hands: unfortunately one can no longer offer any judgment on the authenticity of that painting itself, as its whereabouts have been unknown since the Second World War. The two portraits now being discussed differ from all those just mentioned in that the use of a horizontal element is combined with the old tradition of the figure enclosed in an illusionistic framing. This is done here in a form that we have already encountered in a portrait drawing of a man dated 1634 in New York (Ben. 433; identified by I.H. van Eeghen with some reservation as being of Willem Jansz. van der Pluym, *Amstelodamum, Maandblad* ... 64, 1977, pp. 11–13). The only difference is that there the arch rests on capitals of more elaborate shape. One is tempted to see the — originally fairly wide — black satiny framing round the figures of Nicolaes van Bambeeck and Agatha Bas as the painted continuation of dark frames in which the paintings were undoubtedly originally placed. Still today the painted framing fulfils the function of a link between the tangible reality of the frame and the fiction of the portrait. Whether the role of the hands in this points to the influence of Frans Hals, as Tümpel[1] believes, is doubtful.

In the woman's portrait the opportunities this motif offers are certainly exploited no less successfully than in the man's. The striking gesture of resting the hand against the frame, achieved by showing the arm daringly foreshortened and with the hand just as boldly shown only in part, contributes to the feeling of direct contact with the sitter that Rembrandt has been able to evoke. It is, however, only one of the means employed: of the others one can mention, the interplay between the beautifully atmospheric rendition and the varied lighting has already been referred to. The position of the head with respect to the fall of light produces shadows, half-shadows and reflexions of light that, in subtle progressions, suggest the plastic modelling of the head and contribute to the facial expression. The various materials from which her rich and complex dress is composed have been given a convincing rendering by means of a varied, often refined but never finicky handling of paint. Small irregularities, such as the shoulder-collar pushed backwards by the action of raising the left arm, the slightly uneven hang of the points of the lace scarf and the curling edge of the cuff on the left help to break up the geometry of the tonally very contrasty shapes. One may, finally, comment that the standing pose of the woman fills the picture area more happily than that of the man, whose figure has, through his leaning on the frame with the forearm, ended up a little low in the picture area. If one looks at the two companion-pieces side by side, the difference in the placing of the figures in the picture area makes the pair look a little lop-sided.

The type of the two portraits — with the illusionistic effect of the painted framing and the role the hands play in the interaction between the picture space and this framing — made an impression on several of Rembrandt's pupils. This applies not so much to Govaert Flinck, whose man's portrait dated 1641 in the coll. Thyssen-Bornemisza in Lugano (Von Moltke *Flinck*, no. 259; Sumowski *Gemälde* II, no. 695) certainly has features from the Bambeeck, as it does to Gerbrand van den Eeckhout, who in 1644 painted his parents in a similar way (Sumowski op. cit., nos. 520 and 521), and especially to Ferdinand Bol, who in a *Portrait of a young man* in Frankfurt/Main dated 1644 (Blankert *Bol*, no. 98; Sumowski *Gemälde* I, no. 162) produced a variation on the *Bambeeck* and in the portraits of a couple from 1652 (Blankert op. cit.,

nos. 149 and 150; Sumowski op. cit., no. 170) developed the framing further into a complete window surround with a stone sill.

At a time when the indications of the sitters' ages on the two portraits had not yet been noticed, Schmidt-Degener thought they depicted François Coopal, the Commissioner of Marine Muster in Flushing in 1634 and 1635, and his wife Titia van Uylenburgh (1605–1641), sister to Rembrandt's wife Saskia[2]. The correct identification of the sitters is due to I.H. van Eeghen[3] who, knowing of the indication of their age found on the paintings a short time before (the man 44 years old and the woman 29[4]), was put onto the track of their marriage certificate dated 27 April 1638. This certificate, the years of birth it mentions, the ages shown on the portraits and the date of 1641 for the paintings gave a clinching complex of evidence: for the first month or so of 1641 Agatha Bas (baptized in Amsterdam on 6 February 1611) was aged 29, and Nicolaes van Bambeeck (born in Leiden on 17 May 1596) was 44 years old during four-and-a-half months of that year. If both of them gave their correct ages, then Rembrandt must have painted the woman's portrait in January, and the man's before mid-May. There is a possibility that Van Bambeeck and Rembrandt had known each other for years — in 1631 the former, also from Leiden, had lived in the Sint-Anthoniesbreestraat like Rembrandt when he moved into the house of Hendrik van Uylenburgh, and in 1640 he, with Rembrandt, belonged to the group of Amsterdammers who lent Van Uylenburgh money for his art business (Strauss *Doc.*, 1640/2). Compared to her husband, who made his fortune in trade — mainly Spanish wool — but occupied no municipal post, Agatha Bas came from a more distinguished background. She was born in an upper-class Amsterdam family and her father, Dr Dirck Jacobsz. Bas was from 1610 onwards several times burgomaster of Amsterdam and on the board of the United East India Company, and undertook many diplomatic journeys abroad. In 1634/35 he had his portrait painted, sitting with his wife and children, by Dirck Dircksz. Santvoort (fig. 5; Rijksmuseum inv. no. A 365, lent to the Amsterdam Historical Museum); in this work Agatha, the eldest daughter, stands to the right of her mother. She died in 1658, and her husband in 1661. What happened to the portraits subsequently is not known; they were not mentioned as among the 50 paintings listed in the 1676 inventory of the estate of their eldest son Nicolaes, who died in 1671, though there was 'een Abraham en Hagar, van een discipel van Rembrandt' (A. Bredius, *Künstler-Inventare* III, The Hague 1917, p. 1022) presumably identifiable with our no. C 85 and 'twee contrefeytsels van vader en moeder door Govert Flinck' that it has so far been impossible to identify[3]. Rembrandt's portraits were probably

Fig. 6. C. Andriessen, *'That is a Rembrand!!! I have never seen such a fine one'*, Amsterdam, Historisch-topografische Atlas, Gemeentearchief



inherited by one of the couple's four other children. They first resurfaced in the early 19th century. A cursory drawing (done from memory) after the woman's portrait by Jurriaan Andriessen (Amsterdam, Rijksprentenkabinet) bears the inscription: 'fraay poutrait van Rembrand gezien by de Hr Coclers Mey 1805' (fine portrait by Rembrand seen at Mr Coclers' in May 1805)[5], and a drawing evidently done at the same time by Jurriaan's son Christiaan Andriessen (inscribed: '24 Meij — dat is een Rembrand !!! Zo schoon heb ik 'er nog geene gezien' - That is a Rembrand!!! I have never seen such a fine one)[6] shows father and son admiring the woman's portrait on an easel and, behind the young art dealer, the man's portrait hanging on the wall (fig. 6). Both paintings were then evidently in the possession of the art dealer Louis Bernard Coclers (1741–1817) of Liège; the young man shown in Christiaan Andriessen's drawing must be either a servant or, as Van Eeghen assumes, Louis Bernard's son Bernard (cf. J.J.M. Timmers, 'De Maastrichtsch-Luiksche schildersfamilie Coclers', *Publications de la Société historique et archéologique dans le Limbourg à Maestricht*, 3rd series 21, 1940, pp. 139–165). The portraits were in 1809 bought, presumably from Coclers, by the Brussels dealers Nieuwenhuys and Dansaert Engels[7]. In 1814 the latter put both works on sale in London, where the woman's portrait was sold and, after changing owners a few times, was acquired in 1819 by the Prince Regent, later George IV. The man's portrait was bought in[8], and returned to Brussels where it was finally sold by the heirs of Dansaert Engels to the museum.

5. Documents and sources

None.

6. Graphic reproductions

None of interest.

7. Copies

1. A copy was at one time in the coll. Johnson in Washington[7].

8. Provenance

- In 1805, together with the companion-piece, with the Liège art dealer Louis Bernard Coclers who had moved to Amsterdam[6].
- Bought in Holland in 1809 by the dealers Nieuwenhuys and Dansaert Engels; put at auction by them in 1814 at Christie's, London (28–29 June 1814, no. 77: 'Ditto [Rembrand]. A male portrait, the companion'), where it was bought in for 390 guineas[8] and then separated from its companion-piece.
- Bought in 1841 from the heirs of Dansaert Engels.

9. Summary

With their reticent treatment and atmospheric rendering based on a refined *sfumato*, the portraits of Nicolaes van Bambeeck and Agatha Bas are typical of an important aspect of Rembrandt's portrait style in the years around 1640. His preference in this period for a composition in which the figure is placed behind an element that demarcates the foreground is here combined with the old tradition of the figure being set inside an illusionistic framing. The latter is probably narrower than it originally was, particularly at the top and bottom, due to a reduction in the size of the canvas that must have been made between 1805 and 1814. The identity of the sitters followed the discovery of their ages stated on the paintings, in the 1950s.

REFERENCES

1 Tümpel 1986, p. 216.
2 F. Schmidt-Degener, 'Portretten door Rembrandt, I. Titia van Uylenburch en François Coopal', *Onze Kunst* 24 (1913), pp. 1–11.
3 I.H. van Eeghen, *Een Amsterdamse burgemeestersdochter van Rembrandt in Buckingham Palace*, Amsterdam 1958.
4 J.G. van Gelder, 'Rembrandt and his circle' [in the exhibition *Dutch pictures at the Royal Academy*], *Burl. Mag.* 95 (1953), pp. 34–39, esp. 38.
5 Gerson 233; I.H. v[an] E[eghen], 'De tekeningen van vader en zoon Andriessen: Agatha Bas bij Coclers', *Amstelodamum. Maandblad ...* 72 (1985), pp. 1–3.
6 I.H. van Eeghen, *'In mijn journaal gezet'. Amsterdam 1805–1808. Het getekende dagboek van Christiaan Andriessen*, Amsterdam-Alphen aan den Rijn 1983, p. 248.
7 HdG 734.
8 J. Smith, *A catalogue raisonné of the works of the most eminent Dutch, Flemish and French painters...* VII, London 1836, no. 301.

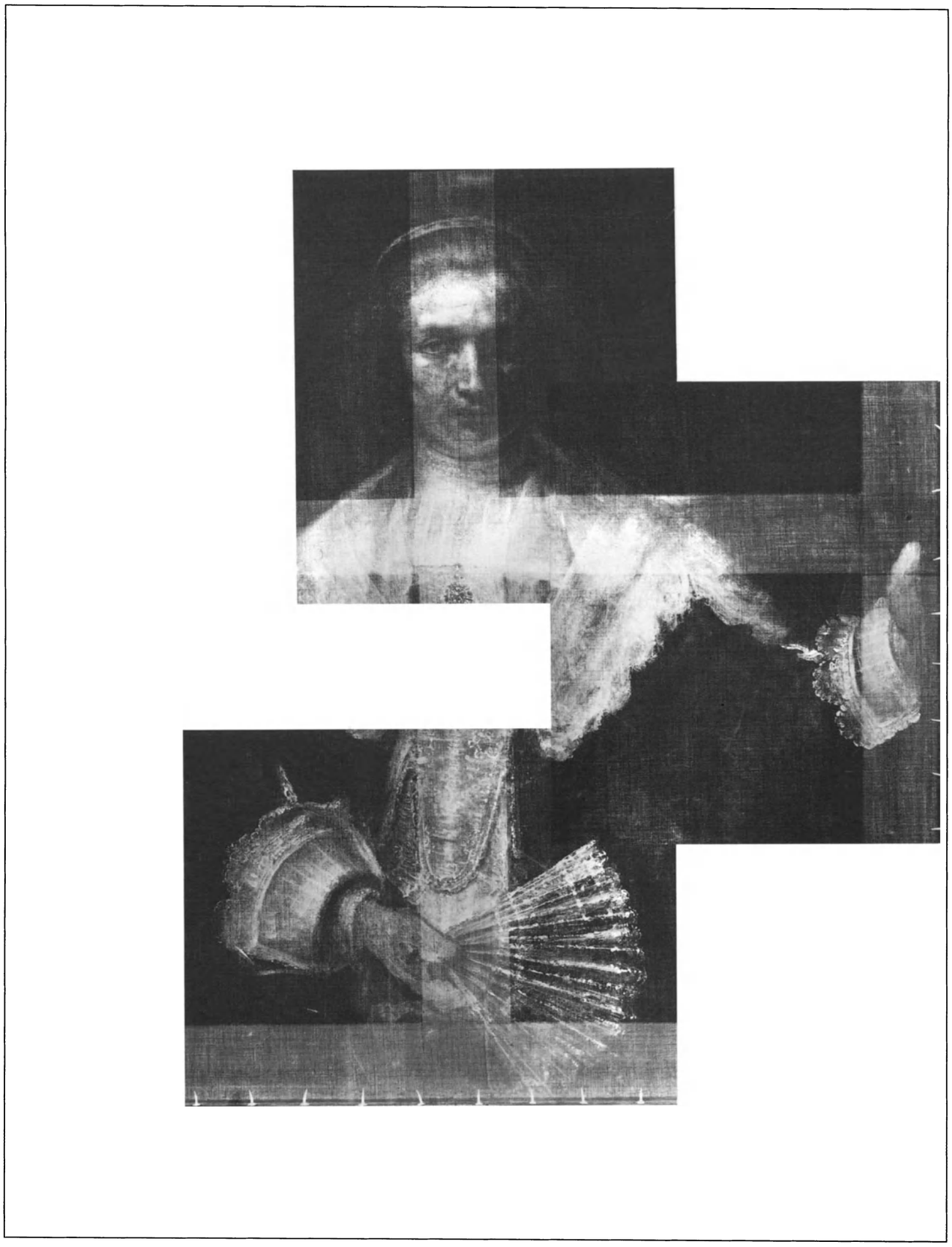
A 145 Portrait of Agatha Bas (companion-piece to no. A 144) 1641
LONDON, BUCKINGHAM PALACE, COLL. H.M. QUEEN ELIZABETH II, INV.NO. 1157

HDG 860; BR. 360; BAUCH 501; GERSON 233

Fig. 1. Canvas 104 × 82 cm



Fig. 2. X-Ray



1. Summarized opinion

A well preserved work (though probably somewhat reduced in size), reliably signed and dated 1641.

2. Description of subject

A young woman, seen square-on and to below the waist, stands looking at the viewer from behind a dark frame against which she rests her raised left hand. In her other hand she holds an opened fan, projecting out over the frame. A shaft of light falls from the left on the central part of the figure and the arm and hand on the right; part of her right hand and the lower part of the fan remain in shadow.

She is richly dressed, with a wide black overgarment of shiny, patterned stuff worn over a purplish-pink skirt and a bodice of shiny grey material with gold-coloured figuring and a scalloped hem. A white material can be glimpsed through slashes in the sleeves. The panels of the overgarment are linked across the bodice by black criss-cross lacing running over small black rosettes; at the bottom the bodice is decorated with a vee-shaped strip of braiding that links two larger rosettes on the panels of the top garment. The top edge of the bodice is covered by a wide band of lace pinned with a brooch; the breast above it is covered up to the neck by lace and an unevenly double-folded scarf which reveals a flat shoulder-collar only at the side. Both the scarf and the collar are trimmed with lace, as are the cuffs. At the back of the head there is the lace edge of a cap, worn on blond hair that is combed back in the centre and hangs down to the shoulders on either side. Jewelled ear-rings, rows of pearls round the throat and wrists and a ring on the right index-finger contribute to the richness of her dress.

The figure is placed in front of a dark background in which a curtain can be vaguely made out only on the right. As in the companion-piece, the narrow frame becomes a curved arch at the top, above small mouldings; fine sheens of light mark the edges and mouldings.

3. Observations and technical information

Working conditions

Examined in October 1972 (J.B., S.H.L.) in good daylight and in the frame. Photographs of radiographs were received later, and cover three areas — the head and adjoining part of the breast, the shoulder and hand on the right, and the hand holding the fan. The threadcount was made from the original X-ray film in the London Courtauld Institute of Art.

Support

DESCRIPTION: Canvas, lined, 104 × 82 cm (sight size).
SCIENTIFIC DATA: So far as can be seen from the available films, there is cusping along the bottom with a pitch varying from 8.1 to 9.7 cm and extending some 10 cm into the canvas. No distortion of any regularity along the righthand edge; no information available on the other edges. Threadcount: 13.7 horizontal threads/cm (13–14.2), 11.5 vertical threads/cm (10–13). A matching threadcount and weave characteristics show that the canvas comes from the same bolt as that of the companion-piece (no. A 144, q.v.).

Ground

DESCRIPTION: A light yellow-brown, suggesting a light ground, shows through in the background and is exposed in a brushmark at the bottom left above the *R* of the signature.
SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

Paint layer

CONDITION: Very good. Craquelure: most evident in rather more thickly painted passages, where it is generally fine with a varied pattern.
DESCRIPTION: In this carefully done painting the paint is opaque, with a little relief in the jewel at the breast, here and there in the clothing, and in the fan. The weave of the canvas is generally clearly visible. The head in particular is executed with care, with an economic use of paint; mostly blending strokes are used to build up the modelling by means of finely graduated and merging areas of light and shade and a frequent and highly effective use of reflexions of light, seen in the eye-sockets, against the nose, below and to the right above the mouth, on the right along the contour of the cheekbone, jaw and chin, and in the neck. A soft grey is used for the deepest shadows, and thin browns for the transitions to areas that receive direct or reflected light. Along the chin and in the neck, clearly-apparent long brushstrokes in pink and grey-white follow the convexity of the shapes; along the adjoining contour of the chin above it, the curve is suggested by a blurred boundary consisting of a haze of grey mixed with some flesh colour. Some pink is placed in the pale flesh tint of the lit parts, on both cheeks and on the forehead to the left where in the highest light the paint is somewhat thicker. An elongated highlight is placed along the ridge of the nose with white and pink. The eyelids are shown with softly brushed borders in brown, the iris in cool grey enlivened with a white dot of light at the upper left and a spot of light brown opposite it. In the mouth, too, the borders are kept vague; the mouth-line is built up from strokes of dark brown paint, the upper lip is a soft red and brown, and the lower lip a soft red with a tiny dab of bright red within it on the left. At the hairline above the forehead the flesh colour is mixed wet-in-wet with the light grey and brownish tint of the glossy hair; a few scratchmarks are used here, while the waves of the thin, loose hair are drawn with strokes of greyish and brown paint.

There is fine detail working, too, in the jewel and pearls and in the complicated shoulder covering, the material of which is suggested convincingly in a variety of whites, broadly brushed or drawn in stripes and flat brushstrokes in the lace, whose pattern is further indicated using small strokes and dabs of a light brown-grey in the upper edge of the scarf and with grey and black where the lace lies over the dark overgarment. The contours are worked up with edges of light done with a thick white. The treatment of the rest of the clothing is, relatively speaking, more free. The pattern seen in the sheens of light on the uniformly black overgarment is indicated with animated strokes of grey, while in the grey bodice it is drawn with strokes of ochre-brown and ochre-yellow and of white. The skirt is in quite thick purplish pink, ochre-brown and grey, applied with strokes that often merge one into the other. The fan, too, is done freely and effectively, with the ribs rendered in strokes of dark red with some grey and the remainder in a mixture of colours that in the light include thick and grainy yellows, ochre, white and green used wet-in-wet with browns, and in the shadow part has dark tints tending almost to black with spots of light in ochre-colour and white. The hand holding the fan is painted with evenly applied flesh colour in which variation is introduced by a progression, corresponding to the fall of light, from a light tint at the top to a warm one in the shadow further down. The thumbnail is indicated with a few loose strokes of thin brown, and a dark red is used for the cast shadow from the pearls on the wrist. The modelling of the thumb of the other hand, against the frame, is rather more thorough, in a pink flesh tint with white highlights and a brown-grey shadow. Left of this thumb, flesh colour shows through the dark paint of the curtain in the background, and some grey immediately below this above the cuff; this indicates that the contour of the thumb was shifted a little to the right in a late stage, and that of the cuff lowered. These observations are confirmed by the X-ray of this area (see below).

The neutral background gets its effect from a fine and very evenly distributed change in tone, ranging from a thin dark grey

Fig. 3. Detail (1 : 1)



Fig. 4. Detail (1 : 2)



at the top and as far down as the shoulder to a somewhat light and more opaque grey on the left alongside the figure that then merges downwards into a warm grey-brown. The vague indication of a curtain on the right consists of a brownish area with stripes of black. The framing is painted in an even black and with dark grey in the upper corners; despite the catchlights in grey and white, this has a somewhat dead appearance.
SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

X-Rays

The available radiographs of parts of the painting show a concentration of radioabsorbent pigment in the forehead and a broadly brushed underpainting in the scarf, shoulder-collar and cuffs. The changes that can be seen in these X-rays amount to fairly modest corrections to outlines. The moving of the righthand thumb further to the right, and of the cuff downwards, has already been observed at the paint surface. The initial rounded contour of the top edge of the cuff was straightened in doing so, and now meets the hand at a sharp angle. A little to the left of this area the visible part of the shoulder-collar has been made narrower, and its lively, uptilted edge was given its shape only later. From the X-ray covering the hand with the fan and the part of the costume above this it may be seen that no reserve was left in the paint layer for the criss-crossed lacing, rosettes and band of braiding over the bodice. The curve of the ball of the hand was broadened a little upwards, and this hand also appears slimmer in the X-ray due to a dark zone along the bottom. Below the hand vague patches showing up light suggest that originally a wider band of the skirt was left visible.

Signature

At the lower left in a dark grey-brown <*Rembrandt.f/ 1641*>, in a firm, clear script that gives no doubt as to its authenticity. At top centre the sitter's age is given in dark paint: <*AE 29*>; this inscription was discovered when the painting was cleaned in the early 1950s.

Varnish

No special remarks.

4. Comments

See under the entry for the companion-piece no. A 144.

5. Documents and sources

None.

6. Graphic reproductions

None of interest.

Fig. 5. Detail with signature (reduced)



7. Copies

1. A copy, formerly in the W.A. Clark collection is now in the Corcoran Gallery, Washington. D.C.[1].

8. Provenance

– Same pedegree as no. A 144 until the sale in London (Christie's) 28–29 June 1814, no. 76: 'Rembrand. Portrait of a Lady in black drapery with a white lace tippet, embroidered stomacher, and fan, a wonderful effort of the art. The delineation from nature is agreeable and fine, but the golden effect of light, and the rich and glowing tints are the nec plus ultra of the art. This extraordinary performance is apparently of the same time and degree of rare merit with the celebrated picture the Woman taken in Adultery, which R. painted for the Burgomaster Six.' (bought in). Sold by Nieuwenhuys to John Smith, and by the latter to Lord Charles Townsend[2]. A copy of the 1814 sales catalogue at the Museum Boymans-van Beuningen, Rotterdam has, added in pencil and retraced in pen: 'This picture was sold by the writer to Lord Charles Townsend for 1000 gs. in his Lordships sale in 1818 it was knocked down to Lord Yarmouth for the king at 720 gs. J.S. [John Smith]. If the face of this portrait was in a slight degree less yellow it might justly be pronounced the best female portrait known of the master'.
– Anonymous [= Lord Charles Townsend] sale London (Robins) 4 June 1819, no. 32: 'Rembrandt. A Lady with her Fan. Painted in 1641, when the Artist was 35 Years of Age, and in the full bloom of all his magic powers of Art, which in this Picture is carried to its acmé; it possesses all his rich, sparkling, and golden glow of Colour, with the most comprehensive display of the Chiaro Scuro that his Pencil ever produced, and has been unanimously acknowledged the finest of his productions, and the nec plus ultra of Art.' (£745.10s to Lord Yarmouth for the Prince Regent).

9. Summary

See under entry for the companion-piece no. A 144.

REFERENCES

1 HdG 860.
2 Cf. C. White, *The Dutch pictures in the collection of Her Majesty the Queen*, Cambridge-London, etc. 1982, p. 107.

A 146 The 'Night watch', or Officers and men of the company of Captain Frans Banning Cocq and Lieutenant Willem van Ruytenburgh 1642

AMSTERDAM, RIJKSMUSEUM, ON LOAN FROM THE CITY OF AMSTERDAM, INV. NO. C 5

HDG 926; BR. 410; BAUCH 537; GERSON 239

Fig. 1. Canvas 363 × 438 cm



1. Summarized opinion

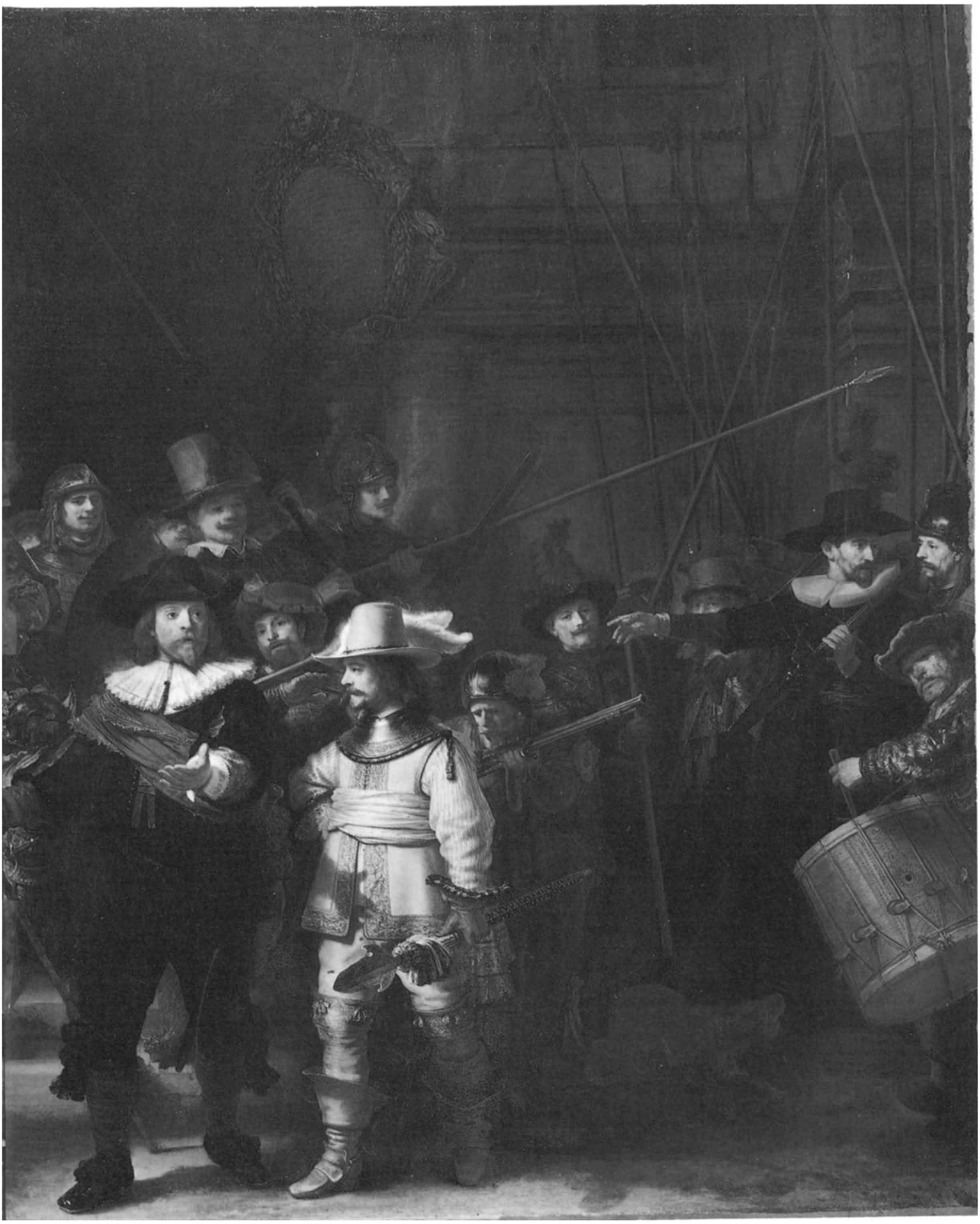
A reasonably well preserved work (though reduced, especially on the left) that is not only signed and dated but also exceptionally well documented as an authentic work by Rembrandt from 1642.

2. Description of subject

The men, belonging to a company of the citizens' militia the Arquebusiers or *Kloveniers*, are gathered in front of a building, lost in semi-darkness, that runs parallel to the picture plane; it has a monumental gateway flanked by attached columns. Above these runs a cornice, enlivening the masonry that on the extreme right projects forward at right angles. To the left of this the wall at the top is broken by a window. The central group in the background stands at the top of a flight of steps leading down from the gateway; only parts of the bottom steps are visible. Adjoining the steps to the left, in front of and parallel to the wall, is a parapet that according to old copies (see *7. Copies* 1, 2 and 4) old copies originally surmounted a vaulting. An iron railing (now hardly visible) projects at right angle to this parapet.

At the centre front (see colourplate on p. 475), walking forward in the full light, is Captain Frans Banning Cocq [numbered 13 in fig. 2][1], his stylish black costume enlivened with a white lace collar and cuffs, a gold-coloured doublet — of which the ends of the sleeves are visible — worn beneath the tunic, and a red sash with gold lace trimming knotted on the left hip with the long ends dangling behind him. Items such as the gorget worn under the collar and the sword at his left hip point to the military character of the scene, and the baton he holds in his right hand proclaims Banning Cocq's rank as a captain. Between the index finger and thumb of this gloved hand he also holds his left glove, while he gestures to the front with the other hand and, with the mouth open as he speaks, turns to Lieutenant Willem van Ruytenburgh [14] (Haverkamp-Begemann, op.cit.[1], pp. 27–28) who walks beside him to the right; according to the caption to a copy made at Banning Cocq's commission (see *7. Copies*, 2), he is ordering his lieutenant 'sijn Compaignie Burgers te doen marcheren'. The shadow of his hand falls on the clothing of the listening lieutenant, who has his face turned fully towards Banning Cocq. As a token of his rank, Van Ruytenburgh carries in his left hand a partisan with an ornamented blade and blue and white fringing round the shaft, the lower part of which is decorated with criss-cross dark bands attached with shiny studs. His gleamingly light costume is just as rich — a yellow buffcoat, worn over a doublet with white-and-yellow striped sleeves and yellow leather breeches, has decorative trimming of thick braiding in which (at the level of the shadow from Banning Cocq's hand) the arms of Amsterdam are twice incorporated, with a lion supporting the shield. Around his waist he wears a broad sash of white silk, one lace-bordered end of which hangs down to the right. Blue and gold, the colours of the Arquebusiers (Haverkamp-Begemann, op.cit.[1], pp. 76–77), alternate in the chain round the crown of his light-tinted hat with its white ostrich plumes, in the decorative edge of the lining of his richly-worked gorget, and in the fringe at the cuffs of his gloves. Leg-coverings with bows, and cavalry boots, complete his attire.

In the middle ground some of the militiamen demonstrate stages in musket drill. To the left of centre one of them, seen full-length and dressed in red, is concentrating on pouring powder from a cartridge into the barrel of his musket [5] (fig. 5). To the right of him a helmeted musketeer is discharging his weapon [12], his forward-leaning body half-hidden behind Banning Cocq — as the cast shadow in particular shows, he has one foot braced on the first of the steps. The barrel of his gun can be seen between Banning Cocq and Van Ruytenburgh, and is being deflected upwards by another militiaman [17]; the latter



holds up a sword with the other (invisible) hand, with the end of the pommel visible to the left of Van Ruytenburgh's face and the blade to the right above his hat. Immediately to the right of Van Ruytenburgh, finally, a man [19] is blowing the remains of the priming powder from the pan after firing his weapon; in the hand supporting the musket he also holds the burning slow-match and the iron gun-fork (fig. 6). The lefthand musketeer [5] drags the fork behind him, and all three are wearing the bandoleer with wooden cartridges hanging from it (each filled with the powder of the main charge needed for a single shot) that forms part of their accoutrement. The centre one [12] also has a priming-flask (filled with the finer powder used in the pan), hanging from the middle of the bandoleer, a dagger and a sword. His head is covered with a helmet decorated with oakleaves, and he wears purple breeches of a 16th-century type. To the left of the red-garbed man a youth [6] runs to the front, a large powderhorn hanging on straps round his neck, and wears a helmet that hides his eyes.

To the right behind the musketeer in red a girl [8] (fig. 13) walks towards the right on the bottom step, and seems to be carrying a metal-rimmed drinking-horn. Behind her, and hardly visible, is another girl [7]. The girl in front catches the full light, and is luxuriously dressed — an ivory-coloured and brocaded gown with puffed lower sleeves and a bluish-grey, brocaded shoulder-cape, together with a jewelled headband, a rope of pearls round her blond hair, and a pear-shaped pearl eardrop. A variety of objects hang from her belt: on the extreme right an ornament of finely-pleated stuff the visible end of which is caught in a clasp; a white chicken hanging upside-down by its feet; to the left of this and largely hidden behind it a wheel-lock pistol[2] the muzzle of which can be glimpsed to the left of the musket of the red-clad militiaman; on the extreme left a flat purse; and beneath the bird a pouch hangs from its drawstring. The second girl, hardly visible, is equally richly clad in a blue-green robe and jewelled hairband.

The group on the left in the background is dominated by the figure of Sergeant Reyer Engelen [1][3] (Haverkamp-Begemann, op. cit.[1], p. 30). He is seated on the parapet above the vaulting, his rank apparent from the halberd held in his mailed fist. The light is reflected in his winged and partly gilded dress helmet with its waving plume (fully visible in the copies mentioned earlier) and on his cuirass, which is worn over a doublet with sleeves striped in dark blue. To the right of him, standing behind the parapet, two men are engaged in conversation: the one on the right [3], identified as probably Herman Wormskerck (Haverkamp-Begemann, op. cit.[1], pp. 30–31) and wearing a brown hat and ruff, carries a shield, and his helmeted companion [2] grasps a sword held raised; the sword and round shield or *rondache* belonged to the equipment of the 'rondacher' (Dutch *rondassier*) (Haverkamp-Begemann, op. cit.[1], p. 92). Behind Wormskerck is a musketeer [4] with plumed helmet, a pleated scarf hanging from the ear-pieces. The hand on the right grasps an iron gun-fork, and between ring and little finger one end of the smouldering slow-match; the other end is held in the other hand which is visible immediately above the helmet of Workmskerck's companion. Left of Engelen's halberd one can see a little of the helmeted head of a musketeer standing behind him, and especially of this man's hand holding up a musket that projects above the group. (The copies — figs. 11, 26 and 30 — show that the painting was once larger towards the left, and included two men dressed in the burgher's costume of the time; the lefthand of these, from his gun-fork plainly a musketeer, holds his hat in front of him. A child standing in front of him peers over the parapet on which the sergeant is sitting.)

Prominent in the group standing on the top step in front of the gateway is the ensign Jan Cornelisz. Visscher [9] (Haverkamp-Begemann, op. cit.[1], pp. 28–29), clad in a splendid costume of shiny stuff with a sword at his side; standing with legs spread wide and one hand resting on his hip, he gazes at the flag he holds up towards the light in the other hand. The swirl of his short cape and of the bandstrings at his collar accentuate the movement. The alternate blue and gold bands on the flag show the colours of the Arquebusiers, and in gold in one of the blue bands are the arms of the city of Amsterdam with the three Saint Andrew's crosses and supported by a rampant lion. Behind Visscher's raised arm one glimpses a man turning towards the rear. To the right behind Visscher stands a quite strongly lit soldier [11] whose head is covered with a helmet with an ornamented comb and earpieces between which a scarf is looped; his other armour comprises a gorget, a round shield and a raised sword — this man too is a 'rondacher'. A man wearing a simple cap [10] peers over his shoulder — as has been supposed, this might be a fragmentary self-portrait of Rembrandt. To the right there follow a man looking upwards, in the rearmost rank [15], and in front of him a man [16] dressed in a breastplate and wearing an old-fashioned tall hat, and holding up a cavalry lance (Kist, op. cit.[2], p. 22) that projects diagonally high in front of the dark archway. After a fourth man standing right at the back, this group includes a helmeted pikeman [18] who lowers his weapon towards the right; he has been identified as Walich Schellingwouw[4]. His pike projects above the righthand group, as do a large number of other pikes further back two of which, sloping crosswise, are obviously held by pikemen who cannot themselves be seen or are only glimpsed. These two pikes and that of Schellingwouw cross almost at a single point. The vertical pikes seem to be placed leaning against the wall. The pikeman on the left of this group [20] (and immediately to the right of the militiaman blowing out his musket pan), with a black plumed hat and a breast cuirass lifts his pike free of the ground in both hands. Claiming the most attention in this group is the figure of the second sergeant, Rombout Kemp [22][3] (Haverkamp-Begemann, op. cit.[1], pp. 29–30), who makes a broad gesture towards the centre as he turns to talk to a man standing behind him to the right [23]. Kemp carries his halberd over the shoulder with the point directed downwards in front of him, and is soberly dressed in black with a white ruff and black hat. His gesture largely masks the head of a musketeer walking behind him on the left [21], who in his left hand carries his weapon in the 'shoulder-arms' marching position and also holds a gun-fork. He too wears a bandoleer with cartridges hanging down over his shiny tunic. In the foreground, with his face turned towards the viewer, is the drummer Jacob Jorisz [24] (Haverkamp-Begemann, op. cit.[1], p. 32), playing his sidedrum. His wavy-edged cap and one visible sleeve in a shiny green material are slashed, in the 16th-century fashion. In the open space in the foreground in front of this righthand group a dog crouches down and barks at the drumming.

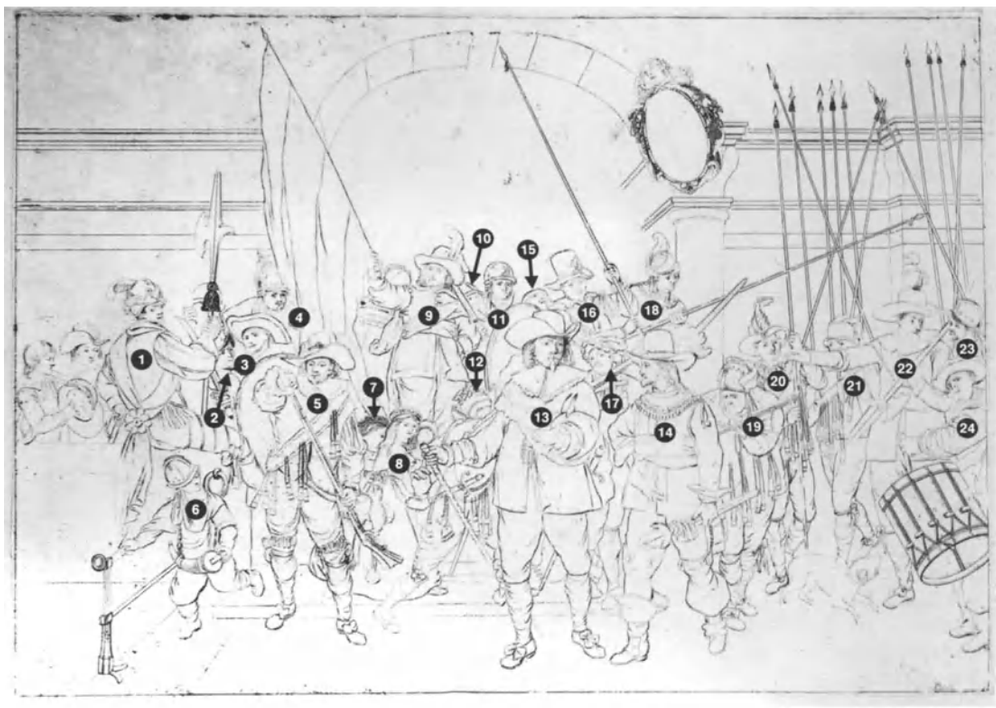
The picture includes a cartouche, probably added shortly afterwards, set against the opening of the gateway, to the right above the pillar. On its convex surface it carries the names of the members of the company depicted: 'Frans Banning Cocq/ heer van Purmerlant en Ilpendam/ Capiteijn/ Willem van Ruijtenburch van Vlaerding/ heer van Vlaerdingen' leutenant/ Jan Visscher Cornelisen' vaendrich./ Rombout Kemp' Sergeant/ Reijnier Engelen' Sergeant/ Barent Harmansen/ Jan Adriaensen Keyser/ Elbert Willemsen/ Jan Clasen Leijdeckers/ Ian Ockersen/ Jan Pietersen bronchorst/ Harman Iacobsen wormskerck/ Jacob Dircksen de Roy/ Jan vander heede/ walich Schellingwou/ Jan Brugman/ Claes van Cruysbergen/ Paulus Schoonhoven' (Haverkamp-Begemann, op. cit.[1], pp. 12–13, note 11). The cartouche is framed in a laurel wreath on which a putto head is set at the top; the wreath is overlaid at left and right with lobing that at the bottom forms a volute with a masque.

3. Observations and technical information

Working conditions

Examined in January 1976 (J.B., P.v.Th., E.v.d.W.) during restoration, when old varnish and overpaintings were removed. Study with the aid of a binocular microscope was carried out,

Fig. 2. Engraving by L.A. Claessens, 1797, first state
(with the addition of the numbers used in the text to identify the figures)



Frans Banning Cocq, captain [13]
Willem van Ruytenburgh, lieutenant [14]
Jan Cornelisz. Visscher, ensign [9]
Reyer Engelen, sergeant [1]
Rombout Kemp, sergeant [22]
Walich Schellingwouw [18]
(probably) Herman Wormskerck [3]

and numerous paint samples were taken and analysed later (E.v.d.W. together with C.M. Groen and J. Mosk of the Central Laboratory for Objects of Art and Science, Amsterdam).

Examined again in July 1984 (J.V., E.v.d.W.) in moderate daylight, with the aid of an ultraviolet lamp and from a staging. Prints of radiographs made during the restoration (5 rolls of Cronaflex film each 400 × 106.7 cm, together covering the entire painting) were consulted during the examination[5], together with the published reports on the restoration and on microscope and chemical investigation of samples[6]. Some further information was provided by the published report on the restoration done in 1946/47, which is prefaced by a survey of the sparse documentation that exists on previous treatment[7], and by the X-ray films taken at that time.

Support

DESCRIPTION: Canvas, lined, 363 × 438 cm, made up of three horizontal strips with widths of (top to bottom) *c.* 107 , 140 and 115.5 cm (the seams are roughly halfway up the figure of Banning Cocq and level with the bottom of the cartouche). It is known that the placing of the painting in the Kleine Krijgsraadkamer (Small War Council Room) of the Townhall in or soon after 1715 led to a strip of some considerable width being trimmed from the lefthand side (see *5. Documents and sources*, 6 and 7). Strips have also been removed from the other three edges, with the incidental result that the canvas is no longer strictly rectangular — there is up to 2 cm distance between the sloping edges and the rectangular opening of the frame which was fitted after the restoration of 1975/76 and which leaves the painted surface entirely exposed[8]. The lining canvas visible between the original canvas and the frame has been filled in with colour. The X-ray shows a clear picture of the partially uneven edges and crumbling corners of the canvas; the latter were consolidated and supplemented during the restoration just mentioned with threads soaked in epoxy resin.

In the X-ray image three more extensive damages stand out clearly (fig. 7), one of which could be blamed on the accident when a carpenter's hammer fell through the painting during the installation of the benches in the Royal Netherlands Institute in 1843 when the painting was in the Amsterdam Trippenhuis (see *5. Documents and sources*, 10). The holes are close to the bottom edge (below Banning Cocq's left foot), somewhat to the right of this (in the lower part of Van Ruytenburgh's right boot) and in the middle of the drum. All three were patched with pieces of canvas (measuring about 3 × 4 cm) during previous restoration; those by the bottom edge and in the drum were for various reasons replaced (with small pieces of prepared 17th-century canvas) during the latest restoration. The same procedure was followed as for stopping a hole in the centre of the red-clad musketeer [5] (Kuiper and Hesterman, op. cit.[8], pp. 31–32 figs. 11 and 12, 37 and 38). A little to the right of the head of the youth [6] there is a fifth small patch. There is also a vertical tear about 25 cm long running to the right of and through the tall hat worn by the man with a lance in the central group in the background [16] (ibid., p. 33 fig. 13), and another of about the same length at the top edge, at *c.* 130 cm from the right.

The immediate reason for the latest restoration was damage done to the painting on 14 September 1975 by a mentally-disturbed man who attacked it with a table-knife; of the twelve cuts he managed to make, a number went through the canvas and several also through the lining canvas that was then present[9]. Those furthest to the left are in the lower half of the figure of Banning Cocq where a triangular piece was entirely cut away, and those furthest to the right are in the drum; the length varies from 100 down to 39 cm. The cuts were repaired with canvas threads soaked in epoxy resin diluted with acetone laid across the cuts from one end of a severed thread to the other, so as to reestablish the connexion (Kuiper and Hesterman, op. cit.[8], p. 25 and p. 27 fig. 7). The lining canvas had to be replaced, and the new one is in a single, seamless piece. This was the third documented relining — the others were in 1851 and 1946/47 (Van Schendel and Mertens, op. cit.[7], pp. 18, 19, 25 and 27). If one works from the assumption that on average a lining canvas lasts about a century (Van Thiel, op. cit.[9], p. 7), the original canvas will have been relined at least once before 1851. From the Van Schendel and Mertens historical survey of

restorations of the *Night watch* one finds that in 1761, 90 years before, there was a commission to 'met linnen bekleeden' (line) five paintings from the Krijgsraadkamer (Van Schendel and Mertens, op. cit.[7], p. 16); this may give us the date of the first lining. Probably due to the effect of a lining adhesive consisting of a mixture of resin and wax, the canvas shows a substantial degree of resinification (see further under *Ground*); the 1946/47 restoration report mentions that the lining adhesive used in 1851 had a high resin content.

The estimates of authors who have discussed the matter of the initial dimensions of the canvas range from 358.7 cm to 412–414 cm for the height and 479 cm to 523 cm for the width (Haverkamp-Begemann, op. cit.[1], pp. 18–19 note 34). J. Six, the author giving the lowest estimate of the picture's height (less than the height today), wrongly assumed that the top and bottom edges were still the original ones, and that the painted surface moreover did not extend right out to these edges[10]. Since the width of the middle strip of canvas which has not been folded over (see *Scientific data*) measures *c.* 140 cm (i.e. 2 ells), one can perhaps suppose that all three strips had this same width (see Vol. II, Chapter II, pp. 37–40). The little that may be concluded from this is that the total height — after subtracting the width of the edges folded over the stretcher — must have been just under 420 cm. There is besides little doubt that the dimensions were determined not by Rembrandt but by the commission for the work, and in particular by the requirements of the intended location. As Martin[11] has already commented, it is possible that the militia group portraits in the Doelenzaal were set in a wooden panelling. This belief is prompted by an engraving (fig. 12) that shows the interior of the Doelenzaal in 1748 (i.e. after some of the militia paintings had been removed) with panelling, though it does not reproduce the division of this faithfully (see also. *4. Comments*). Investigation of the walls of the hotel rooms into which the Doelenzaal has today been converted might, as Haverkamp-Begemann has suggested (op. cit.[1], p. 56 note 16 and p. 57 note 18), give greater certainty as to the earlier presence of panelling and, if so, offer a fresh opportunity of determining the original dimensions of the *Night watch*.

Two other approaches are conceivable. The first assumes (starting from the idea that the paintings were set in panelling) that the three militia group portraits that were together on the south wall of the Doelenzaal — the *Night watch* on the left, the *Company of Captain Jan van Vlooswijck* by Nicolaes Eliasz. in the centre and the *Company of Captain Cornelis de Graeff* by Jacob Adriaensz. Backer on the right (the Backer and Eliasz works are also in the Rijksmuseum, on loan from the City of Amsterdam) – – all had the same dimensions. A complication here is that the two other works have likewise not kept their original size (Martin, op. cit.[11], pp. 24–25) — the Eliasz now measures 340 × 527 cm and the Backer 367 × 511 cm — and have thus rather lost their value as a point of reference. There is not much certainty to be gained, either, from a calculation using Lundens' copy (see *7. Copies*, 1). One can hardly expect the copy to be mathematically accurate, and moreover both the *Night watch* and the copy have irregular edges (and the copy also exhibits unpainted strips of varying width along the right and left sides). If one chooses the size of the copy to judge the average dimensions of the painted surface, one arrives at *c.* 393 × 515 cm as the original size of the *Night watch*. If one holds to the belief that the three militia paintings on the south wall all had the same dimensions, then the width of 515 cm found demonstrates the inaccuracy of a calculation based on Lundens' copy — the Eliasz painting is already 12 cm wider in its present state, and for the Backer work too a width of over 520 cm is more likely.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: No clear and regular cusping could be measured on any of the four sides, though the weave was deformed to a varying degree. This was more marked along the bottom and righthand side, which is in line with the conclusion that the painting has been trimmed more radically at the left and top than at the right and bottom. The centre strip of canvas, the only one to have kept its full width, is *c.* 140 cm across, i.e. 2 ells. The fact that the strips are joined with large stitches clearly visible in the X-rays can be seen as evidence that they are stitched together at the selvedges without being folded over against one another.

Threadcount: upper strip 12.2 (11.5–12.5) vertical threads/cm, 12.9 (12–13.5) horizontal threads/cm; centre strip 12.5 (12–13) vertical threads/cm, 12.4 (11.5–13.5) horizontal threads/cm; lower strip 12.1 (11–13.5) vertical threads/cm, 12.8 (12–13.5) horizontal threads/cm. Given the length of the strips joined horizontally, there can be no doubt about that this is the warp direction.

The thread density and weave characteristics of the three strips are so like not only each other but also those of the canvas of the Munich *Resurrection* (no. A 127) that it may be assumed that the canvases of both paintings came from the same bolt (see also Vol. II, p. 29).

Ground

DESCRIPTION: The fairly dark, matt brown-grey ground has become visible at a number of places due to wearing, sometimes in the form of dark spots in the light paint (as in the heads of Banning Cocq [13] (fig. 19) and the red-clad musketeer [5] (fig. 5)), and sometimes — and then more extensively — in areas that are painted thinly with dark paint and are thus more liable to wear. In this way one gets an extraordinarily clear picture of the ground in the figure of Banning Cocq, where worn patches in the dark paint at the knees, the adjacent bows and the shoes were left visible during the latest restoration. There are also passages where the ground was not covered with paint, such as the oblique dark band to the left of Banning Cocq's feet in the foreground. Here and elsewhere the ground, too, can in such cases exhibit traces of wearing, revealing the weave of the canvas (Van de Wetering, Groen and Mosk, op. cit.[6], p. 74 fig. 1 and p. 78 fig. 8).

At the back of the original canvas, at points where it is extremely thin, red strokes and dots show through from the front. The X-ray, where these appear as long and broad brushstrokes showing up lightish, show that they occur over large areas of the canvas. According to the restoration report this is perhaps red lead that formed part of the ground (Kuiper and Hesterman, op. cit.[8], p. 26); it might also be red lead occurring at various points beneath the ground (Central Laboratory Amsterdam, sections 1462 and 1478).

SCIENTIFIC DATA: During restoration it was found that the ground had suffered severely from resinification, and was softer and more flexible than expected. To explain the latter Kuiper and Hesterman postulated a ground deliberately chosen to be supple because the large canvas had to be rolled to transport it to the Doelenzaal, as well as the possible effect of boiled oil that may have been used to coat the back; there is evidence that this was not uncommon in the 17th and the 18th centuries (ibid.; see also *5. Documents and sources*, 7). The presence of resin, oil or both is also revealed by a microphotograph under UV fluorescence of a sample taken during microscope and chemical investigation; both the canvas and the ground fluoresce strongly (Van de Wetering, Groen and Mosk, op. cit.[6], p. 78 fig. 7 and p. 86). It is less clear whether the presence of resin (colofonium) and linseed oil is due to extraneous action — that of linseed oil from the painting on the front or from the coating of the back with boiled oil as already mentioned, and that of resin from the coating with lining adhesive — or whether they are ingredients of a binding medium used in the ground itself (ibid., p. 87). The latter explanation is the more readily believable in the case of the glue also found as a component. It is this organic material — glue, resin and oil — that has become brown through the ageing process and has thus led to darkening of the ground; after extraction with solvents the ground is found to be several shades lighter and far more suitable for acting as a mid-tone between the underpainting in black and brown and the one in light paint (ibid.).

Fig. 3. Detail of the ensign Jan Visscher [9]



Cross-sections of samples (Central Laboratory sections 1457 and 1468) showed quartz as the main component, together with red ochre and a little black pigment.

Paint layer

CONDITION: Part of the damage the paint layer has suffered over the years is found at places already mentioned when discussing damage to the canvas (see *Support*). The five patches — to the right of the youth [6], in the waist of the red-clad musketeer [5], close to the bottom edge below Banning Cocq, in Van Ruytenburgh's right boot and in the drum — have been painted over during restoration, and crumbling paint along the edges and along splits and knife-cuts has been filled in. Occasionally, inexpert restoration in the past has caused more extensive paint loss; this has happened in zones along the split alongside and in the tall hat of the man in the centre of the background [16] (Kuiper and Hesterman, op.cit.[8], p. 33 fig. 13) and above the patch against the lower edge. In the report on the restoration carried out in 1946/47 it was commented that the overpaintings encountered then were often occasioned by holes and cracks, totalling no fewer than 63, that were however 'doorgaans niet van ernstige aard' (mostly not of a serious nature); an illustration shows the central part of the picture, with the points referred to circled (Van Schendel and Mertens, op.cit.[7], pp. 28–29 and fig. 7). Study of the radiographs made in 1976 indicates that in by far the majority of cases the 'holes' must have been paint-loss, never extensive. During the 1975/76 restoration the assumption that the *Night watch* was considerably overpainted proved to be false (Kuiper and Hesterman, op.cit.[8], p. 50). At that time the old retouches were removed except for those, like the small ones in the head of the red-clad musketeer, that somewhat enliven a worn area (ibid.). Sometimes they have not been replaced and

Fig. 4. Detail of Walich Schellingwouw [18]



wear in the paint surface has been left apparent, e.g. in the black paint of the figure of Banning Cocq (see *Ground*). Wearing in both dark and light passages is indeed the factor that seems to mar the appearance of the painting most (though to an extent that is hard to gauge). It has not left the faces untouched — the shadows have suffered in general, and sometimes the lit areas as well, e.g. in the middle group in the background. Given that, until the latest restoration, there had for a long time been no attempt to take off old varnish down to the paint layer, it is reasonable to suppose that the wear dates from long ago. A different kind of damage, for which the restoration report of 1975/76 also holds a method of treatment to be responsible, is the roughness of the surface on the left by the youth with a powderhorn and in the legs of the red-clad musketeer, and on the right around the dog; this is probably due to repeated regeneration of these dark areas using alcohol vapour according the Von Pettenkofer method (ibid., p. 42). Craquelure: in some places reworked by the artist, to be mentioned below under *X-Rays*, there is heavier craquelure than elsewhere. Otherwise no special remarks.

DESCRIPTION: The architecture seen in the half-shadows is rendered with broadly and opaquely applied dark brown and brown-grey paint and — in the cornice — a dark grey; this area is in sound condition, unlike the black paint of the gateway which is locally worn. Colour showing through the paint surface proves (as does the X-ray) that the flag was painted over the architecture. The pikes on the right are drawn in dark and lighter brown.

The rendering of the helmets of the militiamen in the background shows great economy of means: a broad indication

of the metal, using overlapping strokes and both broad and thin long touches of black, grey-black and dark brown paint, is worked up at places with densely-placed touches of grey-white representing the glisten of light on the skull (e.g. with persons 1 and 2), and especially with a crisp indication of reflexions in red-brown, ochre yellow, yellow and white on which the suggestion of material and a specific (and in some cases elaborate) shape largely depends. Wearing of the dark paint, as in the case of the helmet worn by Walich Schellingwouw, the pikeman on the right in the central group [18] (fig. 4), consequently mars the effect to only a slight extent. Broadly brushed, opaque warm brown, brown-yellow and greyish brown are used in the hats. Here, the accent is placed on gradual changes in tone that give a convincing appearance of their rounded shape, seen for instance in the hats of Wormskerck and the ensign [3 and 9] (figs. 8 and 3) where further fine strokes and stipples of a lighter paint pick out the edges catching the light. The plumes decorating hats and helmets are here invariably done in subdued colours — black, greyish and brownish. The headgear catching the light are separated from the lit parts of the faces beneath by broadly brushed, warm-tinted shadows that in a number of cases include a simply-executed eye area. The modelling becomes more pronounced in the lit parts of the cheekbone and nose; in many instances the nose standing out against the further, shadowed side of the face provides the strongest depth-creating contrast, while abrupt tonal contrasts are mostly avoided in a treatment geared to a general depiction of form and type.

It is noticeable that the unity of effect at a distance that has been achieved goes hand-in-hand with a considerable variation in the use of paint in the lit faces, something that is in fact seen throughout the painting. In the face of Sergeant Reyer Engelen [1] dabbing brushstrokes follow the modelling relatively closely; a pale flesh tint is for the most part thinly applied, and perhaps also somewhat worn — at many places a darker underlying layer shows through, presumably the ground. A red glaze is placed on the lit cheek and in the lips. The face of the man to the right of him [2] — at virtually the same angle to the light — is quite the opposite, being done over an ivory-coloured underpainting the tint and broad brushstroke relief of which are, or have become, visible in the shadow of the nose. (In the X-ray there are areas showing up light above and to the right of this head, suggesting changes; see *X-Rays*, b and fig. 9.) The head has been built up with broad strokes and confused touches of a varied flesh colour containing a great deal of pink, and no use of glaze. (Surface craquelure has been painted over, showing that not all this pink and pink-red is authentic.) The head of Herman Wormskerck [3] (fig. 8), which catches more of the full light, is painted with strokes of a light flesh tint set densely over one another and regularly parallel to the fall of light, in a way that is not found in any other of the heads but does recur a little lower down in the lit sleeve of the red-clad musketeer [5]. More inspired is the treatment given to the head, rather more in shadow, of the musketeer [4] behind Wormskerck — this is painted fluently, and despite closely similar tonal values is varied in its effect. The central group in the background — made up of the ensign [9] with to the right of him the soldier with round shield and sword, the man with the tall hat and the pikeman [11, 16 and 18] — shows a relatively more uniform treatment of the faces than the group to the left. They are done with broad fields, with the two furthest to the left (and thus nearest to the light source) more strongly stressed by the use of, respectively, a warm and a lighter flesh tint set against the greyish shadows and a few ruddy accents against the nose and in the mouth (fig. 3). It must however be said that in these four heads the cohesion has suffered (to an extent it is hard to judge) from wear, especially in that of the ensign and in the face (painted thinly in the shadows) of the pikeman Walich Schellingwouw [18] (fig. 4).

The execution of the figures further back behind the two groups so far discussed is without exception broad. Thin paint is often applied in unbroken fields that give the passages in question enough body to stand out from the areas behind, while on the other hand the subdued range of earth colours and drab green deprive them of any further accenting, which would be unwanted for the overall suggestion of depth. Here and there, e.g. in the presumed self-portrait [10] and the man looking upwards [15], the heads in this rear row are done rather more thoroughly, and the shiny mechanism of the musket seen to the right of Sergeant Engelen's face [1] has even received quite careful treatment. This is an example of the selective use of detail that characterizes the portrayal of the groups in the background as a whole, as indeed that of quite a few of the passages rather further to the front in the picture. In the background groups it is found especially in metal objects — the helmets described earlier, Engelen's halberd and cuirass, and the sword and gorget of the militiaman [11] to the right of the ensign — and in Engelen's finely-folded neckerchief, with its stripes in blue glaze, and the scarves draped between the ear-pieces of helmets [of 4, 11 and 18]. A more extensive area that gives an impression of detailed finesse is the costume of the ensign [9], in fact painted with an easy bravura. Over a basis of dark brown, long and short strokes of greyish, greenish, bluish and ochre-coloured paint, and in the sheens of light, dry glancing touches, spiky strokes and stipples in a light ochre colour and light yellow, achieve a coloristically rich, mixed effect; the figure, meanwhile, merges into the background through the breaking of the colour into mid-tints that are moreover used scattered. The flag is rendered, in the dark bands, with a thinly brushed-out, slightly greenish blue over grey-green and reddish brown (as has already been said, the flag was laid down on top of the architectural background) and with narrow strokes of thick grey-blue in the sheens. The light bands consist of bold and very long strokes of yellow-brown, with sheens of light in a warm and (at the top) pale yellow; the Amsterdam city arms and the supporting lion are sketched in broad strokes of a subdued ochre colour. One component in which detail is avoided both in the ensign and in most other figures in the background is the hands; where they are rendered, they are painted mostly in a single tint with little or no variation, and articulation of form depends on the contour and the edges of the fingers, drawn with just a few strokes. In the group on the right the young musketeer part of whose face is masked abruptly by the arm of the sergeant [21] is almost the only one of the men in the back rank to be seen full-length; apart from the pikes held up at an angle, the only hint of them is a single helmet. His face is done with small dabbing brushstrokes, much the same as the 'self-portrait' [10], while the portrayal of his brownish-green, plumed hat, his shiny purplish doublet with a bandoleer of cartridges and his hand holding the musket resting on his shoulder contributes to the alternation of colour, the detail and the action in this group.

In the transition from the figures in the background to those in what might be called the middle ground, there is the nearest of the two girls [8], who is the most brightly lit (fig. 13). In the head, painted with broad strokes, one can at some places — especially in and below the slightly shadowed eye areas — see the relief of underlying, curving brushstrokes, and in the upstanding edges the ivory colour of the underlying layer. The same phenomenon of a broadly-brushed underpainting was already encountered in a head in the background [2] where it seems to be connected with an alteration; in the figure of the girl however (and in that, described below, of the lieutenant [14]) it appears as the first step in the construction of a strongly lit passage. The use of light tints continues through the whole of the girl's figure — in the honey-coloured hair, in the light grey-blue, yellow and ochre colour of the cape, in the very light grey and butter-yellow of the objects hanging from her belt, and in the light ivory-yellow of the gown. Traces of a bold underpainting that to a great extent determines the relief can be detected both in the head and elsewhere in the figure — e.g. in the hip, the bird and the knee. What is then striking is the total

Fig. 5. Detail of the musketeer in red charging his musket [5]



absence of emphasis in the brushwork in the topmost layer, where the strokes are invariably blending or where, as in the cape, the paint is applied in a mass of streaks of paint, or wet-in-wet. Within the figure the tonal difference between the lit and shadow areas is very much softened, and not used for creating a sharper articulation. This choice of colours akin in tint and tone, combined with the neutralizing of the brushwork, has resulted in the accent being placed (despite a not insubstantial amount of detail) very largely on the overall image of the light figure. A suggestion that one can see gunpowder-smoke around her head is prompted by cloudy patches of blue-grey. The blue-green of the dress of the girl behind [7] adjoins the red of the costume of the musketeer loading his weapon [5], and along the outline of his sleeve and hand is here and there overlapped by this red and by a flesh tint.

As mentioned under CONDITION the paint layer in the head of this musketeer has suffered somewhat; the X-ray shows that this head had little or no light underpainting, so that patches of a matt, dark brown-grey that in some places (e.g. along the lefthand contour of the tip of his nose) breaks up the warmly-tinted flesh colour probably has to be interpreted as traces of the ground (fig. 5). During restoration the eyelash lines, pupils, mouth-line and righthand contour of the chin were strengthened with black, and touches of pink placed in the cheeks and nose. The manner of painting elsewhere in the figure

is marked by bold brushwork, especially in the hand holding the cartridge and the adjacent areas. In the lit parts of the hand a robust flesh tint is set against and over browns in the shadows; light paint showing through above and in the ring finger indicate that its position was initially different, with its edge higher up. To the left of the hand there are heavy strokes of white in the cuff, and on the right (more as scattered accents) in the pleats of the collar. Where the sleeve on the left catches the light there is a strong pinkish red and some ochre brown, applied with a free and varying brushstroke that at the very top consists of series of densely placed strokes running parallel to the fall of light (a procedure that, as already said, is also used in the immediate surroundings of the head of Herman Wormskerck [3]). Long strokes of bright red form the contours of the figure which, lower down, is seen in reflected light, and a deep brown-red governs the half-shadow in the centre, interrupted by the drawing of the bandoleer of cartridges in brown. The cord dangling from the cartridge held to the muzzle, on the other hand, is accented in carmine red.

Even with the naked eye it is clear that the musket butt, which stands out sharply against the girl's light dress, has been extended at an angle to the right — the light paint of the dress shows through the extension, which consists only of dark (and probably somewhat worn) paint in the top layer. One detail to which the eye is drawn only upon closer inspection is a small band of matt, dark grey that on the left, level with the waist, borders the contour of the figure and give the impression of belonging to Wormskerck's shield. It is missing in Lundens' copy (see *7. Copies*, 1), so that it may be doubted whether this band was part of the original paint layer. Possibly its lefthand border shows the position the contour of the red-clad musketeer had before the stage when the shield was being worked up, and the dark grey would then be a later and non-autograph addition made to hide the earlier edge when wear had made this visible at the surface (see *X-Rays*, d). On the left alongside the red musketeer the powder-boy [6] is treated broadly as a figure lit to only a limited extent by reflected light coming from the right. The paint is cracked and crusty at this point, as well as further to the right in the musketeer's legs (see also CONDITION).

The oakleaves that adorn the helmet of the militiaman firing his musket and part-hidden behind Banning Cocq [12] have touches of a pale green impasto, set over brown, that give considerable modelling; the X-ray shows (see *X-Rays*, g) a vague catchlight on the — taller — comb of a 'morion' helmet of an old Spanish or Italian model (Kist, op.cit.[2], p. 13). There is no obvious reason to suppose that much change has otherwise been made to the helmet; it consists, like those in the background, of a collection of rapid strokes of black and dark grey over brown, supplemented with deftly-placed sheens of light. On the shoulder of the musketeer (just visible above Banning Cocq's arm) there are broad strokes of a purplish grey and vibrant green; this green recurs in the slashes in the costume seen at waist height. The purplish grey also to a great extent determines the colour of the lit part of the costume, which especially in the sheens of light on the puffed breeches is varied with a pink-white applied wet-in-wet with a zigzag brush movement. The bandoleer has edges in a soft red and a lozenge pattern made up of strokes of blue applied dry; the strings by which the cartridges are hanging are in ochre-brown and pinkish red, while the dagger scabbard is purple with edges in a somewhat lighter tint, obviously meant to represent velvet. The barrel of the musket, seen between Banning Cocq and Van Ruytenburgh, is painted with long strokes of grey-black and light grey, and the flash from the muzzle is in orange and yellow-white merging towards the right into a light blue-grey.

The figure seen between the two main characters, Banning Cocq and Van Ruytenburgh, of a man pushing the barrel of the gun upwards with his hand [17] is executed in mainly subdued colours such as a greenish ochre in the floppy cap, a warmer yellow ochre in the plume and light, and brownish greys in the cursorily-sketched glove. To the right of this, however, a remarkably strong blue-green is used on the shoulder (i.e. immediately alongside Van Ruytenburgh's profile). Compared to those placed further back on the steps, this man's head has a greater variety of tint; while this is seen in a relatively even lighting, that of the musketeer blowing out the powder pan of his weapon [19] shows a lively contrast between the lit and shadow areas, with a clear line of demarcation along the ridge of the nose and in his right eye-socket (fig. 6). In the light, particularly, this head is modelled in broad fields with a light flesh colour on the left above the eye-socket and on the sharply-contoured cheek, and a pink-red in the lower part of the nose. In the (larger) shadow areas the modelling is given rather more tonal nuances, but here too the emphasis is on unity, achieved through a *sfumato* in warm tints; details such as the eyes and the subdued red mouth are absorbed into this. A broad underlying brushstroke visible at the paint surface and running from the left above the tip at the centre of the helmet rim to the temple on the right suggests that the rim initially took a different line (see *X-Rays*, l). The plume above the helmet is painted with relaxed strokes in a subdued ochre colour, and the costume of this figure is in a dull red occasionally mingled with an ochre tint. A brownish red is used on the lit shoulder, and on top of this on the left, bordering the presentday contour of Van Ruytenburgh's shoulder, there are thick strokes of a pinkish red. As the X-ray (ibid.) shows, the lieutenant's shoulder contour further down has been shifted to the left, probably to make room for showing the mechanism of the gun more fully and thus make it plain what the musketeer is doing. Here as elsewhere the rendering of the weapon is marked by a balance between fine detail and a broad, painterly treatment. The figure, placed for by far the most part in shadow, is lit by reflexions from the right, and further thrown into relief by the black of the clothing and accoutrements of the pikeman standing close behind him with his pike raised in both hands [20]. Where this figure catches the light on chest and shoulder, the glisten on shoulder-plates and the upper part of a cuirass is suggested with spots and strokes of lighter paint set over brown and black. The manner of painting in the head is similar to that of Sergeant Engelen [1] — thin, with numerous nuances of tint and vagueness in all the contours. The head is fairly worn; light paint shows through in the dark paint above the eye on the left and above the nose. This, and a light accent apparent in the radiographic image (see *X-Rays*, m) make one suspect that at an earlier stage the pikeman wore a helmet instead of the present hat whose deep black brim provides a powerful frame for his quite finely handled face.

The head of Sergeant Rombout Kemp [22] also presents a manner of painting that uses small brushstrokes, though the flesh tint in the lit parts is rather thicker and more uniform (fig. 23). Here again something of the nuances and vividness seems to have been lost through the paint layer being worn, both in the flesh areas and in the moustache and beard; the eyes are now composed for a fair part of the grey-brown of the darkened ground (Kuiper and Hesterman, op.cit.[8], p. 50). Rising above his black hat, the appearance of which is determined mainly by the firm and lively contour, there is a tuft of feathers that is assumed to have initially decorated a helmet (Haverkamp-Begemann, op.cit.[1], p. 78). The image of this area in the X-rays certainly cannot however be interpreted unequivocally as bearing out this belief (see *X-Rays*, o). The ruff is portrayed very simply in its broad shape. A light tint showing through on the chest in cracks in the black paint shows that its contour has been moved upwards slightly on both the right and left, and a change of tint in the musket and background seen on the left above the ruff is, according to the X-rays, likewise attributable to its being reduced at that point, with an associated filling-in of the adjoining area above this (for a third change in this area, see under *X-Rays*, o). The remainder of the figure of this sergeant is soberly done — he stands out more through a large part of the figure being visible, and through the eye-catching action of his

Fig. 6. Detail of the musketeer blowing powder from the pan after firing [19]



hand gesturing towards the centre. The shape of this hand, and fall of light on it, are shown with firm strokes of a sand-coloured paint over a greenish grey, and in the placing of an accent in the form of energetically applied strokes he offers a parallel with the lit parts of the red-clad musketeer [5]. The colour in his other hand is less pronounced, with strokes of a flesh tint and a little pink in the lit fingers against a fairly nonchalantly applied thin brown and grey in the shadowed back of the hand; one may assume that the position of the hand has been altered in connexion with a shift in that of the halberd (see *X-Rays*, 0).

The head of the man towards whom the sergeant is turning [23], who faces the light, is executed with fairly thick paint and has thus stood up well to wear; at all events, it is among the most firmly modelled in the whole painting, done with broad, rather blending strokes in a subtly shaded, warm flesh tint (fig. 23). A similar economy marks the rendering of his helmet, the form and material of which are characterized with a smoothly brushed-out grey-black, a wide highlight on the skull in which a great deal of blue is used, and scattered, tiny accents of light. In this figure placed well towards the front, the scarf hanging down from the sides of the helmet is in a bright red, unlike the subdued tints used for the similar scarves of the figures in the background [4, 11 and 18]; this colour recurs in a reflexion of light along the underside of the brim of the helmet.

This accentuating by means of colour is taken further still in the drummer further to the front [24], and combined with a very forceful brushwork (fig. 28). Using mostly short, dabbing strokes that only roughly follow the form, a patch of colour is built up in this head from an opaque light brown, flesh colour and salmon red, set against a light green in the nose and moustache. The tint of an ivory-coloured underpainting can just be detected on the relief of the brushstroke in the transition from light to dark along the jawline (cf. [2], [8] and [14]). Broad underlying strokes can also be seen lying crosswise over the chin and in the shirt, evidence (supported by the radiograph, see *X-Rays*, p) that the outline of the shoulder was originally higher up than it is today, and the same is true just above the righthand part of the cap whose contour at first had a steeper angle. The edge of this cap, catching the light, is formed with broad, sinuous strokes of a thick greenish and ruddy paint. In the shiny sleeve a dark green has been worked up with broad strokes of a yellowish green and a little blue-green, while the colour contrast is heightened further by the use of dark red in the transition to the shadow; scattered licks of ochre colour and light yellow show the material lining the slashes. Unlike the animated brushwork in the figure, that in the drum is scarcely noticeable, and is geared to a precise rendering of the object that catches the attention as a lit foreground repoussoir. The X-ray shows a boldly-done preparation at the underpainting stage, where the straight lines of the cords stretching the skin taut over the drum are drawn with a hard, dry brush through the wet, light paint. The completed state, on the other hand, stands out through the finesse with which the curve of the drum's shape is suggested by a gentle but effective progression of tints, and the cords as well as their cast shadows are executed with accuracy and vividness. At the working-up stage, moreover, the upper lefthand corner of the drum was shifted to the right, somewhat reducing the bulbousness of its shape, and the drumstick in the drummer's visible hand (initially more or less vertical) was made to slope more to the left; this last change was probably made in connexion with the alteration in the pose of shoulder and arm, mentioned earlier. Both changes — of the drum's contour and of the angle of the drumstick — can be seen both from the paint surface, where the initial lay-in shows through the thin dark paint of the part further back, and from the X-ray. The dark space between the drum and figure of the musketeer blowing out his powder-pan is enlivened with the dog, sketched with relaxed strokes of an umber-coloured paint; traces of red glaze on the shoulder, found during the latest restoration (Kuiper and Hesterman, op.cit.[8], p. 51) are evidence that the animal's colour will at some places have been rather more intense and more varied — the paint layer is worn at this point and has crusty splits (see CONDITION).

In the figures of Captain Banning Cocq and Lieutenant Van Ruytenburgh [13 and 14], finally, the treatment reaches its greatest intensity in terms of chiaroscuro contrast (between the two of them and within the figures themselves), sharpness and wealth of detail. The lastnamed goes more for the clothing and accoutrements than for the faces, where the definition is limited to the broad typing that marks the treatment of the facial features of the members of the company in general (figs. 19 and 22). To judge from the radiograph (see *X-Rays*, j), Banning Cocq's head had little if any underpainting in light paint. The surface shows in the lit areas (somewhat worn on the cheek) a strong pink-red and ochre colour mixed with white, applied everywhere with blending brushstrokes, and on the nose a pink-white and a solid white highlight. The borders of the upper eyelids are drawn with brown, and those of the lower lids with strokes of bright red. A yellowish grey is used in the shadow half of the face, with considerable red on the cheek. At least in the present state the brushwork can be seen mainly in the drooping moustache, where the ochre yellow interrupts the black of the mouth opening, and in the neck. It is clear from both the paint surface and the X-ray that the upper limit of the collar against the neck has been lowered, like the upper contour on the left. Fat white and greys are placed in the densely-worked, lit parts of the collar, with sharp edgings where the contours of the lace are reproduced. In the sheens of light the gorget presents light blue and yellow as well as white and grey-white. The fiery red of the sash, painted with broad merging strokes, provides together with the white of the collar one of the most pronounced contrasts of bright colour in the whole painting. To the right the toned-down red of the shadow part of the sash forms an effective background for the gesturing arm and hand, largely enclosed by the black band of the sleeve, and in the bow and the dangling ends it acts in much the same way for the hip and thigh on the right. The figure's plasticity is in fact determined largely by the animated line of the contours of the deep black costume, especially in its outer contours (where the contrast with the adjacent areas behind is varied in order to provide, alternately, the definition of form and a link with the surroundings) but also internally in the border of the slashes in the upper part of the sleeves and the gap between the panels at the front. In the hand with which Banning Cocq gestures to the front — just as in the lit hand of the red-clad musketeer [5] — the lit tips of the thumb and fingers are formed in a strong, light flesh tint set against reddish tints in the back of the fingers and hand, which are bathed in reflected light. There is a marked contrast with the other hand, gloved and in shadow, which like the dangling glove it holds is sketched broadly and freely in browns and some black.

As one would expect, the X-ray shows (see *X-Rays*, k) that the figure of Van Ruytenburgh, the most conspicuous light feature in the whole painting, was extensively underpainted with a light colour. Something of this underpainting in white can still be glimpsed in the glisten of light on the gorget; it has a composition quite different from the adjoining lead white in the top layer (see SCIENTIFIC DATA). As with the girl to the front in the middle ground [8], the relief of this underpainting works through into the surface, but beside this one finds in the central figure of the lieutenant a conciously-used impasto in the top layer. Often mentioned in discussions for this reason is the gold braiding along the edges of the buffcoat, done in browns, ochre colour, yellows and spots of white, where the paint must be almost as thick as was the relief of the actual object (fig. 17). For the rest the buffcoat shows, like the breeches and hat, areas of a broadly and flatly brushed opaque, butter-yellow paint that have great brilliance. Other ways of accentuating the figure include the use of pure white (in the sash, the sleeves, the plumes on the hat and the tassel of the partisan) and the sharpness of the edges of light and shadow (the former in the edge of the hatbrim, the latter especially along the armhole of the buffcoat on the right and its hanging panel on the left, and at the waist along the bottom edge of the sash). Where the distance between an object casting a shadow and the cast shadow itself is slightly or substantially larger — the shadow of the buffcoat on the breeches at the lower left and the cast shadow of Banning Cocq's hand, respectively — the sharpness of the edge and depth of tone in the shadow are carefully reduced. As has already been mentioned (see *2. Description of subject*) blue and gold were the colours of the Arquebusiers, and we find both (i.e. blue and yellow) repeatedly combined in Van Ruytenburgh's costume: in the chain around the crown of his hat, in the lining of the gorget, and in the fringe on the yellow-brown gloves. A vibrant blue is used in the tassel on the partisan, a subdued blue-grey in the leggings, and small traces of blue heighten the white of the sash. A variation in the range of colour is provided by the reddish tint of the lining of the cavalry boots, painted in a warm yellow. As we shall see below when discussing the X-rays, the partisan was given its present size and shape in various stages. There is a far more relaxed treatment in the head, where in the lit areas a light flesh tint is applied (with a somewhat ragged edge along the nose), and in the more shadowy areas pink, greenish-grey and brownish paint is brushed loosely over the ivory-coloured

underpainting showing through. Of the eyebrows, the eyes and the mouth (largely hidden behind the flaky ochre-coloured and brown paintstrokes of the moustache), none is sharply delineated. The wavy hair is rendered with finer and longer strokes of brown and black. Though in the head the paint layer will have suffered to some extent from wear, the dominant impression is that here too the treatment is based on the assumption that the picture will be viewed from a distance, which will bring about unity with the rest of the figure.

The very unevenly lit foreground is treated with broadly brushed areas of brown and a sandy colour in which the ground is occasionally left bare. In the steps there are warm and cool greys, and the paint is applied rather more thickly.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: During the 1975 restoration the Rembrandt Research Project, in collaboration with the Central Research Laboratory for Objects of Art and Science, had the opportunity of examining the painting in detail, with the main intention of gaining an insight into Rembrandt's working procedure. Cross-sections were made from 53 paint samples, special attention being paid to traces of the underpainting. The layer structure was analysed both under the microscope and — wherever possible — by studying the paint cross-sections. An attempt was made, by comparing the radiographs with the paint surface, to reconstruct the sequence in which the work had been done; we also tried to learn something of the pigments Rembrandt used. The results of this research have already been published in part[6], so that we may limit ourselves here to a few summarizing remarks and one addition.

The investigation concentrated first of all on the first lay-in of the painting. In many places underlying passages were found — here and there they had become visible because of wearing of the surface, and otherwise were often apparent in the relief — that were shown with light paint. The natural conclusion was that these were heightenings in white on a first lay-in done in dark paint. Scarcely any traces of this earlier dark lay-in could be pointed to with any certainty, since thin dark lines and tones of this kind do not stand out significantly from the other dark paint that forms by far the greater part of the painting. In a number of cross-sections grains of dark pigment were found directly on the ground, and these can reasonably be assumed to be part of a thin dark first lay-in (Central Laboratory sections nos. 1455, 1470 — see also Van de Wetering, Groen and Mosk, op. cit.[6], p. 78 fig. 13 and section 1476). The highlights seem to have been executed partly in a cheap variant of lead white — a mixture of lead white and chalk that in the 17th century was known as ceruse (cf. section 1457 of a sample from the plume in Van Ruytenburgh's hat [14]). This mixture was not only cheaper but also easier to grind, and seems to have been of very solid consistency. W. Beurs, who goes into the nature of this mixture at length in *De Groote Waereld in 't kleen geschildert...*(Amsterdam 1692, p. 9), also mentions that it had a tint slightly different from that of pure lead white. The passages identified by us as ceruse highlights do indeed have a yellowish-white colour and are a little coarser and denser in consistency. By no means all the light areas have a light underpainting; e.g. while the head of Van Ruytenburgh does, that of Banning Cocq [13] does not. In the case of the ensign [9] the whole lit side of the face is underpainted light, while in the helmeted man to the right of him [11] some light paint has been placed only on the lit cheekbone and the ridge of the nose. As has been said about the investigation of earlier works (Vol. I, Chapter II, p. 24), a light underpainting must be looked on as not so much a technical device aimed at surface effect as the record of a stage in the work when the composition and lighting were being established. It appears also to have been used to make corrections.

Once or twice the underpainting is done in roughly the intended colour, especially in the case of flesh-coloured passages such as the pointing hand of Sergeant Kemp [22] (section 1485) or the lit hand of the musketeer loading his weapon [5] (section 1471). The combination of a monochrome treatment and passages occasionally set down in colour can already be found in earlier work (cf. Vol.I, p. 23 esp. note 55; for a comment on the function of such occasional blocking-out in colour, also observed in an unfinished Rubens, see Vol. II, p. 43 and no. B 8). As the first lay-in in dark paint can hardly been seen, no direct comment can be made on the thoroughness or degree of detail in it — the very free execution of the ceruse highlights make one suspect that the dead-colour stage of the painting as a whole will have been fairly sketchy. The reserves left for forms more to the front in the radioabsorbent paint of areas further back (which, as a result of the sequence of working from the rear to the front, will have been completed earlier) show a similar free approach – – they are broadly done and their contours seldom match the final outlines of the areas concerned.

One passage that seems from its appearance to be part of a light underpainting but has, as pointed out by Haverkamp-Begemann (op. cit.[1], p. 94 note 70), to be seen rather as a pentimento made in a late stage of the work is the 'feather headdress' of the girl in yellow [8]. During the latest restoration this 'headdress' was toned down so that it no longer plays any significant role. The way the 'feathers', due to overcleaning, became visible at the surface through a dark top layer, and their yellowish-white appearance, suggested that this was done with the ceruse used to heighten the dead-colour. Both the composition of this layer — an organic yellow pigment (buckthorn yellow, *Rhamnus catharticus*), chalk (on which the organic yellow was probably precipitated) and some white lead — and the fact that elsewhere it lies on top of a dark layer containing azurite (section 1470, in the blue costume of the ensign) makes it however very likely that this 'feather headdress' belonged to a more or less fully worked-up stage of the painting. The worn dark layer partly lying on top of it, and especially the fact that the headdress is not reproduced in the Lundens (*J. Copies*, 1) makes it practically certain that it was discarded by Rembrandt during the work and covered over. To judge by a drawing by Pothoven (*J. Copies*, 3; fig. 29) it had already become visible in the 18th century.

The cross-sections show a widely-varying degree of complexity in the paint structure. A great measure of complexity can be explained mostly by the fact that the sample was taken from a place where several areas overlapped, e.g. section 1455 taken at the chin of the drummer [24], where a layer of a brown-red flesh tint lies over another containing azurite — evidently forming part of the drummer's blue-green costume; this brown-red layer is in turn covered by a thin layer also containing azurite that obviously belongs to a revised version of the costume. Another example of a complicated structure of this kind is seen in a sample taken from the shadow area to the right front of the ruff of Sergeant Kemp [22] (section 1456). Over the ground there are two almost white layers that contain mostly lead white and a very few black, dark-brown and ochre-coloured grains of pigment — and no chalk, so that this is not ceruse. It is thus by no means a foregone conclusion that these layers form part of a light underpainting. Given the fact that, according to the X-rays, the ruff was first considerably larger, it is probable that the white paint is part of the worked-up first version (without — at least at the place where the sample was taken — a light underpainting). The addition of black, brown and ochre-coloured pigment grains to the white paint is then connected with the toning-down of the white in line with this figure's placing in depth. Banning Cocq's collar is for the same reason whiter, like the feather in Van Ruytenburgh's hat, in section 1457, where the white has no admixture of any kind. Over these two light layers there is the black of the costume, which overlaps Kemp's ruff (whose size had been reduced). On top of this again a grey-brown layer contains some dark brown and red pigment — the tint of the shadow on the ruff in its presentday form.

A pentimento, clearly recognizable in the radiograph (see *X-Rays*, l) on the right beside Van Ruytenburgh's present shoulder outline reveals what one already suspects from the

paint surface at the shoulder of the musketeer blowing out his powder-pan (fig. 6) — the artist's search for the right solution is documented in the numerous (in fact, seven) layers of paint above the ground in section 1461.

In the case of Banning Cocq's sash one can see, in section 1449, how an orange layer immediately over the ground (and containing some organic red) has on top of it three layers of more or less translucent red predominantly made up of organic red. The organic red used in these layers seems to have come from redwood. As the paint particle in question was dislodged during the damage done in 1975, it cannot come from elsewhere than the part of the sash seen more or less in shadow. The multilayered structure may have to do with an intention to preserve the translucency of the red in the shadow tone; the application of several translucent layers on top of opaque (and also red) layers is a commonly seen procedure in Rembrandt and in 17th-century painting in general. The phenomenon is often apparent even to the naked eye.

Such a multilayer procedure is however the exception; in general it can be said that a complex layer-structure seems to be not so much a deliberate attempt to achieve an effect as the incidental outcome of a working procedure where the brushstrokes — or various areas of paint — partially overlap one another, or (as we have shown above) of small or more substantial pentimenti such as occur frequently in the *Night watch*. In areas like the background (section 1477) or the lit foreground (section 1460) we found, respectively, only a dark and an ochre-coloured layer; and in the few samples taken from flesh areas only a single layer was found in two out of four instances (by the ensign on the left — sections 1480 and 1476). Microscope study of the often very heavily overcleaned flesh areas throughout the painting confirms the picture of an incarnadine consisting in general of only one layer. The thought that the same overcleaning might have caused the disappearance of other layers is belied by the fact that in the simply-constructed flesh areas there is already a remarkable variety in the flesh tints from one figure to another; Lundens' copy documents the fact that this variety is intentional. The inevitable conclusion is that with the figures portrayed in the *Night watch* Rembrandt did indeed produce his flesh tints directly, i.e. without the complexity of layer-structure suggested in Doerner's reconstruction of Rembrandt's technique (M. Doerner, *Mahlmaterial und seine Verwendung im Bilde*, 1921, 16th edn Stuttgart 1985, pp. 216–219).

The samples taken from the cartouche bearing the names do show a complex layer-structure, but this was predictable — infrared photographs taken earlier[7] had already shown the architecture of the gateway to continue underneath. Sampling at this point was done mainly to see if there was evidence of the cartouche having been added later, as its absence in Lundens' copy suggested; a layer of varnish was indeed found between the dark grey of the architecture immediately over the ground and the two layers of paint belonging to the cartouche (sections 1462 and 1463). In no other sample — even those from the pentimenti described above — was a similar varnish layer discovered. From this one may deduce that during the work on the painting Rembrandt did not use an intermediate varnish, and the layer found at the cartouche may safely be regarded as the finishing coat. This makes it certain that the cartouche can be described as a later addition, and the nature and quality of the brushwork in the details in it already make an attribution to Rembrandt extremely unlikely. This layer of varnish, which must be hidden beneath the relatively large area of the cartouche, thus forms a document of prime importance for our knowledge of Rembrandt's varnish (assuming that he varnished his own works, a point on which we in fact know nothing from the sources). The possibility put forward as part of the 'cleaning controversies' that a painter like Rembrandt might have used tinted varnishes is not borne out by the two samples taken from the cartouche. It is noticeable, besides, that the layer of varnish found in both these samples is very thin.

Finally, there are two observations that may be important for understanding how Rembrandt used pigments. It is striking that in very dark passages where black pigment predominates, one time and again finds particles of organic red (sections 1469, 1479 and 1477). According to a verbal communication from Mr L. Kuiper, chief restorer at the Rijksmuseum, it is normal practice to add some organic red to the paint when retouching passages in black, in order to give a tint deeper than pure black; evidently Rembrandt himself used this device.

Another interesting feature is found in the second pike from the right, parallel to the edge of the picture, where the paint used for the subdued light on the wooden shaft (section 1468) contains a great deal of buckthorn yellow (*Rhamnus catharticus*). This may throw some light on the function of this yellow compared to the far more common though also more opaque yellow ochre. The fact that this pike is in half-shadow may have dictated the choice of this translucent pigment.

X-Rays

Over the painting as a whole the radiographic image does not give an impression of there having been extensive alterations, though there is evidence of local changes. In the following account, corrections of minor importance have been ignored.

(a) Against the present lefthand edge of the canvas there is a light patch that looks to be part of the picture — it is reminiscent of the lit tip of a metal object, presumably a weapon — but is not found in Lundens' copy (NB: the dully-glistening rosette at the back of the sash round Sergeant Engelen's waist is clearly above this patch). This is evidently the only remaining trace of a feature that Rembrandt initially included in the picture but finally discarded. As a result of the strip being trimmed off at the left (see *Support*), any further trace of this has been lost.

(b) In the description of the paint layer attention has already been directed to the fact that the face of the rondacher [2] to the right of Sergeant Engelen is underpainted with light paint, thus differing from all the other figures in the background. An explanation offered was that the X-ray image indicates that there have been alterations at this point (figs. 8 and 9). Immediately adjacent to the rondacher's face there is a moderately radioabsorbent patch that extends above the face over an area that in the picture is for the most part occupied by the helmet, including the part seen to the left of Sergeant Engelen's mailed fist, and to the right of the face as far as the contour of the face of Wormskerck [3]. This contour is in a carefully-done reserve, which means that the head already occupied this position when the paint that shows up light was applied. Above Wormskerck's face the edge of the radioabsorbent patch also forms the lefthand contour of his hat, but in the present picture this contour has disappeared and the edge of the hat has been extended downwards to the collar. On the left the present edge of the hat abuts the contour of the rondacher's helmet. So while in the X-ray the space between the two heads shows up as a uniform light area, it is divided in the picture between hat and helmet. Above the rondacher's head, too, the light patch — with here a more or less rounded edge — has little connexion with what can be seen at the surface, i.e. the vee-shape of the contour of the helmet (with on the left the steep downward line of the comb, and on the right the sharp rise of the pointed brim). As an underpainting for the present picture the patch that shows up light is consequently far from specific, and one wonders whether it is in fact an underpainting in the true sense. The whole thing reminds one more of a procedure Rembrandt sometimes used as the first stage of an alteration — covering over the abandoned feature with light paint and then painting the replacement on top of this new 'ground' (see, for instance, no. A 6, the Leiden *History painting*, where Rembrandt's self-portrait was prepared in this way). Whatever caused the radioabsorbent patch, it is clear that something rather different

Fig. 7. X-Ray



was involved with the underpainting of the face, because this appears especially at the top as a distinct dark reserve against the light patch.

One can more readily deduce that any changes in this area may nonetheless have been related to the whole from the outline of a rounded form, showing up light and probably sketched only in underpainting, that can be seen immediately below the rondacher's head to the right, half in the dark reserve for Wormskerck's shield and half above it. This form closely matches that of the rondacher's hand which in the present picture is holding a raised sword a little further down and to the left. In view of the similarity in shape one has to assume that originally the same action was intended for the hand done in the underpainting. The placing makes it obvious, however, that this cannot have been the hand of the rondacher, but rather of Wormskerck standing to the right. The blade of a sword held in this hand would however then have been in the middle of the space occupied by the head of the rondacher.

The most coherent explanation one can offer for this complex of features is that in this part of the picture there was initially only the figure of Wormskerck, with his attributes as a rondacher — the shield and a sword raised in his right hand. As a second stage the figure of a second rondacher was added to the left, and this man was then allotted the hand with the sword, which was shifted further down and to the left. The area that first showed the blade of the sword while it still belonged to Wormskerck was covered over, partly with a light underpainting where we now have the face of the rondacher, and upwards and to the right with light paint that perhaps served as a 'ground' for the additional changes: at the top came the helmet, to the right the space was divided up between the side of the helmet on the left and the side of Wormskerck's hat on the right. The fact that the sword in its present position occupies a dark reserve might indicate that the change was made at an early stage.

(c) The head of the powder-boy [6] seems not to have been underpainted with any light paint. His left leg is however in an accurately-done reserve in the radioabsorbent part of the parapet between him and the red-clad musketeer.

(d) The pleats in the crown of the red-clad musketeer's hat [5] are seen in the X-ray as vertical strokes appearing faintly light. Further up one sees a dark reserve showing that the crown was originally considerably taller. Both the present crown and this reserve are bordered to the left by a broad light stroke to represent the side of the hat catching the light. To the left of this stroke and upwards a dark reserve suggests that the tall crown of the hat was combined with a brushlike plume. Hats with a tall crown like that seen in the initial lay-in were fashionable at the beginning of the 17th century; the brim of this type of hat was quite narrow. In the radiograph there is scarcely even any trace of such a brim, and on the left a stroke showing up light is

immediately alongside the hair. This brushstroke formed the bottom edge of the flag on this side (Van Schendel and Mertens, op. cit.[7], p. 39); in the picture there is today at this point the present hat-brim projecting out wide to the left.

The light image of strokes above and in the ring finger of his hand on the left shows that the position of this finger was originally different. The small strip of dark grey bordering the figure on the left level with the musketeer's waist, already mentioned when describing the paint layer, is readily seen in the X-ray; it shows up lighter than the figure but much darker than the sheen on Wormskerck's shield alongside it to the left. The suspicion voiced in the description that this strip has to be explained as belonging to an original reserve for the figure that was finally not followed is confirmed by the radiographic image. The X-ray moreover suggests that this strip was only the upper part of a more extensive correction involving the whole middle part of the contour of the figure on this side. Below Sergeant Engelen's leg there is a similar dark reserve, whose lefthand edge seems to be a continuation of this strip; on the right by the underside of the cartridge hanging against the thigh the bottom edge of the dark reserve joins up again with the present contour of the figure. This lower reserve, of which there is no sign at the paint surface, is interrupted by the very dark shape of the cartridge swinging out furthest to the left; probably this is all that is left of the original lay-in. As has already been commented when describing the paint layer, the butt of the musket has been made larger than the reserve originally provided for it.

(e) While the radiographic image of practically all the heads matches what one might expect from the paint surface, that of the ensign's head [9] is confused, a sure indication that there have been changes. One gets the impression, particularly from the relative positions of the nose, moustache and mouth, that in a previous phase he was facing more to the front; the lively motif of his looking up at the flag would then have been introduced only later. At the paint surface the brushwork in the lit cheek on the right is far from homogeneous; the X-ray image makes it likely that the shadow of the nose originally seen square-on was covered with light paint.

The hat-crown was initially higher. The reduction to its present height can be seen as accommodating the alteration to the pose of the head that tilted this slightly backwards. Changes in the floppy white collar that are already legible in the paint surface — beneath the chin the upper edge of the lefthand part has been lowered while the righthand part as a whole has been raised — are also to be found in the X-ray. The curved arm on the right has been widened subsequently to the right, thus largely hiding from the view the hand holding the sword of the rondacher standing there, which was originally visible in its entirety. The width of the floating bottom part of the flag, halfway up the figure on the left, has been halved above this level to make space for the flapping hem of the ensign's cape.

(f) In the figure of the girl to the front [8] the strong light underpainting, the relief of which is apparent at the surface, shows up clearly. Immediately above the head one finds the light image of the fuzzy, curving strokes that have long been visible at the surface as well and have been interpreted as the feathers of a former headdress (see *Paint layer*, SCIENTIFIC DATA). As has been mentioned, this passage was during the latest restoration judged to be a feature abandoned by Rembrandt, which had come to light due to wearing of the dark paint that covered it; it was therefore painted over again.

(g) Above the oakleaves decorating the helmet of the musketeer discharging his weapon behind Banning Cocq [12] there are faint traces of a rounded helmet-comb that formed part of a morion helmet at an earlier stage. The end of a short sword visible in the paint surface to the right of the leg of this musketeer is absent in the X-ray, and is thus a later addition by Rembrandt. The same is true of the cast shadow from his foot on the bottom step, which is seen in the surface to the right of Banning Cocq's right leg.

(h) The backwards-tilted head of the man in the back row [15], to the left of the head of the pikeman with a tall hat, was initially seen more from the front.

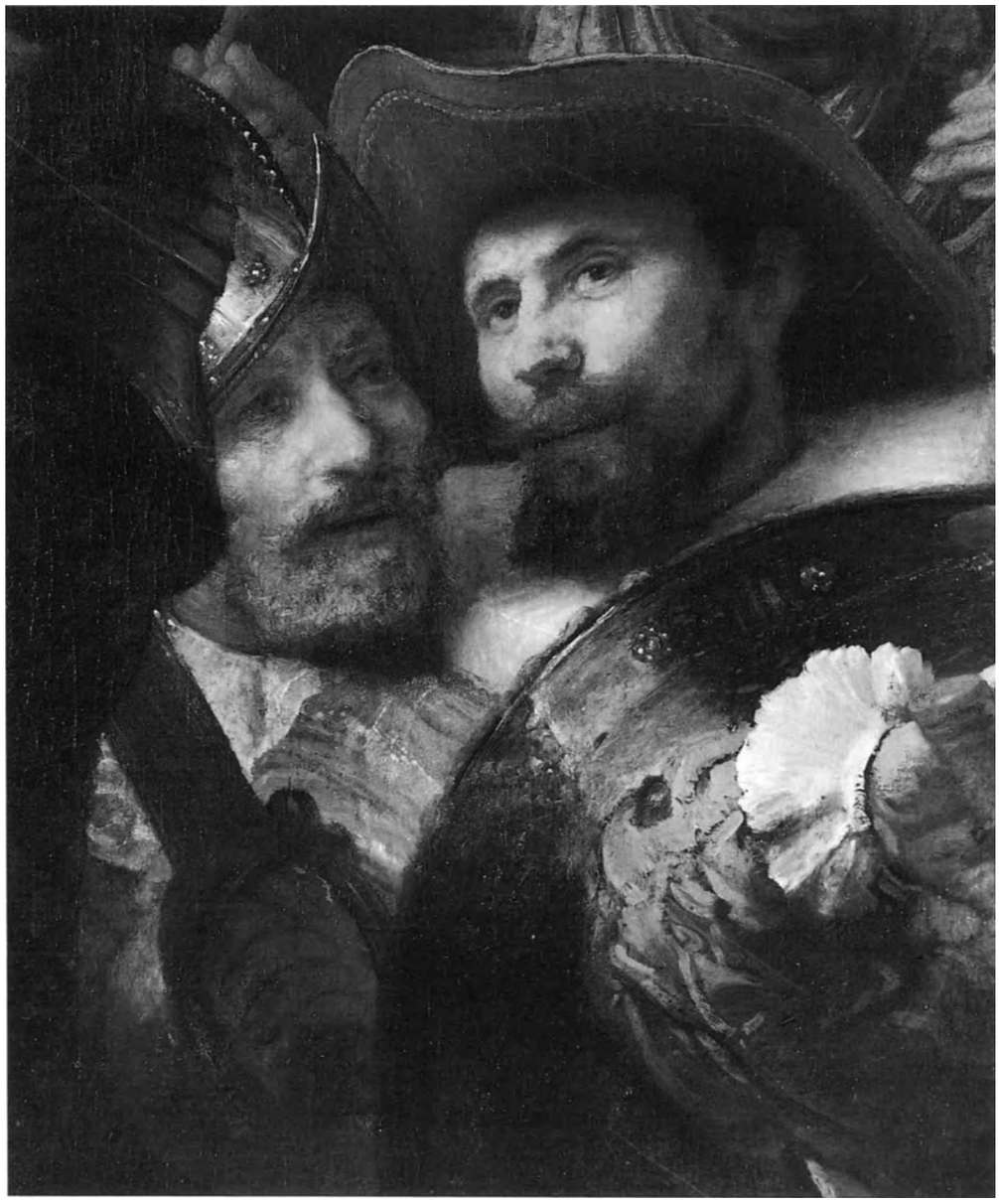
(i) Traces showing up light in the X-ray show that the tall hat of the man above Banning Cocq [16] was at first adorned with a plume at the centre front. Possibly the headgear was not a tall hat in the first lay-in, but this would be deduced more readily from the paint surface where light paint shows through in the somewhat worn, shadowed forehead (indicating that initially no allowance was made for a hat-brim casting a shadow) than from the radiographic image, which tells one little or nothing about a previous, different headgear. On the left above the hat-brim there is a complex image of moderately light brushstrokes that is hard to interpret; because of its placing one tends to think of a tuft of feathers that has been painted out. Vague, dark reserves below the presentday eyes suggest that in a previous stage the eyes were set rather lower in the face.

(j) It is noticeable that, apart from the nose, Banning Cocq's face [13] does not really show up light in the X-ray and thus cannot have been underpainted with radioabsorbent material. The pink-red used in the top paint layer (supplemented with some ochre colour mixed with white) as usual adds little to the radioabsorbency of the area. The lace collar, on the other hand, does have a light underpainting; compared to the shape the collar had in this, the contours at the upper left and against the throat have been moved down, as has already been mentioned in the description of the paint layer. Brushstrokes giving a light image show that the lower border of the gorget was initially a little lower down than it is today.

One can see very clearly from the reserve that the dangling glove he holds on the left had a thumb sticking out, which was painted out to simplify the shape. In the bow on the right below the knee of Banning Cocq's left leg there are two reserves. The earlier one is slightly smaller than that for the present bow, the end of the lace having been extended to the side in order to give more flourish and suggestion of movement. As both the previous and the present lower edge of the lace have the appearance of a reserve, the surrounding area of the bottom step lying further back must also have been revised — in the first phase it adjoined the first reserve, and in the second phase the final one.

(k) The costume of Lieutenant Van Ruytenburgh [14] shows, as one might expect, extensive underpainting in paint giving a light X-ray image, with in the sleeve on the right a loose, zigzag brushwork as a preparation for suggesting the folds. The contour of the shoulder and arm was at a previous stage further to the right, and it has already been commented in describing the paint layer that the reduction in this form was probably done to make more room for the passage behind with the musketeer blowing out his powder pan. The X-ray image also shows that in the underpainting there was no reserve for the shadow of Banning Cocq's arm and hand on the lieutenant's clothing. The shadow cast by his fingertips on the righthand panel of Van Ruytenburgh's buffcoat is even entirely missing in the X-ray. The ball of the lieutenant's thumb on the right was initially indicated broadly and its contour finally moved somewhat to the right, whereas the edge of the gauntlet was lengthened a little to the left. As Van de Voorde and Van de Wetering have already remarked (Van de Voorde, op.cit.[5], p. 53 fig. 1; Van de Wetering, Groen and Mosk, op.cit.[6], p. 84), the blade of the partisan was enlarged twice. The wings at the bottom of the blade were added only later, and the foot of the partisan shaft was given a point instead of the previous blunt end. Other changes were to the boot on the left. Easy strokes

Fig. 8. Detail of a rondacher [2] and Herman Wormskerck [3]

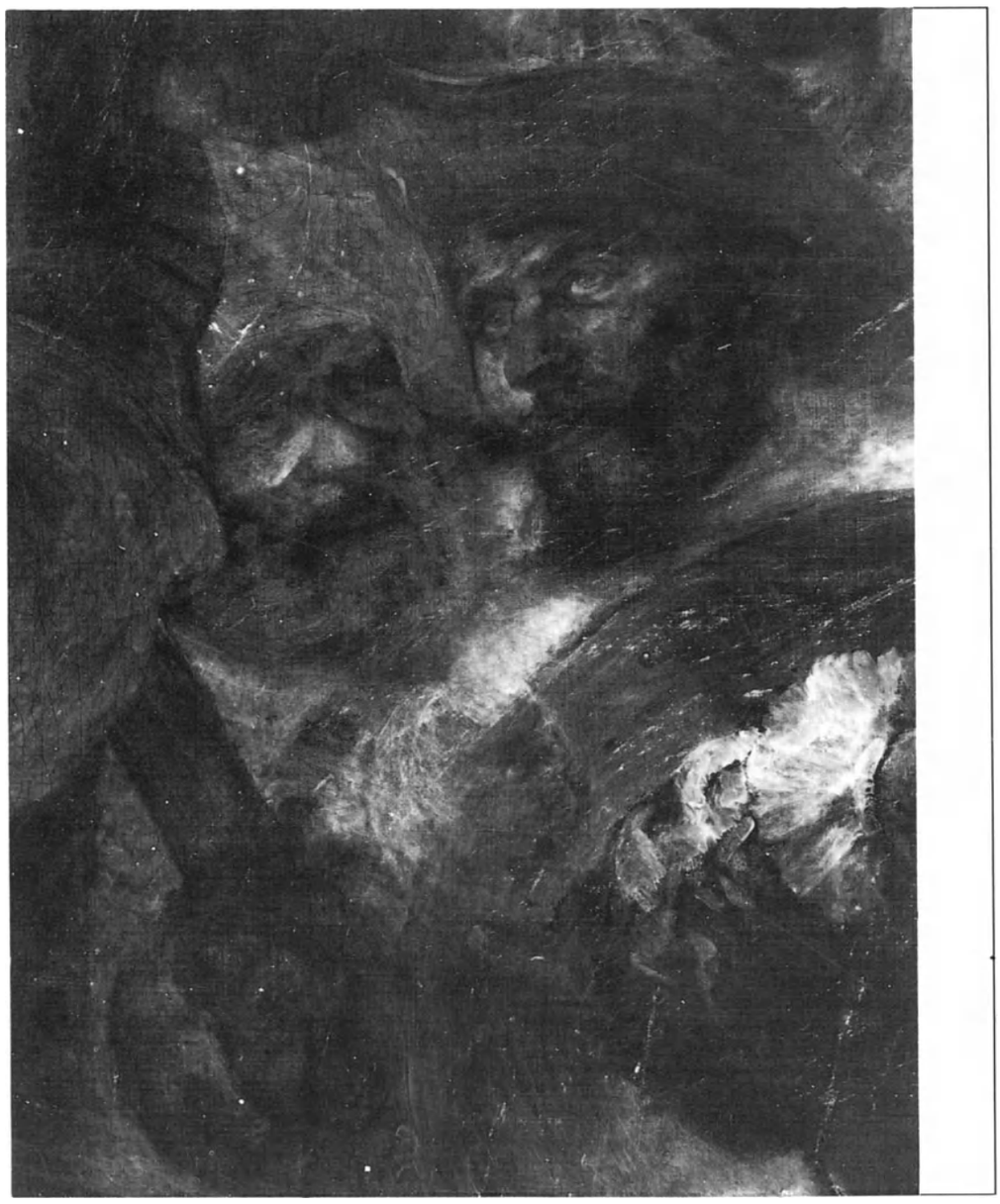


showing up light reveal that the cuff was first sketched-in as being turned down (i.e. like that on the other boot) and that the protective flap over the instep initially projected out further to the left (so that the contour has been simplified).

His hat with its white plumes and his head show up less light than the most brightly lit parts of the costume, though it may be seen at the surface that the face is in fact executed over a light-tinted underpainting. A dark reserve runs along the outline of the tip and wing of the nose. The image of the hat both in the X-ray and at the paint surface suggest that the top of the crown has been raised somewhat. It is not obvious that the X-ray shows any alteration in the brim, as Haverkamp-Begemann (op.cit.[1], pp. 16-17) has stated.

(l) The head of the musketeer [19] seen behind Van Ruytenburgh on the right, blowing out the pan on his musket, shows a concise distribution in lit areas appearing moderately light, and dark reserves for the eye-sockets, the shadow side of the nose and the lefthand part of the moustache and the chin where these stand out against the lit edge of the shirt. A sharp dark line runs along the contour of the lit cheekbone; this was probably drawn over with a pointed object (such as the end of the brush handle), thereby removing paint. The righthand part of the brim of the helmet initially took a steeper line — higher on the left and lower on the right — than it does today, and this can be seen at the surface as well. The yellowish-green/ochre-coloured paint of the plume on his helmet appears to be totally non-radio-absorbent. One notices a dark patch with distinct ragged edges showing up on the lit shoulder against the outline of Van Ruytenburgh's shoulder. At this point there are thick strokes of pink-red in the paint surface (see *Paint layer*, SCIENTIFIC DATA), while the remainder of the lit shoulder is painted with

Fig. 9. X-Ray, detail



brown-red. The appearance of this patch can best be explained by assuming that paint that was already fairly dry was scraped away when the outline of the lieutenant's shoulder was moved to the left. The only parallel for this known so far is seen in the X-ray of the Kassel *Half-length figure of Saskia in rich apparel* (no. A 85), where it occurs on a larger scale in the right background.

(m) Just above the moderately radioabsorbent area of the face of the pikeman standing behind and to the right of the musketeer just described [20] there is a strong accent that appears light in the X-ray. This is lower down than the catchlight on the present clasp (which does not show up at all) of the dark plume on this pikeman's hat. It can furthermore be seen at the surface that light paint shows through in the shadow above the lefthand eye and nose (i.e. roughly the same phenomenon seen in the face of the man with a tall hat [16] — see under (i) above). These features seen in the radiographic image and in the paint together prompt the suspicion that the present black hat replaces an earlier different headgear: this allowed the light to fall more freely on the face, especially on the left, and offered a sheen of light just above the forehead. This prompts associations with Rembrandt's Kassel *Self-portrait with a helmet* of 1634 (no. A 97), and the idea of a helmet comes naturally to mind. From the X-ray, one can do no more than speculate; the notion seems to be contradicted by the fact that the brim of the present hat stands out against the more radioabsorbent paint of the background, which would make one think of an original reserve. The phenomenon can however be explained by the background in this area having been gone over again after the hat was painted — immediately above the area in question to the right, two pikes set at an angle in dark reserves have been painted out

(the upper part of the lefthand one was left floating; Van Schendel and Mertens, op.cit.[7], pp. 46–47 fig. 30).

(n & o) Study of the area that takes in the musketeer [21] to the left of Sergeant Kemp (with his face half-hidden behind Kemp's arm) and the sergeant himself [22] leads one to conclude that this has seen the most substantial changes. According to the X-ray the musketeer initially wore a helmet, with its shiny brim just above his eyes. Above this on all sides stretches a vaguely edged patch showing up fairly light and also visible at the surface — on the left especially, through a difference in tint compared to the paint used above it for the background, while the righthand part coincides with the plumes on the brownish-green hat that has taken the place of the helmet. The patch has no resemblance in shape to either the helmet or the hat; there is however a similarity with the patch, showing up light, around the face of the rondacher on the left [2] (see (b)); as there, a possible explanation might be that a passage to be changed was first covered over with light paint that then served as a new 'ground' for the feature taking its place. It is also possible, however, that the greater radioabsorbency is caused by the paint in the top layer. All one can be certain about is that the paint layer here is thicker than in the adjacent areas — this may be deduced from the fact that it shows a far heavier craquelure. It is also unclear whether the change is connected directly with that in the headgear and head of the musketeer, or merely with an alteration made — for reasons one cannot understand — to the area immediately above.

It has already been reported in the literature (Haverkamp-Begemann, op. cit.[1], p. 17) that the headdress of Sergeant Kemp, too, differs from the first lay-in in which one has recognized a helmet; the tall bunch of feathers standing up from behind the crown of the present hat would be the remains of this first version. As we have seen twice already (see i and m above), the X-ray image in other cases too provides scant evidence on which to base any change in the headgear — in both cases it is no more than a reasonable assumption deduced primarily from the paint surface showing an alteration in the lighting on the forehead. Nor can one expect (though it is indeed likely in the case of the pikeman — see under (m) above) that a helmet laid in with dark paint would leave traces in the X-ray. True as this is, one has to comment that in the case of Kemp there is practically no evidence for a helmet in a previous stage. One can see a rounded, dark reserve at half the height of the present hat-crown, roughly where one would expect the outline of the head to be; it leaves very little space for any kind of headgear, and certainly not for one that can be combined with the towering bunch of feathers. Furthermore, the lighting on the face is in this case in line with what one would expect to see of a forehead in the shadow from a wide-brimmed hat; the hat and the face thus seem at all events to belong to the same stage of the work. A correction to the contour of the hat, showing through in the paint of the background to the right alongside the hat-crown, proves that the background has been subsequently strengthened, and as a result the hat shows up clearly in the X-ray. This is far less true of the bunch of feathers, probably because the paint with which this was worked up has roughly the same radioabsorbency as that of the adjoining background.

As has already been remarked when describing the paint layer, it can already be seen at the surface that the size of Kemp's white wheel-ruff collar has been reduced, and the X-ray bears this out; at the upper left the contour has been lowered, while on the chest it has been raised. Compared to the light underpainting the lit area of the ruff to the right of the head also appears to have been reduced through a strong shadow cast on it from the head. The most interesting feature, however, is that the light lefthand part of the ruff is interrupted by an area where the lighting is less strong; this looks like a deliberately-made reserve. Van Schendel and Mertens, who were the first to describe this on the basis of the radiograph taken in 1946/47 (Van Schendel and Mertens, op. cit.[7], p. 46), interpreted the shape of the reserve as that of the sergeant's left hand which in an earlier stage was shown holding his attribute, a halberd, in a vertical position. This does, indeed, seem the most likely explanation. One complication is that we find the blade of the halberd in its present position (i.e. carried over the shoulder with the tip pointing downwards) set in a reserve in the area behind – – that is to say in the doublet of the musketeer to the left of Kemp. The only way this can be reconciled with Van Schendel and Mertens' interpretation is to assume that this part of the doublet was renewed after the halberd had been moved to its present position. The light image in the X-ray of the doublet is roughly in keeping with what one expects from the surface; if the present doublet masks a first and perhaps rather different lay-in, the latter will have been worked up very little — or at least not with radioabsorbent paint. An alteration in the position of the halberd must have also involved a shift, downwards and to the right, of Kemp's hand holding it; so one may see here an explanation of the strikingly nonchalant execution of the hand.

This reading of changes in the area that includes Kemp and the musketeer to the left of him means that the figure of the latter has been to a great extent reworked. It is noteworthy that the only drawing so far that bears a more than superficial resemblance to one of the figures in the *Night watch* (attributed in fact to Govaert Flinck; fig. 25) can be compared with this musketeer (see *4. Comments*).

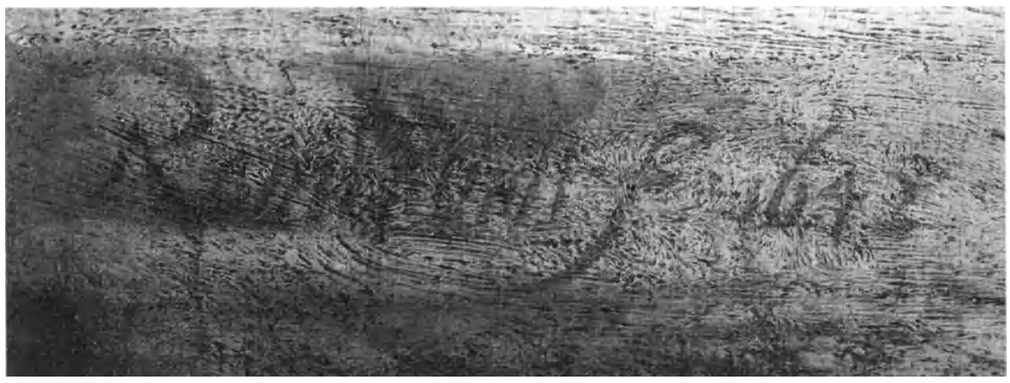
For all that, the real interest of the observations prompted by the radiograph of the painting's righthand part we have been describing lies not in the mere fact of there being demonstrable or probable changes, but in the reasons behind them. Time and again the areas concerned — however they have come into being — provide accents, in a variety of colours (the musketeer to the left of Kemp with his brownish-green hat and purplish shiny doublet), in black (the hats of the pikeman and Kemp), or in white (Kemp's ruff, from which an obstructive element that interfered with the light area was removed). All these changes seem to be an appropriate means of enlivening a part of the scene that is furthest from the source of light.

(p) Most of the changes made to the figure of the drummer [24] can already be detected at the paint surface; traces of them are plainly evident in the X-ray. The brim of his cap, catching the light, originally took a steeper line upwards to the right. The contour of the shoulder cut across the chin, and has thus been quite appreciably lowered. It can also be seen from the X-ray that the first lay-in showed a narrow, lit strip of the body in between the lower edge of the sleeve and the top of the drum. The drumstick has been changed from a vertical to a sloping position, and the top lefthand corner of the drum has been shifted a little to the right; in both instances traces of the initial lay-in show through in the thin black paint of the area behind. It is interesting to note the clearly visible, bold underpainting of the drum, which had the cords sketched in the wet paint with a hard brush.

(q) There is no trace at all of the dog in the radiographic image.

(r) In the background architecture one notices a band of horizontal brushstrokes showing up faintly light, some of which show a connexion with the light paint used for the cornice while others do not. The former are interrupted on the right by reserves left for pikes, and continue as converging lines showing the gateway's perspective through where there is now the cartouche carrying the names (which cannot be seen in the X-ray). The latter run across the whole width of the painting, including the opening of the gateway and the flag. There appears to be craquelure in both kinds of horizontal light brushstroke, and from this one may conclude that in each case one is dealing with light paint on the front of the canvas; it is not however clear what the purpose of light strokes across the full

Fig. 10. Detail with signature



width (possibly an underpainting?) will have been. One can scarcely suppose that in an early stage Rembrandt intended to show a cornice extending over the entire width of the picture.

The radiograph furthermore gives a good idea of the location and size of the five inserted patches, the position and length of cracks and cuts in the canvas and its occasionally irregular edges and corners (see *Support*), the traces of the brush used for applying to the canvas a red paint that shows up lightish (see *Ground*), and local paint loss (see *Ground* and *Paint layer*, CONDITION).

Signature

On the bottom step, to the right of where this is cut by the foot of the musketeer in the centre [12] <*Rembrandt f 1642*>. The letters and figures are somewhat worn, but they are easily legible and give an impression of authenticity.

Varnish

The painting was revarnished during the restoration in 1975/76 (Kuiper and Hesterman, op. cit.[8], p. 43).

4. Comments

When the *Inleyding tot de Hooge Schoole der Schilderkunst* written by Rembrandt's former pupil Samuel van Hoogstraten (Rotterdam 1678) was published, the reader could find what has since become a very wellknown passage devoted to Rembrandt's 'work in the Doele in Amsterdam'. The author ventured a prediction: '. . . that same work will . . . in my view outlive all its rivals, being so picturesque in its thought, so dashing in the placement of the figures and so powerful that, as some feel, all other works are as playing-cards beside it' (*5. Documents and sources*, 4). History has since more than proved him right. Of all the militia group portraits produced in the provinces of Holland and Zeeland — a recent count of those that have survived has put the total at about 125[12] — the *Night watch* stands on a pinnacle of its own: it is the Dutch national painting.

Van Hoogstraten was not alone among his contemporaries in his enthusiasm for the work, as the quotation shows. This may also be deduced from a text by Filippo Baldinucci likewise dating from some decades after the painting but seen as reflecting judgment from the 1640s. On the authority of the Danish painter Bernhard Keil, who worked in Rembrandt's studio in those years, Baldinucci states that the painting — the only one by Rembrandt described in any detail — won him a great reputation matched by hardly any painter 'di quelle parti' (*5. Documents and sources*, 5). As one might perhaps expect in a discourse that appeared in 1686, criticism predominates in the passage, and is not entirely absent from the Van Hoogstraten either. The painting was however able to survive this; Fromentin[13] tells us, though without identifying himself with the view, that in his time (he visited Belgium and the Netherlands in 1875) the painting even had the reputation of being 'one of the wonders of the world'. Whenever a work of art gains such an exceptional status, there is inevitably the process of fame feeding upon itself. More important and more interesting is another level, that of the *Night watch* as a one-off, adventurous solution to the militia group portrait, a genre that in Rembrandt's time had a long tradition behind it and was, as we now know, in fact approaching its end. In originality there is no, and in artistic merit hardly any, militia piece that can be compared with this painting. In many respects it has more in common with Rembrandt's work in other genres than with the group portraits done by his colleagues. Since the 1800s, especially, the painting has been gradually smothered in a welter of commentary. A great many facts and opinions, in the cultural and historical context particularly, have been collated by Haverkamp-Begemann in his monograph of 1982 on the painting (see note 1), and reference will repeatedly be made to this.

The present text will look in turn at (I) some facts about the commission and the great hall at the Kloveniersdoelen, or Arquebusiers' Headquarters, with its decoration of militia group portraits of which the *Night watch* formed part; then at (II) the picture seen as what is termed a 'role portrait'; at (III) the *Night watch* as a group portrait and its relation to Rembrandt's other portraits; and finally at (IV) the painter's 'craft' — how he organizes the image using composition, chiaroscuro and colour.

Fig. 11. Copy 2. Two pages from a family album of Frans Banning Cocq. Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum (on loan from the De Graeff family)



I. The commission

Something is indeed known about how the painting came into being. Among the first mentions of the work are two affidavits made before a notary in 1659 that served, with others, to place on record the extent of the property of Rembrandt and his wife Saskia at the time of the latter's death in June 1642. Two of those portrayed in the picture then stated (see *5. Documents and sources*, 3) that sixteen persons belonging to the company had been depicted by Rembrandt, that the latter had received 1600 guilders for this, and that those depicted had paid an average of 100 guilders, 'one rather more, another rather less, according with the place they occupied in it'. This latter arrangement was quite common (Haverkamp-Begemann, op. cit.[1], pp. 10–11). As against the number mentioned in the affidavits, there are eighteen (prior to 1946 one read 17) names on the cartouche in the painting. The statements show that the payment to the artist was made before Saskia's death in June 1642 — this matches the date shown on the painting. Though one cannot be entirely sure about this (ibid., pp. 9-10 note 1), the painting was by then probably complete. One may be sure that the execution took some considerable time, but we have no precise information about when the commission was given. However, the fact that Jan Claesz. Leijdekkers, who as S.A.C. Dudok van Heel discovered made his will on 20 December 1640 and was buried a week later (ibid., p. 14 note 16), was on the evidence of the names on the cartouche among the sitters, shows that the company is depicted as it was composed prior to December 1640, and that the commission for the work was given some time (perhaps some considerable time) before that date.

One may assume that the captain, in this case Banning Cocq, had (perhaps together with his fellow-officers) a major influence on the choice of artist and possibly also on certain aspects of what was to be represented, and how. Schupbach has shown this to be likely in the case of Rembrandt's *Anatomy lesson of Dr Tulp* (no. A 51), which reflects Nicolaes Tulp's ideas on anatomy. In a family album (on loan to the Rijksprentenkabinet, Amsterdam) in which around 1650 Banning Cocq had all the notable facts about himself recorded there is, as a caption to a watercolour copy of the *Night watch* (fig. 11), only the following text — probably the earliest referring to the painting : '*Sketch* of the painting in the great hall at the Arquebusiers' Headquarters, in which the Young Lord of Purmerlandt, as captain, gives the order to his lieutenant, the Lord of Vlaerdingen, to march off his company of citizens' (see *5. Documents and sources*, 1). These words at all events give the most evident meaning of the gesture Banning Cocq is making as he speaks.

The *Night watch* was one of six group portraits of militiamen that, together with a seventh showing the four governors of the Arquebusiers' Headquarters, were to decorate the great hall on the upper floor of a new wing of the building which was apparently completed well before December 1630 (Haverkamp-Begemann, op. cit.[1], p. *52* note 6). This served as a meeting place for the militiamen, as well as for receptions and other festivities. Haverkamp-Begemann has been able still to identify the walls of the great hall in the presentday Doelen Hotel (ibid., pp. 51ff, esp. 54 and 56 note 16, figs. 31–35); De Gelder, quoted by Martin (op. cit.[11], p. 14), gave the dimensions as roughly 9 × 18 metres (8.5 × 17 metres would correspond to 30 × 60 Amsterdam feet). In those days before the Townhall was built these dimensions were exceptional for a room in a civilian

Fig. 12. Anonymous artist, *A political gathering in the great hall of the Arquebusiers' Headquarters on 9 August 1748* (engraving)



building. Three militia group portraits hung on a long wall opposite six windows looking out onto the river Amstel. From a list drawn up in 1653 by Gerrit Schaep (*5. Documents and sources*, 2) we know the position in which each of the seven paintings was placed, and the names of the captains and lieutenants; dates for the paintings and the names of most of the painters are also included. On the long wall the *Night watch* occupied the place on the left, the *Company of Jan Claesz. van Vlooswyck* (the senior in rank as captain) painted by Nicolaes Eliasz. was in the middle, and a militia piece by Jacob Backer on the right. The portrait of the governors by Govaert Flinck hung on the chimneybreast in the short wall facing the door, flanked on the left by a militia piece by Joachim von Sandrart and on the right by another by Flinck. On the other short wall a militia piece by Bartholomeus van der Helst was hung above a very wide open hearth. The dates given by Schaep, some of which are also on the paintings, are 1640 for the Sandrart work, 1642 for those by Rembrandt and Backer and for Flinck's *Governors* (though the Eliasz. work too was completed in that year), 1643 for the Van der Helst (though it bears the date 163[9]), and 1645 for Flinck's militia portrait (Haverkamp-Begemann, op. cit.[1], figs. 35–42).

Some impression of the interior is provided by an anonymous engraving (fig. 12) of a political gathering in 1748, by which time Rembrandt's painting had not occupied its original place for 33 years but had been hung (in its reduced state) in the Small War Council Room in the Townhall (see 3. under *Support* and *8. Provenance*). The long wall opposite the windows is shown divided by pilasters into sections each corresponding to a single window (instead of two), though this may — as De Bruyn Kops[14] suspected — be due to inaccuracy on the engraver's part. The windows have perhaps kept their dimensions, but have become 18th-century sash windows. The heavy beams, resting on corbels, seem however to be original, and together with the asymmetrically placed entrance reached by a narrow staircase (in the short wall that is not visible in the print) must have given the interior what was for the time a decidedly conservative feel. The classical character of Van Campen's Townhall begun in 1648, which had already been evident in his Coymans houses on the Keizersgracht of 1625/26, was still entirely absent from the hall of the Kloveniersdoelen; the resemblance, suggested by Haverkamp-Begemann (op. cit.[1], p. 55), to Inigo Jones' Banqueting House in London dating from the early 1620s cannot have been all that strong. The decor, too, could in no way be termed a stylistically homogeneous ensemble creating an illusionistic effect of the kind Rubens achieved in the Antwerp Jesuit Church, in the Palais du Luxembourg and in the Banqueting House.

The little we know about the framing around the paintings is confusing. Blankert (A. Blankert and R. Ruurs, *Amsterdams Historisch Museum, schilderijen daterend van voor 1800*, Amsterdam 1975–79, no. 140) found one item of information in the testimony of two carpenters who stated before a notary on 29 July 1642 that they had not long before set the Eliasz. painting 'in its full framing' (in sijn volle lijsten vast geset). The 1748 print shows the paintings as let into a wainscoting. De Bruyn Kops thought this likely for one thing because none of the militia pieces coming from the great hall has a 17th-century frame[14]. This does not really chime with the fact that the paintings by Eliasz. and Backer had been given detachable name-boards in the usual way — when they were

moved to the Townhall in the 18th century these were interchanged by mistake (Blankert and Ruurs, op. cit., nos. 140 and 18). Because of the cartouche displaying the names that was introduced into the picture probably around 1650 (Haverkamp-Begemann, op. cit.[1], pp. 12–13 note 11) — less legible, but at least not likely to get lost — it is improbable that the *Night watch* too had a detachable name-board.

Even though in the decoration of the great hall complete unity was not achieved, there was nonetheless an evident and unusual attempt at imposing a system. In their varying format the paintings were directly matched to the available wall-space, which with those on the long wall resulted in an exceptional height, and with the Van der Helst above the wide open hearth in a long frieze. In the latter case the lighting of the picture was also geared to the daylight entering through the windows to the right; with the three works on the facing short wall, reality coincided with the fall of light from the left that is usual in paintings. The three painters of the works on the long wall also kept to this convention — lighting straight from the front would of course have brought considerable problems with the modelling. The placing also seems to have been taken into account in the grouping of the sitters in the paintings by Sandrart and Flinck to the left and right of the narrow chimneypiece. They show a mirror-image arrangement, with groups sloping upwards towards the left and right respectively. According to recent research Sandrart's work (listed by Schaep as the earliest of the seven) is made up of two heterogeneous parts, perhaps precisely because of the adaptation to the whole. Jacob Backer, with his militia piece to the right on the long wall and a group also sloping upward to the right, seems to have taken account of a similar harmony between the compositions on this wall. Eliasz. appears to have made an attempt to do so in his painting hanging in the middle, especially in the setting where the front of a building visible in the right background links up reasonably well in its perspective with the otherwise rather remarkable side wall of a building on the left in the Backer work. (This is also argued by the fact that this sidewall has, in a very much reduced copy of Backer's militia piece — where the original combination with its neighbour no longer had any bearing —, been reworked into a crumbling wall covered with some foliage; W. Martin, 'Backer's Korporaalschap uit den Kloveniersdoelen . . .', *O.H.* 50, 1933, pp. 220–224, esp. 222.) In this respect Rembrandt's *Night watch* is least in line with the others; in the relationship just postulated the composition of Backer's work would here have had to find its counterpart in a grouping rising towards the left. Because the various companies, or more probably their captains or officers, each chose their own painter the result did not show a great deal of stylistic unity. We can of course hardly rejoice in the originality of Rembrandt's painting without wondering what this meant for its original context, and without recognizing that the *Night watch* with its large areas of darkness must have seemed like a stylistic outsider in the otherwise colourful ensemble. Samuel van Hoogstraten's lament that 'I had rather that he had put more light into it' will have stemmed partly from the impression the painting made as part of the whole.

One question still unanswered is why the collection of militia group portraits came into being in the years 1640–42 (with a few stragglers in 1643 and 1645), while the great hall must have already been available a good deal earlier. Was this decoration planned from the outset, or did it come about only as the result of a later concept? As Tümpel comments, the hall was hung with tapestries when in 1638 there was a banquet for the French dowager queen Maria de' Medici, (op. cit.[12], p. 96). Alongside, and following, other assumptions there was for a long time after 1909 the belief that what gave rise to the whole series of paintings was Maria de' Medici's 'joyeuse entrée' into Amsterdam on 1 September 1638[15]. This certainly holds good for one of them; the work by Sandrart shows Cornelis Bicker, Lord of Swieten, and his men grouped around a bust of Maria de' Medici and a sheet of paper bearing a poem by Vondel that begins with the words: 'De Vaan van Swieten wacht om Medicis te onthalen . . .' (The banner of Swieten waits to receive Medicis) (*All the paintings of the Rijksmuseum*, Amsterdam/Haarlem 1976, no. C 393). Clearly this painting was meant to perpetuate the memory of the role of Bicker's company in her entry; but this was almost certainly not the case for the other group portraits. Of the five captains portrayed in them, three — including Frans Banning Cocq — did not, as M. Kok[16] has discovered, yet hold that rank in 1638. It remains possible that the queen's entry nonetheless provided the more general reason for decorating the hall fully, and continued in people's memory as such. There is support for this view in the fact that according to Olfert Dapper's 1663 description of Amsterdam there also hung in the great hall 'the picture . . . of Maria de Medicis, who in the year sixteen hundred and thirty-eight came to visit this City' (quoted by Haverkamp-Begemann, op. cit.[1], pp. 61–62 note 33). The militia pieces — with the queen's bust in that by Sandrart — have then already been mentioned, so that this will refer to a separate portrait that then, one might assume, hung either above the door or on one of the sections of wall between the windows.

II. The Night watch as a 'role portrait'

The known contemporary sources have all been cited in what has been said so far. Although these tell us

more than is usually the case — Van Hoogstraten's text, which will be referred to several times more, is for all its brevity surprisingly varied and to some extent still valid in its assessment of the picture — the *Night watch* presents a problem that always arises when one attempts to interpret Dutch 17th-century paintings: the lack of contemporary, to any degree consistent and detailed commentary on the subject matter and its implications. Here one has only a single sentence, the caption to the copy in Banning Cocq's album, which as a result is constantly quoted (as it already has been above). Early testimony does not, for example, include that of Joachim von Sandrart, who from 1637 until certainly 1645 was active in Amsterdam (cf. S. Slive, *Rembrandt and his critics*, The Hague 1953, p. 85 note 3), one of the few painters of the period to have committed any thoughts to paper. In his *Teutsche Academie* of 1675 he did not, in the paragraph devoted to Rembrandt, mention any painting in particular. Possibly he was, as a rival where the militia pieces in the Kloveniers-doelen were concerned, not much inclined to help spread the fame of the *Night watch*. Houbraken, writing in 1718, does mention a large number of works by Rembrandt, but not the *Night watch*.

The history of the interpretation of what the painting represents, after that time and especially since the 19th century, can be seen as one largely dominated by a tendency to tie it to a moment in time, to place and event; even in recent commentaries it has seemed hard to really break free of this. The title *Night watch* by which the painting is universally known was given it in an unwary moment in the late 18th century. The painter Jan van Dijk, who restored the work in the middle of that century, still described the lighting in the picture as 'strong sunlight' (see *5. Documents and sources*, 7), but this notion must — possibly together with the result of his work — have since been lost. Misunderstanding, possibly stimulated by the appearance of a darkened painting, led to the idea that Rembrandt had depicted the company in a nocturnal scene, setting out on the task it then had to fulfil of guarding the gates of the city. The title has never been unanimously accepted. A quite different view was held by the Brabant painter Quirinus van Amelsfoort (1760–1820), who is quoted by Haverkamp-Begemann (op. cit.[1], pp. 68–69 note 8). Possibly as a reaction to Van Dijk's remark he wrote that what one saw here was not sunlight but a 'mysterious' light, suitable for a religious subject but not for a group portrait of militiamen.

The question of 'day or night?' was to claim attention for a long time. As late as 1875 Fromentin (op. cit.,[13] p. 239) called it 'la plus controversée de toutes'. He himself gave the argument short shrift — to him, anyone familiar with Rembrandt's work must know that 'communément c'est avec la nuit qu'il a fait du jour'. His approach to Rembrandt's chiaroscuro gave pride of place to its special, self-contained character; the term 'luminariste' seemed, to him, the most suitable definition for a painter in whose work light and shade could be seen as an almost independent factor. Like Van Amelsfoort he saw however a contradiction between the lighting and the subject-matter, which he too interpreted as entirely realistic. His expert opinion on the lighting did not prevent later attempts at a realistic explanation of the fall of light (now seen as being daylight), in connexion with an identification of the setting both inside and outside the picture. Hofstede de Groot[17], for instance, thought it was at the side of a canal beside a bridge, with the light filtering through the trees; Schmidt-Degener[18] (1917a) believed it to be the outside of a city gate (admitting the impossibility of the steps on which the militiamen are standing), with the company in the shadow of a projecting bastion on the left.

The abandonment of the idea of a nocturnal scene opened up the way for guesses as to the reason for the company marching out by day. Haverkamp-Begemann (op. cit.[1], pp. 106–107 notes 115–118) provides a survey of the various suggestions made on this point; the reason has been sought in annual events such as the popinjay shooting-match, or a fair, or in ceremonial receptions such as that of Maria de' Medici already mentioned.

A problem that arises when one tries to relate the picture to an actual event is that the picture is seen as coinciding with it; 19th-century writers in particular looked on the picture practically as being a reportage. In the 17th-century Netherlands, however, the portrayal of a contemporaneous happening was only to a limited extent subject-matter for a painting — that was far more the domain of the print. Schmidt-Degener's essays[18] written in the years 1912–17 represent an interesting phase in the interpretation of the painting's subject-matter. They are in part determined by an anecdotal approach and he seems to have had difficulty in getting away from the historical novel — something peculiar to his time. On the other hand he contributed, as Haverkamp-Begemann rightly says, 'more to a correct understanding of the painting than anyone else for decades after him' (op. cit.[1], pp. 106–107 note 115). He realised, for instance, that the merging of event and subject would be very exceptional, but accepted it here nonetheless: 'These are the final busy moments before the arrival of some important personage' . . . 'the seated sergeant is perhaps staying behind to take command on the forecourt [of a city gate]', and so on. Even with Martin in 1947 (op. cit.,[11] pp. 28–30) the notion of the painting being a more or less realistic depiction of the company at the arrival of Maria de' Medici — with the appropriate shots being fired in welcome —

was still playing a large role. The most recent attempt to maintain a link between the painting and that event was made by Schwartz[19], who reasoned that the then captain and lieutenant of the company stood with the reception committee outside the city gates, and not with their company immediately inside the gateway where Banning Cocq (who, it must be noted, belonged to a different company — see M. Kok op. cit.[16], p. 120) and Van Ruytenburgh would meanwhile have taken command as successors-designate.

Alongside those who looked for the painting's meaning in a contemporary event, there have since the end of the 19th century been others who have stressed the culturally-determined, symbolic elements and the importance of traditional formulas. This approach (usually occurring in combination with the former) has proved the most fruitful. Meijer's articles from the 1880s[20] are an early example, though they were in fact preceded by H. Riegel, who wrote: 'zwar beruht das Werk in allen seinen einzelnen Theilen völlig auf der Wirklichkeit, ... als Ganzes besteht es nur in der Phantasie' (quoted by Haverkamp-Begemann, op. cit.[1], p. 108 note 119). Since then, reality has come not to be seen as all-pervading, and it is now assumed that the meaning of some elements must be mainly symbolic, albeit incorporated in a context that refers to reality. What prompts this sense of reality is the element that has inspired all the explanations mentioned — action. Action is always looked on as, to use the words of Haverkamp-Begemann (op. cit.[1], p. 105) 'one feature unifying the entire painting ... emphasizing the participation of everybody'. The caption to the copy in Banning Cocq's album — the captain giving the lieutenant the order to march the company off — (see *5. Documents and sources*, 1) is then seen as explaining what is happening. Among virtually all militia group portraits the *Night watch* is unique in being, in essence, a dynamic picture. This also poses a unique problem: if all this activity cannot be connected to a contemporary event without entailing an anachronistic concept, what then is its purpose?

Modern interpretations like that of Tümpel and Haverkamp-Begemann move away from the idea of the picture reproducing an actual event, and allow for underlying idealized concepts. At the end of a lecture in 1970 Tümpel[21] gave the following definition of the *Night watch* as a history painting: 'Historisierung bedeutet hier, dass [Rembrandt] die Korporalschaft in einer für ihre Gegenwart und Vergangenheit bezeichnenden Handlung zeigt, die zugleich den inneren Grund für ihre Existenz angibt: Der Aufbruch, der früher zur Befreiung bedrohter Städte führte und in ihrer Gegenwart in den triumphalen Aufmärschen und Aufzügen die Vergangenheit aufleben liess'. This more or less sets the limit on the possibilities so long as a link with contemporary events is maintained in any form. Unity of time (the moment) with Tümpel, unity of action (the preparation for coordinated action directed outwards) with both Tümpel and Haverkamp-Begemann, continued as always to be the basic premises. In Tümpel's monograph on Rembrandt[22] the action was described as follows: 'Compared to the Anatomy Lesson Rembrandt thus chooses a different instant here — it is not the course of the action that is shown, but the beginning. The order to march off has just been given to the lieutenant, some members of the company have heard this and are beginning to form up, but they are not yet in marching order'. Haverkamp-Begemann (op. cit.[1], pp. 107–108) put it thus: 'Rembrandt borrowed features from actual customs, like marching out armed and in costume, and depicted the action similar to what the public saw at such occasions [i.e. an actual event, a special occasion]'. The answer that both authors felt they have found thus consists mainly of the special reason for the company's marching out being replaced by an amalgam of everything that can be thought of in connexion with this. As long as unity of time and action, as a framework for the whole picture, is maintained this does not however make any real difference, and the picture keeps its character of the depiction of an event.

The process of rationalization has become increasingly more subtle since the 18th century. In Haverkamp-Begemann one sees this inter alia in the idea that daily life in the 17th century was itself laden with symbols, certainly so in the case of marching and parades in a semi-military environment. These events thus, according to him, already contained an element that can be compared with an historical pageant — the 'marching out ... in costume'. He devotes a passage to the old-fashioned clothing, old weapons and other accoutrements seen all over the picture (ibid., pp. 90–91, and for example p. 44 note 20) that would illustrate the fact that the members of the company owned these — which can well have been the case — and especially that they made use of them for ceremonial marches; his evidence for this does not however provide any concrete examples.

It has long been recognized that three figures in the group clash with an interpretation based on a coherent action — the two girls, and the musketeer in the centre seen firing his weapon. Emmens[23] called the girls 'allegorical in-sets'. In Haverkamp-Begemann we find reasonably convincing suggestions as to the meaning of the three figures. Anticipating on the discussion of this that will follow, they can be briefly summarized here: one might, following Benesch (Tümpel, op. cit.[22], p. 170; Haverkamp-Begemann, op. cit.[1], p. 95), see the girls

Fig. 13. Detail of the two girls [7] and [8]



as a personification of the Arquebusiers, and the musketeer as that of musketry (Haverkamp-Begemann, op. cit.[1], p. 88). In the case of the girls Begemann was able to discover a clue from real life. For this one has to turn to the 'chambers of rhetoric', where pairs of children can be found in depictions of their pageants as the bearers of emblems (ibid., pp. 96–101, figs. 71–72); besides, paintings from the Southern Netherlands show children in rich and sometimes old-fashioned dress in parades of the musketeers or at their receptions (ibid., figs. 73–74), though with different attributes. The girl to the front in the *Night watch*, (fig. 13), with a chicken hanging from her belt whose feet have long been interpreted as alluding to the claw in the emblem of the Arquebusiers, apparently does indeed act as an emblem-bearer. Other aspects such as the fact that the girls are a pair, and that the colours of their clothing (yellow-white and blue) seem to allude to the colours of the arms of the Arquebusiers, bear out the

presumed analogy. The motif that makes the girl to the front emblematic is however taken from a quite different figure: inspiration has, as was discovered long ago, been sought in one of the attributes of the sutler (a camp-follower selling provisions); the motif of a chicken hanging from the belt is depicted in 16th- and 17th-century prints and one or two paintings with this figure. The need to combine features of differing origin so as to arrive at a single relevant image makes it not all that probable that children could in fact be found as emblem-bearers in parades of the Amsterdam Arquebusiers.

Schmidt-Degener has already remarked (op. cit.[18] 1916a, p. 61) that firing off shots at the moment the company was marching out did not happen, and was indeed forbidden. We find the same point made by Haverkamp-Begemann (op. cit.[1], p. 85), with a reference to regulations of 1651. It has already often been recognized that the action of the musketeer in the centre [12] firing his weapon through the group cannot have actually taken place. Instead, this is now seen as demonstrating one stage in the use of the musket, as set out in Jacques de Gheyn's manual entitled *Wapenhandelinghe van roers musquetten ende spiessen* (The Hague 1607); two other stages are being shown by the two musketeers dressed in red, likewise in the middle ground [5 and 19]. To make more readily understandable the action of the red-clad musketeer to the right of the lieutenant — blowing out the residue of powder left in the pan after a shot — Rembrandt has even reduced the extent of the adjacent shoulder of Van Ruytenburgh (see *Paint layer,* DESCRIPTION, and *X-Rays*, 1). Where the non-contemporary clothing of the musketeer firing his weapon in the centre is concerned Haverkamp-Begemann (ibid., pp. 87–88), this time more convincingly, interprets the clothing as a motif that 'removes him from reality into the historical or allegorical realm'. Moreover his shooting is 'not in touch with the reality of the company and negates its action'. What is important here is to distinguish between action as a motif of movement (in which respect the figure of the centre musketeer is the only one interrupting the forward movement of the group) and action as a rationally-determined act (in which case none of the three musketeers in the middle ground takes part in the forming up of the company — as just said, the musketeer to the right of the lieutenant represents a stage following the shot, itself prohibited at this point). Of the musketeers only two — the one [4] immediately to the left of the flag (with a burning slow-match between the fingers of his hand holding the gun-fork, as prescribed as the second step in De Gheyn's manual, for a musketeer on the march) and the one in the background [21] to the left of Sergeant Kemp (showing the same stage, with the weapon in the prescribed position over his shoulder) — show an action that would fit into the actual context of the parade moving off.

The supposed unity of action — broken only by the two girls and the musketeer firing his gun — , the 'participation of everybody' mentioned earlier, means that the distinction just drawn between two kinds of action is not found in commentaries up to now: both are seen as coinciding. One can appreciate what is behind the remaining over-emphasis on the reality of the picture, and the tendency to limit the number of dissidents as much as possible: it is the idea of a parade through the streets of Amsterdam, which makes one assume impending coordination of conduct even where what is mostly involved is coordination of the figure composition as an artistic means. As will be argued below, this plays a role with far more than just the two red-clad musketeers. Where the non-contemporary dress and accoutrements are concerned, it does indeed seem for the time being (and not just in a single instance) as if these elements shift the picture away from the context of reality; this was certainly more immediately evident to a contemporary viewer than it is to us, for whom everything we see is the fashion and accoutrements of centuries ago. A similar use of this is found, if anywhere, in Rembrandt's own repertoire where we recognize 16th-century dress in (to mention a few of the portraits from the same period) the etched *Portrait of Johannes Uyttenbogaert* dated 1639 (B. 281), the London *Self-portrait* dated 1640 (no. A 139) and the Kassel *Half-length figure of Saskia van Uylenburgh* presumably completed in 1642 (no. A 85). Haverkamp-Begemann (op. cit.[1], p. 80) also mentions the etching, as a 'role portrait ... with historical references and allegorizing allusions', and applies (ibid., p. 73) the term 'role portrait' also to the *Night watch*. It does however seem necessary, in order to arrive at a consistent reading of the picture, to shift the accent firmly onto what separates it from the contemporary event — onto the symbolic, onto personification, emblem and allegory.

This standpoint has already in the past been adopted by Hellinga[24], but his explanations — assembled too arbitrarily from colour symbolism and Ripa's *Iconologia* — did not provide any useful result. The interpretation of the painting that will be given below is based on two fundamental notions. First, it is assumed that the picture is governed by thematic unity, in the sense that the meaning of the various components must not be looked for in one case in symbolism and in another in contemporary reality. Working from the manifestly symbolic character of the figures of the two girls, preference will always be given to symbolic meaning. Secondly, it is assumed that the picture is complete in itself, meaning that its cohesion will not be made dependent on a projection forward in time; this

would seem just as unsuitable an approach as the explanations of the fall of light (already mentioned, and long abandoned) by extrapolating the surroundings beyond the framework of the painting. Action and rest will not therefore be looked on as something that *will* be directed towards a single goal, but as the expression of a number of interrelated themes. Reading the picture in this way is in line with Van de Waal's discussion of Rembrandt's *Syndics* (Br. 415), where the author denounced the expansion of that painting's subject in both time and space as a common fallacy when it comes to interpreting 17th-century pictures (H. van de Waal, 'The Syndics and their legend', *Steps towards Rembrandt*, Amsterdam-London 1974, pp. 247–292, esp. 252–253). Further orientation relating to the cultural and iconographic context will perhaps in the future make it possible to define the themes contained in the *Night watch* more precisely than will be done in the present somewhat tentative interpretation.

Among the articles written by Schmidt-Degener in the second decade of this century, the two earliest in particular concentrate on an assumed relationship between the *Night watch* and Rembrandt's *Concord of the State* (no. A 135). The author (op. cit.[18] 1912, pp. 12–13) found specific similarities in these two works in individual motifs, and pointed to the emphasis placed, in the allegorical representation of the *Concord*, on the role of Amsterdam, whose arms topped with the imperial crown occupy a central position in the series of city coats-of-arms linked by clasped hands (the symbol of concord). The three S. Andrew's crosses of the arms of Amsterdam can also be seen on the saddlecloth of the white horse to the right. The exact meaning of the allegory is unclear, but its militant character is plain, and led Schmidt-Degener (op. cit.[18] 1916b, p. 47) in the end to conclude that the *Concord* grisaille may have been intended as a draft for a decoration of the great hall of the Arquebusiers' Headquarters; it would be beyond our present scope to examine this further. No clear evidence for the purpose of the grisaille has been discovered since. Prior to this assumption the author developed the idea of a relationship between the two works that is as singular as it is interesting. He called (op. cit.[18] 1912, pp. 19–20) the *Concord* a 'preliminary study' for the *Night watch*, and asked 'Why is the Company not portrayed thus, as a living allegory on the soldier's calling?' Besides the reasons he himself thought of there is another, fundamental one — in the *Night watch* Rembrandt was being commissioned to paint a group portrait, and this aspect is wholly absent from the *Concord*. One has to wonder however whether Schmidt-Degener's conclusion is correct — that allegory no longer played any part in the assembling of the scene of the *Night watch*, and that only the figure of the girl to the front remained as an 'emblematic vestige'.

The thematic similarity (which one must term only partial) that the author claimed to find in the two works has its counterpart in a likewise partial similarity of motifs, so long as this is understood broadly enough. It includes part of the scene of the *Concord* and all of that of the *Night watch*. In the first we see, mostly on the right, high walls or ramparts with an opening in the middle with soldiers gathered in front of it. We find the same in the *Night watch*, though the motif is placed parallel to the picture plane and everything has a more civilian character – – both the burghers of District II who are portrayed (Haverkamp-Begemann, op. cit.[1], Ch. II) and the setting, here a wall pierced by a monumental gateway and, at the upper right, a window. The horsemen who dominate the *Concord*, and who never occur in militia portraits, have disappeared. The spurred cavalry boots worn by officers and sergeants (by the lieutenant in the *Night watch*, for instance, and by the captain, ensign and a sergeant in Van der Helst's work for the great hall) are an indication that there will not in fact have been a total absence of cavalry, but for obvious reasons it cannot have been a suitable motif for a group portrait. In the *Night watch* Van Ruytenburgh's costume does not seem to be the only hint of the horseman — recently it has been suggested by Kist (op. cit.[2], p. 22) that the weapon held up by the man with the tall hat [16] is a cavalry lance. This strengthens the similarity with the *Concord*, where apart from a flag there is also a lance (the weapon of the rider on the white horse) projecting above the group in front of the gateway. It is plain from other matching motifs found by Schmidt-Degener that in Rembrandt's mind the *Night watch* and the *Concord* were in some way connected. In the centre of the *Concord* there is an oaktree on an eminence; in the *Night watch* this feature (the meaning of which will be discussed later) can be recognized in reduced form in the oakleaves on the helmet of the musketeer in the centre firing his weapon [12]. The arms of Amsterdam on the saddlecloth of the white horse reappear twice in the *Night watch* in the embroidered edge of Van Ruytenburgh's buffcoat. Finally, there are identical movement motifs in the groups standing on the right: in the *Concord* a man turns to talk to someone to the right while he points to the left, just as Sergeant Kemp [22] does in the *Night watch* (figs. 14 and 15). The juxtaposition of both elements, the material (ramparts and walls) and the human, that have a part to play in the defence of the state or city (in the Republic this generally meant the same thing) recurs in contemporary texts, where the human element naturally takes precedence in a comparison. An example of this can be found in a print with a poem by Jan Jansz. Starter on the 'Citizens of

Fig. 14. Detail of *The Concord of the State* (no. A 135). Rotterdam, Museum Boymans-van Beuningen



Fig. 15. Detail



Amsterdam marching out to the assistance of Zwolle ... on 26 September 1622', already cited in connexion with the *Night watch* and the *Concord* by Schmidt-Degener (op. cit.[18] 1914a), Hellinga (op. cit.[24]) and others. The print shows the Amsterdam companies on the march, with the ramparts and entrenchments around Zwolle in the background. The poem bears a motto taken from Plutarch:

The strength of the State lies more in united
and well-armed citizens than in strong fortresses.

With some research the range of examples of such links in contemporary literature could undoubtedly be expanded.

By placing the architecture and positioning the group in the *Night watch* parallel to the picture plane, Rembrandt has ensured an even distribution (though, as has already been said, probably to the disadvantage of the link with the Backer painting). The gateway rising in the centre has in the literature been associated with a city gate, but also with a triumphal arch. On the basis of the context we have just been proposing a city gate seems the most appropriate, provided it is taken as a gate of Rembrandt's own design and not an actual one. In suggesting a triumphal arch reference is usually made to his etching, dating from *c.* 1641, of *The triumph of Mordechai* (B. 40, fig. 16), where a monumental gateway is also seen in the centre; in calling this a triumphal arch one is however being rather easily persuaded by the suggestion implicit in the title. To all appearances this gateway is 'the king's gate' at which according to the biblical account (Esther 6:10) Mordechai the Jew was seated, and from the narrative it may be deduced that it is the entrance to the palace. So one is dealing here primarily with something other than a triumphal arch, and the etching provides no real argument for seeing the gateway in the *Night watch* as such.

If we now shift our attention from the broad lines of the picture to a component such as the figures of the two girls — and the one at the front in particular — it makes sense to put pictorial arguments first. With a painter like Rembrandt, whose management of a picture relies to a great extent on chiaroscuro, the centre of the lighting often coincides with what is important for the meaning. This surely also applies to these figures, of whom the girl to the front occupies one of the two focuses of the lighting. Compared to the other centre, the figure of the lieutenant, the impact of the girl's figure is moderated — the lieutenant is given the brightest white, the strongest contrasts of light and dark and colour, and the most sharply-drawn detail. In the girl, on the contrary, the brushstroke is blended and the artist uses a variation of light colours of limited tonal range; this seems to provide one reason why Rembrandt chose a white chicken for hinting at the emblem of the claw, which was in reality depicted as that of a raptor. The difference in treatment from the figure of the lieutenant fosters the illusion of a greater distance. At the same time, however, it lends the girl's figure something of the immaterial, which leads to her occurring in commentaries as 'fée' (Vosmaer) with an 'existence incorporelle' (Fromentin). Rembrandt usually (i.e. in biblical scenes) reserves this effect for figures connected with the supernatural; the accent on the light form as a whole is then the expression of radiating light that outshines the internal detail. Weisbach[25] describes the impression the girl's figure made on him in comparable terms, as 'eine gleichsam Eigenlicht ausstrahlende Masse — wie auf biblischen Bildern das Christuskind oder andere heilige Körper, denen ein mysteriöser Eindruck verliehen werden soll'. It may have been the same impression that prompted Quirinus van Amelsfoort to the criticism that a 'mysterious' light like that in the *Night watch* was suited only to subjects such as a Transfiguration or a Birth of Christ. But even apart from this (somewhat debatable) aspect it seems that the girl must be given an identity other than the mortals among whom we see her.

In trying to identify her it seems wise, as in the earlier discussion of the figure's origin, to take account of her having a companion, albeit hardly

Fig. 16. Rembrandt, *The triumph of Mordechai*; etching (B. 40; reproduced in reverse)



visible. The sole specific feature the second girl brings to the picture is the blue of her dress; seeing this blue, taken together with the yellowish-white of the first girl's dress, as the colours of the coat-of-arms of the Arquebusiers — a golden claw on a blue field — has the merit of involving the girl to the rear in the whole in a meaningful manner. In combination with the allusion to the emblem, the solution that has already been proffered of a personification of the Arquebusiers — though spread over two figures — seems more credible than the suggestion by Hellinga (op. cit.[24], p. 13) who identified the girl to the front as 'een kleine victoria' and her companion as 'gaudia'. She holds a drinking-horn of which one sees only the upper part. In the Middle Ages a drinking-horn was also known in Dutch as a '(gryphon's) claw'; it has recently been assumed (in: *Schutters in Holland*, op. cit.[12], p. 162) that the private citizens who in 1522 donated the drinking horn that is probably depicted here (and is still in existence in the Amsterdam Rijksmuseum) had in mind the similarity in name with the emblem. It is hard to draw a line here between the particular and the general — after all, the Archers and Crossbowmen, too, had this kind of ceremonial drinking-horn. Among the objects at her belt the girl wears a wheellock pistol[2], the butt of which can be seen to the left of the feet of the chicken, and a pouch hanging by its drawstring. In the latter has been seen an allusion to the Arquebusiers as the guardians of prosperity; her rich clothing could then also be an expression of this.

With a shift of view to the symbolic the girls become not so much 'allegorical in-sets' as a centre-point around which other symbols are gathered. These have a constantly differing relationship to reality — from pure symbol in the oakleaves to the right to a symbol like the flag above that in practice acts as such, to a practical object like the musket on the left that sums up the activity and raison d'être of the citizens' militia. In the latter two objects, which also occur in reality, Rembrandt has at the same time satisfied his portrait commission. A collection of symbols like this is not unlike that of objects of differing nature, sometimes carried by persons, that we traditionally find in sculpture round entries and gateways, or in their equivalent on paper, the title page.

The firearm always held an additional significance for the Arquebusiers, to which Tümpel (op. cit.[21], pp. 170–171) has already drawn attention. In their 16th-century group portraits we see the weapon, still in the form of the caliver of that time, embroidered together with the claw on the sleeves of the militiamen as their 'blazon or arms ... a claw holding a firelock' (C. Beudeker, *Oudheden van Amstelredamme*, ms. Amsterdam Municipal Archives, quoted by Haverkamp-Begemann, op. cit.[1], p. 46 note 26). An early 16th-century name-stone, the only remaining fragment of their old Amsterdam headquarters in the 'Swych Utrecht' tower (Amsterdams Historisch Museum, Haverkamp-Begemann, ibid., fig. 53) bears two crossed calivers in the centre, flanked by two raptor's claws. Still in situ in Haarlem, for example, are two crossed calivers as a symbol embellishing the gateway that in 1612–13 was added, possibly by the city stonemason Lieven de Key, to the building of the Arquebusiers Headquarters. It would seem that in the 17th century the claw gradually became the dominant symbol, and in Flinck's portrait of the governors done for the great hall we find in a cartouche this motif alone. Dapper too in 1663 describes (as Haverkamp-Begemann reports, op. cit.[1], pp. 46–47 note 27) only the claw as a motif in the windows — probably those of the great hall — and on objects in pewter and silver. A combination of claw, wreath (though not of oakleaves) and firearms in an order comparable with that in the *Night watch* is, finally, found in a vignette (ibid., fig. 56) above a poem dating from 1659 dedicated to the S. Michael's Order that had its headquarters in the Kloveniersdoelen: here again a claw alone occupies the field of a wreathed cartouche behind which there are two crossed firearms. Nonetheless the function of bearing a symbol explains the prominent place given in the *Night watch* to the musketeer clad in red seen full-length. While his action, pouring powder into the barrel of his musket, is demonstrated in De Gheyn's manual by a musketeer with his back to us, Rembrandt has his facing the viewer so that the weapon is seen in its entirety.

In considering the musketeer firing his weapon, to the right of the girl, it is once again important to start from pictorial arguments. Throughout the picture Rembrandt has been very selective in what he does or does not show, thereby ensuring

optimum effect; later, when discussing the configuration of the picture, we shall look at this more closely. Around the captain the artist has used various devices intended to emphasize this central figure. Thus while Banning Cocq's face is shown in three-quarters, those immediately around him are in full profile, on a smaller scale or (as in the case of the musketeer) even not seen at all. The action of the musketeer, the most violent in the picture, is rather brusquely masked by the figure of the captain, so that its effect is partly neutralized; at the same time, it links the figures of the officers to the most spectacular moment in the use of a musket, the moment at which we see it in operation with the barrel belching flame and smoke from the powder spreading all around (the worn remains of this were recognized for what they are during the latest restoration). The musketeer has a thematic link with the man deflecting the musket-barrel upwards with one hand and holding a sword up high with the other (to the right above the lieutenant's hat). Together they illustrate — as Haverkamp-Begemann (op. cit.[1], p. 88) has commented — the musket-drill needed to fit the militia for its task. In the introduction to De Gheyn's manual this is placed in the broadest context, that of general interest: 'It is out of all doubt, that neither the quietnesse of a common wealthe without armes, nor the armes without convenient or due exercise, can stand or be maintained', as the contemporaneous English edition *Exercise of Armes* has it. Handling the weapon, with the element of drill illustrated more particularly by these two figures (the two red-clad musketeers show other stages), forms the theme that is inserted in the middle ground of the picture. The use of more than one figure for showing a particular concept is found repeatedly in the centre of the picture — the two girls have already been discussed as an example of this.

The oak or the oakleaves that we meet in the *Night watch* crowning the helmet of the musketeer firing his weapon are an ancient and commonly-occurring symbol. According to Van Mander 'the wreath of oakleaves with acorns meant of old the protection of the citizens' and in a more general sense the oaktree could stand for virtue and strength ('Den Eyck-looven krans met den Eyckelen, beteyckende van outs de bescherminghe der Borgers . . . De Eycke beteeckent oock deught, en sterckheyt . . .'; C. van Mander, *Uytleggingh . . .*, 2nd edn Amsterdam 1616, fol. 120). We find oakleaves, for instance, worked into links of the ceremonial collar of both the Amsterdam Arquebusiers and Archers (*Schutters in Holland*[12], p. 98 fig. 70 and p. 278 cat. no. 92 respectively); as trophies for the best marksman at the annual shooting-matches these collars were comparable to the presentday prize cup. In a modello by Artus Quellinus or his studio for a marble relief (never executed) that was to have been placed in the newly-built Townhall in memory of Frans Banning Cocq as burgomaster, one can see his coat-of-arms hanging against a treetrunk wreathed in oakleaves (fig. 20). And of course we find the oak, in combination with the palm, in the centre of Rembrandt's *Concord of the State*. Oak- and palmleaves appear in a similar combination in a poem by Jan Vos on a portrait of Cornelis Bicker, Lord of Swieten, the captain in Sandrart's militia group portrait in the great hall of the Arquebusiers (*Dichtkunst van Jan Vos.* Verzaamelt en uytgegeven Door J.v.D., Amsterdam 1658, p. 236). According to the title, the poem's subject was a portrait painted by Flinck (possibly Von Moltke *Flinck*, no. 196; Blankert and Ruurs, *Amsterdams Historisch Museum. Voorlopige Katalogus*, no. 153):

'Dus ziet men Zwieten, die, door dapperheid en raden,
De Vryheid aan het Y bevrijde voor gevaar
Die Hoofddeugdt past een krans van palm en eike bladen . . .', etc.
(Thus we see Zwieten who, by bravery and wisdom, / delivered freedom on the IJ from danger/ This signal virtue a crown of palm- and oakleaves befits . . .)

It is hard to tell for whom the crown of oakleaves in the *Night watch* is intended — for the Arquebusiers in general or for their captain in particular. Perhaps we are not meant to choose; the fact that the crown is worn by a figure whose face remains hidden could be interpreted in either way. This makes him anonymous, and for that very reason he may take on the function of personifying musketry in general that Haverkamp-Begemann (op. cit.[1], pp. 87–88) gave him. Yet a figure with the face hidden might also be a suitable way of presenting the crown as an attribute belonging to the captain: in such a context the role of the figure would be reduced to that of a mere support immediately alongside the captain. This suppression of the individual features in order to expand the function of a motif, or indeed make it work at all, finds a parallel in the chicken, where the allusion to the symbol is made easier by its head being out of sight.

In the figures of the two officers, as well, allusion seems to have some role to play, using in part as with the girls the symbolism of colour. Haverkamp-Begemann (op. cit.[1], pp. 76–77) has pointed out that the alternation of blue and yellow in details of the lieutenant's costume (in the beads or jewels round the crown of his hat, in the edge of lining seen underneath the gorget, and at the edges of the cuffs of his gloves) allude to the colours of the Arquebusiers, or possibly also to those of the Amsterdam War Council whose colours were also blue and gold: the device 'Pugno pro Patria' in gold on a blue field (the very uneven proportions in the

Fig. 17. Detail of lieutenant Willem van Ruytenburgh [14]



use of the two colours — with yellow for the heraldic 'or' —, both here and in the girls, comes into a discussion later of colour as an element in the picture). In the militia paintings by Eliasz. and Backer done for the great hall we meet the combination of dark blue and gold in the sashes of most of the sitters. In those by Flinck and Van der Helst there are also orange, white and light blue in the sashes, which one may take it represent the Republic's flag of that time, similar to the convention followed by the Haarlem militias after 1624. The fiery red of the sash worn by Banning Cocq does not fit into either of these colour combinations. Hellinga (op. cit.[24], pp. 12–13) has commented that the red of the sash may be taken as an allusion to the arms of Amsterdam, where this colour appears; the black of the costume, on the other hand, he believed to represent an abstract concept such as 'wisdom'. The allusion to the city arms makes more sense, however, if one pursues the reasoning further. There is no cause to deny Rembrandt the happy chance that in the stereotyped black and white of the dress of the Amsterdam upper class he at the same time could have found the other colours of the city arms (three white S. Andrew's crosses on a black pale in a red field). However, without any confirmation of such a coincidence in contemporary commentaries we meet the same problem as with the drinking-horn as a 'claw', of separating the specific from the general. In the *Night watch*, however, there is one detail that might be seen as such a comment, and where the same process of using more than one figure to complete an allusion may once again play a role. The shadow of the captain's outstretched hand points to the arms of Amsterdam in the embroidered edge of Van Ruytenburgh's buffcoat (fig. 17). The in any other respect arbitrary placing of the coat-of-arms makes it plain that a deliberate connexion between the two figures is being made, and this may also extend to the captain's wearing the colours of the arms of Amsterdam.

It has been possible to argue, in what has been said so far, that in both the broad lines of the picture and the rendering of the figures gathered in the

Fig. 18. Attributed to C. Ketel, *Sketch of a militia piece*, pen and brown ink with grey wash 29.4 × 39.2 cm. Amsterdam, Rijksprentenkabinet



centre a symbolic component plays an important though variable role. How should we now regard the groups of figures to the sides? In both of these Schmidt-Degener (op. cit.[18] 1912, pp. 12–13; 1914b p. 44) found formal resemblances with elements in other Rembrandt works — those already mentioned with the grisaille of the *Corcord of the State* (figs. 14 and 15), and others with the etching of the *Triumph of Mordechai* (fig. 16). In the etching this applies to four figures on the righthand side (and thus drawn on the left on the plate): a lady and a gentleman with a hat watching over a parapet at the upper right, and below them a woman sitting on a low wall who holds in her arms a child wearing a protective headband. This author recognized the motif of the lady and gentleman in the men standing behind a parapet who were seen on the strip originally on the left and later trimmed off the *Night watch*; one of them is seen in profile, while the other looks more to the front and has his head covered with a hat (fig. 26). In front of them is a child wearing a headband, while the woman sitting on the wall is matched in the *Night watch* by the adjacent figure of Sergeant Reyer Engelen. The fact that we have here a relationship twice involving four figures supports the link claimed by Schmidt-Degener. Depending on the context, similar pose and action can make a total volte-face in meaning: the figure in the etching who in placing and pose shows similarities with Banning Cocq is Haman, shown at the moment of his deepest humiliation. In both cases, however, the figure is expressing action; with the inactive poses of the figures we are considering, the possibilities are rather closer. The unity of action that has always been the basis for interpreting the picture has led to the stillness in pose of those involved invariably being seen as expressing action that has not yet begun but very soon will. In an explanation of the scene that gets away from a rationalizing factor like the passage of time, these figures take on the same role as their counterparts in the etching — they are involved, but more as onlookers like those watching the triumphal progress of Mordechai. In the painting this role falls to still more figures, viz. the two men to the right of the sergeant, Herman Wormskerck [3] and his neighbour [2]. The attention of these members of the company is, one would think, focussed on the elements of symbolic significance located in the centre — including the officers who partake in these in various ways. The action of two figures in the group on the right, Sergeant Kemp [22] and the man to whom he is speaking [23], can best be interpreted in the same way. The sergeant's pointing gesture has always been seen as, to quote Schmidt-Degener (op. cit.[18] 1916b, p. 39 and p. 50 respectively): 'the typical gesture of the sergeant ordering his squad . . .' and ' . . .he is ordered to join the main troop'. The formal resemblance this author himself found with the two figures in the *Concord of the State* (where both are at the back of the group on the right) suggests something else: the lefthand one can there again be seen as pointing to the symbols placed in the centre, and such will also be case here.

There are thus fewer and fewer of the subjects of whom one has to assume that their pose and action are explained by preparing for marching off in disciplined ranks. There does remain, as was said at the start, the caption to the copy in Banning Cocq's album as an adequate gloss on his own action and that of his lieutenant. Giving the order to the company to march off and making them do so fits their respective functions, but in the light of what has been said above the officers' action becomes more of a contribution to a varied whole. As far as one can tell a total or partial connexion with this remains the more evident explanation for the actions of a series of other figures: for those of the ensign (where the symbolic function is inseparable from the practical) and those of the two musketeers in the background, where the action in accordance with De Gheyn's manual can be combined with what was normal for an order to march [4 and 21], as well as for those of others like the man with a sword and shield, the man with the lance and the pikeman in the rear rank [11, 16 and 18], the pikeman raising his weapon on the right in front of them [20], the powder-boy and the drummer in the foreground, and the partly seen 'extras' who help to bulk out the company. Probably the crossing, more or less at a single point, of the three pikes to the right has to be given a symbolic meaning.

Distinct from the contemporary event the parade of the officers and those directly connected with their action can be made into an abstract theme, something like the 'triumphantly joining the colours' that Schmidt-Degener (op. cit.[18] 1916b, p. 31) saw as a unifying motif. This was what, according to him, linked the *Night watch* to the only previous

composition for a militia portrait marked by a great deal of activity (fig. 18). If the work was in fact executed it has been lost, and is now known only from a drawing (K.G. Boon, *Netherlandish drawings of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries in the Rijksmuseum*, The Hague 1978, no. 329; Haverkamp-Begemann, op. cit.[1], pp. 71-72). Rightly or wrongly it has been seen as the draft for Cornelis Ketel's lost *Company of Captain Herman Rodenborg Beths*, which he painted at the end of the 16th century, again for the Arquebusiers. What does indeed in this drawing appear to be an all-embracing theme is however in the *Night watch* only one of the themes, albeit the dominant one since the officers in the centre play the principal role in both. But in the whole it is only one of three themes — the second covers the handling of firearms, as demonstrated by the four musketeers in the middle ground, and the third, the group of musketeer-symbols, has as its centre the girls and takes in the figures surrounding them. These latter also however have other functions, as the ensign additionally plays a role in the first theme and the musketeers to left and right are involved in the second. The entire group (originally thus larger) placed on the left, and two persons on the righthand edge of the picture, are connected with this symbolic centre as well. In fact — through the presumed colour symbolism in the costumes of the officers and the coat-of-arms of Amsterdam on the lieutenant's buffcoat, and perhaps also through the crossed pikes on the right — most of the actors are caught up in the complex of symbolic allusions. This highlights the unity of the company and of the picture. Starting from the formulation of the theme by Schmidt-Degener this unity can be spelt out as follows: the militiamen portrayed *have* all come under the colours, and the weapons and attributes all around are the expression of this. In the case of the first and second themes there is corresponding action, in the third (the symbolic centre) there is none, though it is interrelated with the other two.

While composing such an unusual and complex picture as this, Rembrandt will surely have conferred in some way or another with his patrons; it is thus evident that the caption to the copy in Banning Cocq's album does not give a full rendering of what this sitter could himself have said about it. Modesty was not the prime motive when the album was being compiled; it is foreign to the whole nature of the document itself — genealogical charts and family coats-of-arms fill most of its two volumes (full details are in Haverkamp-Begemann, op. cit.[1], p. 26 note 13). The texts and captions are written in a neat, regular hand, with swash capitals. The caption to the copy of the *Night watch* is the same in two respects as the others in the part devoted specially to Banning Cocq. The illustrations of his country seat, of windows donated to churches and of the Archery Butts of which he was governor (Haverkamp-Begemann, op. cit.[1], figs. 45, 47 and 48) are also accompanied by single-sentence captions in which the 'Young Lord of Purmerlandt' occupies the central place. The caption to the drawing of the butts building, for instance, reads 'S. Sebastian's or Archery Butts in Amstelredam, of which the Young Lord of Purmerlandt became Governor in the year [not filled in]'. This ignorance by the scribe of what in the context is a not unimportant fact indicates that the captions were not based on direct evidence from Banning Cocq himself.

We may wonder how far the patrons' range of interests influenced the working out of the programme for the painting. Banning Cocq's activities do seem to throw some light on a number of aspects, and to do them justice calls for a slight diversion at this point. He must have been very much involved in the Amsterdam civic militia, as is evident from his long career in this milieu and from a number of special initiatives taken by him (ibid., pp. 24–25). It was not just day-to-day matters that occupied his attention; during his term of office as one of the four governors of the Archery Butts (from 1648) a certain 'Colin' (taken to be Jacob Colijns) was commissioned to copy in an album — the Egerton manuscript 983 in the British Museum — all of the militia group portraits in the headquarters building, listing the names of those shown so that they should not be lost to posterity. In the case of the *Night watch*, which he himself had commissioned, Banning Cocq was able to take more drastic measures — the incorporation within the painting itself of a cartouche bearing the names took place at about the same time as the compiling of the Egerton ms., i.e. *c.* 1650 (ibid., p. 12 note 11). The Egerton ms., then, dealt not only with the future but with the past as well, just like a great part of Banning Cocq's own album via, for example, the genealogical charts.

This interest in the past is in tune with the spirit of the time. Schmidt-Degener (op. cit.[18] 1916a, pp. 76–78) already gave this some attention, and in this connexion mentioned the première of Joost van den Vondel's play *Gijsbrecht van Amstel* in 1638 (he says 1637), in which the action was set in mediaeval Amsterdam, and the preparation of P.C. Hooft's *Nederlandsche Historiën*. Subsequently he, and later Hellinga, were to make far too direct a link between *Gijsbrecht* and the *Night watch*. Interest in the past had already earlier been expressed (Haverkamp-Begemann, op cit.[1], p. 23 incl. note 5) in the style in which the Amsterdam upper class built their country houses, placing the crown on their newly-acquired estates and associated titles. They included Banning Cocq's father-in-law Volckert Overlander, who around 1622 had his castle of Ilpenstein built on the Purmer polder. When he died in 1630 this was

Fig. 19. Detail of captain Frans Banning Cocq [13]



inherited by his elder daughter Maria, while the title of Lord of Purmerlandt and Ilpendam passed to his son-in-law (probably we have to see Overlander as being the 'Old' Lord of Purmerlandt). In the illustration in the album the castle, which was knocked down in 1877, has a rather forbidding appearance with its battlements and corner turrets at the front – Overlander, too, was involved in the Amsterdam citizens' militia. Following in the footsteps of the feudal nobility was done knowingly, and is evidence of the pretensions of these well-established burghers. This attitude emanates, too, from the memento of Banning Cocq's career, the modello already mentioned for the marble relief (fig. 20; see J. Leeuwenberg and W. Halsema-Kubes, *Beeldhouwkunst in het Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam* 1973, no. 306). It shows his coat-of-arms, obviously embellished via the seignories of his family-in-law, topped by a helmet with a swan as the crest, surrounded by the collar of the order of S. Michael and flanked at both sides by a

Fig. 20. Circle of A. Quellinus the Elder, *Modello for a marble relief with the coats of arms of Frans Banning Cocq and his ancestors*, painted terracotta and gilt wood 84 × 59 cm. Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum



chute each of four family coats-of-arms. Together with the arms of other (ex)burgomasters — he held the office in 1650, 1651, 1653 and 1654 — the relief was to have found a place in the *Vierschaar* (tribunal where a death sentence was pronounced) of the newly-built Townhall; more prestigious surroundings were hardly imaginable. While the relief was in the end never executed, Banning Cocq carried off a master stroke in choosing Rembrandt to paint the group portrait of his company, though the idea that his name would remain known largely because of the fame of the artist would never have entered his mind — the caption makes no mention of Rembrandt. The latter fact was not unusual; Jan Vos, too, in the long series of 'captions to pictures' from which a few lines have already been quoted (see above p. 460), makes very little of their authors; more than once we find they are not mentioned, or mentioned only by initials, and in the poem itself they are virtually never referred to by name.

The tendency in those days to retrospection seems to offer a context in which the minds of patron and painter may have met; in his lecture in 1970 Tümpel too referred to this (op. cit.[21], p. 173). The attitude taken by one period in the past towards an earlier one is of course a complicated matter. The documentary approach our own age adopts was not unknown in the Netherlands of the 17th century — Hooft's *Historiën*, the Egerton manuscript and Banning Cocq's family album (though this was an ego-boosting document not really geared to objectivity) are varying examples of the fact; but instead of our presentday sense of distance and dissociation, the linking of present actions to those of the past was paramount. In the case of the *Night watch* we are probably not too far off the truth in thinking that the old-fashioned attire is pointing to a past felt to be venerable, and that a yearning for prestige played a role in associating one's own person with this past. We may also take it that this element was incorporated at the behest, or at least with the agreement, of those commissioning the work, and note that in executing it Rembrandt was able to use his usual range of props. If 'his own bias' (Haverkamp-Begemann, op. cit.[1], p. 93) is involved here, this is to be seen mostly in the preference for making a particular allusion in a particular way (though a way generally understood at that time), and is not even partly the result of a personal whim.

In the *Night watch* the allusions seem to differ in nature. The rondachers with their swords and round shields are not seen in any other militia portrait after the late-16th-century design already mentioned (fig. 18), and make their last appearance here. As an item in the varied armament of the company they had, at the time the work was painted, apparently only just or not quite disappeared from use (*Schutters in Holland*[12], p. 168). The unwieldy two-handed sword, here raised in the air by the man seen between the two officers, does not recur after the *Night watch* (ibid.); this weapon was the attribute of the 'kapitein d'armes', a non-commissioned officer responsible for the care of weapons and accoutrements (ibid., p. 198), yet the name-shield does not mention any of the subjects as such. The 16th-century cap with slashes worn by this man probably harks back to the past in general — on the evidence of Rembrandt's Leiden *History painting* (no. A 6) it was a suitable headdress to use as far back as classical antiquity. The same seems to be true, for instance, of the to our eyes rather fanciful helmet worn by Sergeant Reyer Engelen, which is similar to that in Rembrandt's *Bellona* (no. A 70). Both kinds of headgear also occur in the *Concord of the State*, alongside helmets of a more normal type.

As may be seen from the history of the interpretations of the work, it is not easy to get away from the feeling that in the *Night watch* one is looking at a scene based on reality. This comes spontaneously to mind, whereas the conviction that the picture contradicts this can gain ground only gradually, as one gathers information that surfaces from the 'submerged cultural background'. The pictorial image of the painting naturally plays an important part in the misconception. Chiaroscuro as used by Rembrandt may by itself be artificial enough as a pictorial means, yet it does justice to everything — it gives atmosphere its volatility, objects their tactile quality. The impression of directness in the rendering of tumult does not come about from movement motifs alone; it is only the combination of these with a widely-varying intensity of lighting, adding a mobile pattern of light and shade to the action, plus a degree of definition ranging from the crisp to the vague, that create this impression. In the portraits the *Night watch* furthermore shares with the other militia paintings a very direct relation to reality. As Fromentin rightly says (op. cit.[13], p. 320), Rembrandt's strength did not lie in the matter-of-fact, but by that token accurate, recording of facial features in which born portraitists like Nicolaes Eliasz. and Bartholomeus van der Helst excelled. In other respects, however, he was indeed a very Dutch, attentive observer with an eye for the characteristic feature, for what was specific in a pose or expression; it is something that underlies his success as an illustrator of biblical subjects. This feeling for a reality that the viewer invariably recognizes in a picture (the characteristic is, at this level at least, at the same time that which does not change) is manifest in the *Night watch*, too, right down to details like the folds in a sash or the explaining of the position of the drummer's unseen right arm and hand by letting the tip of the drumstick project just a little above the edge of the drum.

There is a great deal to be said, when a picture has the concrete and the abstract, as well as its own time and the past, so intertwined, for quite simply calling it an allegory. The allegory is seen as a genre that Rembrandt used only rarely, and it perhaps did not really suit him. A more appropriate variant for him will have been the 'role portrait', with symbolic allusions. In the case of the *Night watch* too the term 'role portrait' used by Haverkamp-Begemann is to be preferred, for it does more justice to what for its contemporary viewer was obviously its most important function, that of a group portrait: Schaep, when drawing up his list in 1653, saw at least no reason for describing the *Night watch* any differently from the other group portraits in the Arquebusiers' great hall. A role portrait, with as its theme what Schmidt-Degener believed had disappeared — 'a living allegory of the soldier's calling', or more accurately of the militant citizen, seems a reasonable compromise. Such a theme would tie up with a line that recurs four times as a refrain in the poem by Starter cited earlier (and in connexion with the *Concord of the State*), which was published in 1623:

'Als't Land gevaer lijd, is elck Burger een Soldaat'
(When the country is in danger, every citizen is a soldier).

III The Night watch as a group portrait

Until well into the present century the standard view taken of Rembrandt's career found great satisfaction in a neat division into two stages — the early Amsterdam period marked by success, growing prosperity and social esteem, followed by a longer period during which the artist took the lonely road of introspection that would be properly understood and appreciated only centuries later. The year 1642 was seen as a suitable moment of catharsis, a personal watershed year in which his wife Saskia died, coupled with a presumed debacle in the reception given to his *Night watch*. Emmens[26] in particular has investigated this view, and has corrected misunderstandings where the latter is concerned. There is indeed nothing in contemporary comment to suggest general rejection of Rembrandt's unorthodox militia portrait — the opposite seems nearer to the truth. There were however a few mutterings of discontent. Van Hoogstraten says that Rembrandt 'as many feel' had devoted too much attention to the unity of his picture, and not enough to 'the individual likenesses he had been contracted to paint'. Obviously even the critics were well aware of the advantages of Rembrandt's approach, but for them the portraits remained the main concern. The introduction of action into a group portrait was normal for Rembrandt; we find it from his earliest work of this kind, the *Anatomy lesson of Dr Tulp* of 1632 (no. A 51), and even with only two sitters he preferred to include action, as in the *Portrait of the shipbuilder Jan Rijcksen and his wife* of 1633 (no. A 77) and the *Portrait of the Mennonite preacher Cornelis Claesz Anslo and his wife* of 1641 (no. A 143). While in these three works the subjects are united in their calm attention, the opposite — commotion — is the case in the *Night watch*; this meant a far more radical break with tradition in a group portrait.

Schmidt-Degener (op. cit.[18] 1916b, p. 32) has already commented that the introduction of dramatic action is hard to reconcile with one of the requirements of the group portrait, namely that the difference in scale between the portraits cannot be too great — this would necessarily lead to a decreasing degree of detail with greater distance. This was indeed quite foreign to the traditional

militia portrait; one can name only one instance in which the code of uniformity of size was broken (though without incurring the consequence just described) — Thomas de Keyser's 1632 *Company of Captain Allaert Cloeck* (Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum cat.no. C 381; fig. 21). The groups of militiamen placed to the sides in the background differ substantially in scale, but not appreciably in degree of detail, from the central group of officers. This 'brings all the faces much to the front' as Schmidt-Degener remarks (though he is not referring to this painting in particular), which here detracts from the consistent rendering of pictorial space. De Keyser also introduces a certain amount of action by having three sergeants mount the steps up to the podium on which the officers are standing, and in depicting such an evidently unfamiliar motif he proved remarkably clumsy. In general, however, painters kept their militia works in line with the demands of the group portrait. In these, the desire for an unhurried reading of details that bound the artists and their customers finds its natural expression in evenly lit scenes with a series of uniformly detailed figures, and in poses limited to various ways of standing and sitting. Attempts at enlivening the picture are not absent, but for all their broad gestures these figures, within their well-defined contours, are bound to have something static about them. The more or less equal size of the sitters keeps them all in the foreground, providing one reason why thematic variation is limited.

This is not to say that the contrast between the traditional militia piece and the *Night watch* is one of tedium on the one hand and vivacity on the other. What matters most is that they are exuberant in different ways — usually the exuberance is seen in the details and in a variety of colours, while Rembrandt alone has put the stress on a dynamic conception of the whole. Reticence in one or the other was however essential if the scene was not to become chaotic. So not the least of Rembrandt's achievements in painting the *Night watch* is the efficiency with which he reconciles the essential contradiction between the portrait commission and the action-filled picture he incorporated this into — though the viewers could not help noticing that there was not the degree, nor the density of detail that they were used to seeing. In a way it will have been the painting's original location that made the artist's solution feasible. When discussing the great hall of the Arquebusiers Headquarters it has already been commented that the three militia group portraits that occupied the long wall facing the windows had an exceptional height. Haverkamp-Begemann (op. cit.[1], pp. 54 and 57) allows for a height of some 5 metres and a wainscoting along the wall 75 cm to a metre high, above which the paintings reached more or less up

Fig. 21. Th. de Keyser, *The company of captain Allaert Cloeck*, 1632, canvas 220 × 351 cm. Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum



to the ceiling. This is reasonably close to the present height of the *Night watch* — 363 cm — with some allowance made for strips of canvas trimmed off at the top and bottom. This meant at all events that from the outset account could be taken of the upper part of the picture being seen quite high up, at a distance at which we are used to seeing things in only broad detail. This left room for choosing a treatment that does not go in for fine definition, and in the execution this played an important role. An impression of the paint surface seen in close-up is provided by Van Dijk, who as a restorer had what one might term a literally close acquaintance with the painting: 'This Painting is . . . done very forcefully in the Paint, and it is most amazing that with so much Coarseness there could be so great a finesse' (see *5. Documents and sources*, 7). What one notices about the portrait heads especially is the very wide variety in the brushwork, to the extent that almost no two heads are handled in exactly the same way. It may be that the quite long time spent working on the painting had something to do with this, yet it is mostly typical of an unusual, experimental situation where the artist was aiming at effect at a distance. Seen at a distance everything forms a homogeneous whole and even substantial contrasts are subdued, like to take just one example that between the noticeably relaxed painting of the lieutenant's face (fig. 22) and the by exception punctilious rendering of his costume — to use Van Dijk's words, 'the Embroidery on the Camisole or Buffcoat . . . so high in Paint that one might grate a Nutmeg on it' (fig. 17).

One result of all this is that in terms of treatment by far the majority of the portraits cannot be compared with individual Rembrandt portraits — with two exceptions. The first is the figure of Captain Banning Cocq, given an emphasis and care approaching that of an individual portrait: the Kassel *Portrait of a man, standing* dated 1639 (no. A 129) has here been given movement. Schmidt-Degener (op. cit.[18] 1914b, p. 40) already pointed out the connexion between the two, and saw in the movement motif a

Fig. 22. Detail of lieutenant Willem van Ruytenburgh [14]



reminiscence of the *Portrait of Marten Soolmans* (no. A 100) painted five years earlier. The second example can be found in the man standing on the extreme right (fig. 23), where the face looking to the left and seen in the full light — the situation one usually finds, with the individual portrait, in that of a woman — shows in its treatment points of similarity with the Rotterdam *Portrait of Aletta Adriaensdr.*, likewise dated 1639 (no. A 132). The head of the man is, indeed, in the *Night watch* one of the most thoroughly modelled, whereas that of the woman is, for an individual portrait, remarkably broadly painted. Looking at the motif alone there is, as Schmidt-Degener remarked, a resemblance between the man who originally stood on the extreme left, holding his hat in front of him (fig. 26), and the *Portrait of a man holding a hat* (possibly also datable in 1639) in the Armand Hammer Collection in Los Angeles (no. A 130). For the portrait of the lieutenant Rembrandt went back to the special formula of the

Fig. 23. Detail of sergeant Rombout Kemp [22] and the man next to him [23]



profile portrait — as said earlier, probably partly or even primarily to somewhat lessen the dominating effect of the figure as the main centre of the lighting compared to that of his captain. So far as we know, he had earlier used this formula only for a *tronie*, the *Young woman in profile, with a fan* dated 1632 in Stockholm (no. A 49) and for the *Portrait of Amalia of Solms* (no. A 61) in the Musée Jacquemart-André, Paris, done in the same year; in the latter case the pose of the head was however dictated by the existing companion-piece, Van Honthorst's *Portrait of Frederik Hendrik*. The most interesting analogy is that with the third and last example, the *Half-length figure of Saskia van Uylenburgh* (no. A 85) already mentioned for the use of anachronistic dress; one may assume this painting to have been begun as early as 1633/34 even though it was completed only in the same year as the *Night watch*, 1642. Belonging to the later stage one has here those very features that, broadly speaking, recur in the figure of Van Ruytenburgh — a white ostrich feather added to Saskia's cap, and her richly worked neckline which provides a dainty paraphrase of his ornamented gorget. The working-up of the lieutenant's figure (minus the face) and that of Saskia (in the most brightly lit part) offers an instance of what in this period was possible as treatment when rendering in full detail is paired with working in a widely different format. One similarity in treatment is to be found beneath the paint surface; in both cases the radiographs show at the righthand contour dark patches with a ragged edge that can best be explained by assuming that dry paint was scraped away when this contour was being corrected (see also *Paint layer*, DESCRIPTION and *X-Rays*, I). The phenomenon is so far known only from these two examples.

The emphasis (unusually strong for a militia piece) on the figures of the two officers will undoubtedly have pleased both of them. The thought then springs to mind (and has more than once been voiced) that Rembrandt was here responding to special wishes on

Fig. 24. Rembrandt, Studies in pen and brown ink 21.2 × 13.4 cm (Ben. 661). Paris, Musée du Louvre, Département des arts graphiques



their part. The premise would then be that he could have found solutions in which the attention was more 'democratically' divided. Without a drastic alteration to his style such an alternative would however have been impossible, and the strongly hierarchical structure of the picture must be explained, first and last, by Rembrandt using means that were peculiar to him.

Adapting the position of the heads, essential for a convincing suggestion of action, is something that Rembrandt used from his earliest group portrait, the *Anatomy lesson of Dr Tulp*. In the *Night watch* the wide variation in this leads to a sprung rhythm that enhances the illusion of commotion and movement. In the ensign the position of the head has obviously been altered (see *X-Rays*, e) from a frontal pose to one looking upwards at the flag. One portrait head Rembrandt added to the picture only after the initial lay-in — that of the helmeted man immediately to the right of Sergeant Reyer Engelen (see *X-Rays*, b). A second adaptation to the mobile nature of the picture lies, as has been said by a number of authors, in the inclusion of a large number of 'extras', often seen only in part. The cartouche lists 18 names of persons portrayed, yet the painting shows no less than 33 figures. Among those depicted in full is the drummer, whose name is not given on the cartouche; he was probably Jacob Jorisz. (Haverkamp-Begemann, op. cit.[1], p. 32 incl. note 25). The drummer was not a member of the company, and probably did not have to pay for his portrait. The head seen partially to the right behind the ensign has frequently been seen as a self-portrait of Rembrandt.

One can point to hardly any preparatory drawings by Rembrandt. A sheet with three figures in the Louvre (Ben. 661; fig. 24) includes one that has something in common with both Van Ruytenburgh and, especially, Banning Cocq — it seems that we are here looking at a first idea for the figure of the latter, with his captain's staff. There is a puzzling similarity between another figure in the *Night watch* and a pen drawing in Copenhagen (Ben. A 33) showing a musketeer who with his left hand simultaneously holds his musket over his shoulder, the top of a gun-fork, and the ends of the smouldering slow-match (fig. 25). This drawing bears an old (and reinforced) inscription *G. Flinck*, and although Popham (in: *Old Master Drawings* 8, 1933/34, pp. 43–45) ventured a Rembrandt attribution it is generally regarded as being by Flinck; the arguments that Sumowski offers, in particular, are convincing in this respect (cf. Van Moltke *Flinck*, no. D 38; Sumowski *Drawings* IV, no. 953). This does not however alter the fact that the drawing does not tie in with Flinck's own militia pieces, either that (alongside the *Night watch*) in the Kloveniersdoelen dating from 1645, or the *Company of Captain Jan Huydecoper* of 1648 in the Voetboogdoelen (Crossbowmen's Headquarters). In the first place, Flinck did the preparatory studies for the figures, for the latter picture at least, in chalk (see Von Moltke op. cit., nos. D 39 and D 40; Sumowski op. cit., nos. 876–878); in the second, Flinck did not in either of the militia works use the motif of the stages in handling a musket that are described and illustrated in De Gheyn's manual. The drawing does precisely this, and the action depicted matches the second stage described by De Gheyn. In the *Night watch* this is, as was noted when discussing the theme of the picture, represented by the musketeer [21] whose head is part-hidden behind the gesturing hand of Sergeant Rombout Kemp but whose left hand, holding the musket on his shoulder and the gun-fork pointing downwards to the left, is clearly visible. This figure originally wore a helmet but now has an extremely narrow-brimmed hat, which does not make it any easier to establish more closely the relationship with the drawing. Possibly Flinck (if he it was) worked from a Rembrandt prototype; that he was in fact imitating some prototype may be inferred from the fact that a sketch in black chalk was subsequently gone over with pen and ink, a

Fig. 25. Attributed to G. Flinck, *A musketeer corresponding with one in the Night watch* [21], pen and bistre over black chalk 22.2 × 13.6 cm. Copenhagen, Statens Museum for Kunst



procedure that can be called typical of a copy. Perhaps, too, there is a link with the fact that the figure in the *Night watch* can in its entirety, on the X-ray evidence, be described as one of the most extensively altered passages (see *X-Rays*, n and o).

IV. Pictorial organization

The following will be an attempt to look at the *Night watch* from the viewpoint of the painter's craft. This is an aspect that has been relatively neglected in comments on the painting, and by definition this leads to a deficient understanding. The picture's uncommon complexity however presented Rembrandt with a very demanding task, and the solution he found to it tells us a great deal about him as a painter.

Attention will be paid, consecutively, to the composition, the chiaroscuro and the colour, as the pictorial means an artist employs in creating his image. A characteristic of Rembrandt's approach and working method is that chiaroscuro and colour can be more readily separated one from the other than they usually are in the work of his contemporaries (members of his own workshop apart). It does not need saying, however, that a painter aims to produce a deliberate synthesis, which leads to a sum that is larger than its parts.

Composition

Just as in any painting, two contradictory needs had to be balanced one against the other in the *Night watch* — the need for unity and the need for definition, liveliness and variation. Instead of the (relatively) uniform coordination of detail and the combining of chiaroscuro and colour that is usual in militia group portraits by Rembrandt's contemporaries, the *Night watch* shows tension as a result of the strong contrasts it contains, tension that is held in check by an organization directed wholly towards maintaining unity. From Van Hoogstraten's comments, which have already been mentioned a number of times, it is clear that the picture's unity was from the outset recognized as one of its special qualities. The passage devoted to the painting occurs in the chapter 'On composition in general ' (Van 't ordineeren in 't gemeen, see *5. Documents and sources*, 4); he mentions as the ideal that 'The true masters manage to have their whole work all of a piece', and goes on to cite Rembrandt's 'picture in the Doele' as an example of this.

The highly effective concentration that is so much a hallmark of Rembrandt's paintings is based on a system of selection and reduction, in which shadow and darkness are prime means of evoking without depicting. Van Hoogstraten's saying 'I had rather that he had put more light into it' thus overlooks one of the most important conditions for the unity by which he sets such store — 'more light' would have led to an expansion of what would then have demanded a certain degree of definition; but a limitation of definition is essential for Rembrandt's whole concept. Besides the rigorous application of chiaroscuro one finds all sorts of ways to serve the same purpose of enhancing unity by judging what is or is not to be depicted, and what is to be less or more strongly accentuated. This cuts both ways, in that what is usually (for the sake of unity) played down is sometimes elsewhere (for the sake of animation) played up to the full and then, free of competition, achieves maximum effect. That Rembrandt did, in doing this, achieve his aim in the eyes of his contemporaries is evident from the comments of Keil/Baldinucci (see *5. Documents and sources*, 5), where one learns that it is precisely details like the walking movement of Banning Cocq and Van Ruytenburgh's partisan shown foreshortened that aroused admiration.

The main lines of the composition are set by the imposing architecture in the background and the

Fig. 26. Copy 1. G. Lundens, panel 66.9 × 85.6 cm. Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum (on loan from the National Gallery, London)



very lively group gathered in front of it. The damage the painting has suffered from having a wide strip cut off at the lefthand side is very evident in the background — the symmetry of layout, with the gateway originally more or less in the central axis of the picture, has been lost (fig. 26). The trimming of the canvas along the top, interrupting the curve of the arch, and the addition of the cartouche on the right against the archway, further spoil the effect of the gateway as a central, static, sobering element, and lessen the contrast with the group 'so dashing in its placement of the figures', to quote Van Hoogstraten. He recommended unforced, varied placing 'so that one cannot, so to speak, at a single blow (as in some militia paintings) strike off all the heads'. In his grouping Rembrandt was following in part the traditional 'banking-up' method which sets one row of persons higher than the other: '. . . like the huckster/ who displays his goods to be admired/ on high shelves at the sides and below' (. . . ghelijck den Cramer/Die zijn goet ten tooghe stelt schoon te wonder/op hooghe borden ter sijden en onder), as (albeit in a different context) Karel van Mander said at the beginning of the 17th century, in the section of his didactic poem devoted to composition (K. van Mander, 'Den grondt der edel vry schilder-const', *Schilder-boeck*, Haarlem 1604, chapter 5 / 34; Miedema edn 1973, p. 139). This arrangement, which makes it possible to show a large group of persons on a limited surface, is the most commonly used one in the 16th-century militia group portrait; the sitters are there very often in the uncomfortable situation Van Hoogstraten warned against. In the course of the 17th century the system came to be more loosely applied. Showing people full-length made it necessary (as here in the *Night watch*) to include a flight of steps in the picture.

A way of grouping sitters that was less usual in a militia painting and that one sees in the *Night watch* is that of leaving parts of the foreground empty so that the viewer is led to look further into pictorial space – – what Van Mander would probably have called 'passageways one can look into' (insichtige ganghen) (ibid. ch. 5 / 16; Miedema edn p. 132). A precedent for this has long been seen in the group portrait of the *Company of Captain Allaert Cloeck* already mentioned (fig. 21), which was done by Thomas de Keyser in 1632 likewise for the Arquebusiers Headquarters, where at least in 1653 (according to Schaep) it hung above the stairway to the great hall (Haverkamp-Begemann, op. cit.[1], p. 70 note 10). There too, inlets on both sides create a salient in the centre that in this instance includes not only the captain and lieutenant but also the ensign, with the sergeants slightly further back. Compared to this layout dictated solely by rank, where the main motif comes about mainly through the composition, Rembrandt's solution is far more imaginative. On the one hand, the captain and lieutenant are in the *Night watch* more strongly emphasized than in any other militia group portrait — every means is used, not just composition but lighting and colour as well. And on

the other, Rembrandt has avoided the stiff formality of De Keyser's composition and integrated the hierarchy of rank within the company with the symbolism to be found everywhere in the centre. The ensign is placed further back, where various means are used to do justice to his position; he is placed at the point where Rembrandt's two grouping systems meet — that of the banked rows and that of the opening in depth, the latter mostly because the small figures of the girls are placed in front of him. In this respect the latter, who together form the symbolic centre, are in the first place a motif that takes up relatively little space, and like the dog and the drum are a convenient means to bringing variety to the lower parts of the picture without masking what is behind. In the relationship between the two centres of lighting it is important that the girl — even though conceived in her entirety as a light-toned figure — occupies a smaller area than the figure of the lieutenant in the foreground.

The most important movement motif in the group is the movement from right to left imparted by the figures of the two main characters in the foreground; this is countered by the left-to-right movement of the figures of the musketeer firing his weapon and of the first girl. In the way the violent action of the musketeer is interrupted by the intersection with the figure of the captain, Rembrandt demonstrates clearly how he creates commotion and at the same time, for the sake of unity, keeps it in check. This happens time and again: the powder-boy running on the left and the dog barking on the right, both of them movement personified, are also both kept wholly in the shadow. Placing the drummer at the right edge meant turning him to face towards the centre, producing more or less the simplest image one can imagine of a drummer in action — one lit arm and the back of a hand are enough to tell us what he is doing.

A motif that was used a great deal to enliven militia portraits in general is the gesturing sweep of the arm; Rembrandt twice exploits this to the full, in the figures of Sergeant Rombout Kemp on the right and of Banning Cocq, in both cases placing the arm, outstretched to the left, parallel with the picture plane. The flamboyant gesture with which the ensign is raising the flag has also created space. There are however further wide gestures — that of the red-clad musketeer loading his weapon, that of Banning Cocq with his other arm, and that of the man behind him to the right deflecting the gun-barrel upwards. Rembrandt shows these three gestures foreshortened, so that they fall within the outline of the figure's mass. These devices, giving an effective suggestion of depth through their convincing execution, at the same time avoid too great a degree of agitation in the scene. In this use of foreshortening one can also see Rembrandt's tendency to aim at a bunched effect in a single figure; it usually brings about economy in the rendering of the limbs. In his individual portraits, too, the hands are hardly ever shown both, uncovered and visible in their entirety. A good idea of the range of possibilities here is provided in the *Night watch* by the four hands of the officers in the centre: one is hidden, two are camouflaged with gloves, and one (the captain's left hand gesturing to the front) is treated powerfully and made a focus of attention. In the militia groups in the Arquebusiers' hall done by Rembrandt's colleagues hands are just one item in a range of motifs, and may or may not be shown. With Rembrandt they are besides, and to a strong degree, a factor in the distribution of accents; this usually means that where they are shown they are indicated only broadly as a patch of colour that gets its suggestion of shape and plasticity from the contour and from the few strokes rendering the outlines of the fingers.

The same is true for the way the legs are done. Here, it is the two systems of grouping that allow Rembrandt to have most of them masked. Where the rows of people are banked up this is an obvious outcome, but in the 'passageways', too, they are eliminated by some figures being partly placed behind others. This is most obvious in the series consisting of Van Ruytenburgh, the musketeer behind him blowing the powder from his pan, and the pikeman dressed in black; in this righthand part of the picture, deep shadow does the rest. On the left we see no more than the cast shadow of the foot of the musketeer behind Banning Cocq; with the girl to the front, her dress reaching to the ground, the artist has been content to show just the tip of her slipper, and the girl behind is for the most part hidden by her companion. Further to the left there was originally — before the strip was trimmed off — a group of four of whom the one remaining, Sergeant Engelen, is seated on a parapet behind which all the others were placed, so that only the top half of them needed to be shown. The link between the four figures with figures in the *Triumph of Mordechai* etching has already been discussed (see above p. 462), and it is indeed in Rembrandt's etchings that one can find numerous examples of figures that, as a logical result of their various situations, are not seen full-length.

All this gave Rembrandt the opportunity to place a greater or lesser accent on what legs do remain. Often it is less, as they are in shadow — the one visible leg of Sergeant Engelen, the lower part of which is furthermore masked by the red-clad musketeer, the legs of the latter and those of the powder-boy (who as has been said is wholly in shadow). The diagonally-placed visible leg of the musketeer firing his gun is on the other hand made into a strong accent, through the stark contrast with

the light skirt of the girl behind. The viewer's attention is however drawn first and foremost to the main characters, striding forward in the salient group formed by the two inlets. The flapping end of Banning Cocq's sash and the outward swirling tails of the bows on his breeches (that on the right has, on radiographic evidence, been enlarged, see *X-Rays*, j) reinforce the suggestion of movement.

Above this in the picture a great deal has been crammed in together in a hectic succession. Calm is restored at one point by the rondacher's shield, certainly not by chance providing part of the background to the head of Banning Cocq. Another shield is introduced on the left behind the musketeer pouring powder into his barrel, where it forms a useful framing for this gesture.

Chiaroscuro

When one turns to a discussion of the chiaroscuro in the *Night watch*, one is dealing with a fundamental aspect — the medium that governs and dominates the pictorial organization of Rembrandt's paintings. More than once in comments the differentiation that results from the strong contrasting of light and dark has been mentioned as a problem in the case of the *Night watch*, where the portraits of a large number of members of the militia company had to be accommodated. Neumann[27], for instance, said 'Für einen Meister von so lebhaftem Gefühl für geschlossene Wirkung, für konzentriertes Licht ... war ein Gruppenbildnis mit gleichverteiltem Interesse eine grosse Schwierigkeit'. The commission therefore seemed to him to be 'eine Art von künstlerischem Missverständnis', obviously assuming that this was aimed at a group portrait matching what was normal; as has been argued in the earlier discussion of the theme of the picture, it seems likely that the artist and his patrons will have come to a certain measure of agreement on the different concept. Arguing from what was normal for Rembrandt, one can nonetheless support Neumann's conclusion that he 'die Aufgabe in der Richtung seiner augenblicklichen Interessen umgestaltete und in seine eigentümliche Ausdrucksweise übersetzte'. The painting does indeed show that Rembrandt remained faithful to the mode of depiction he developed in the 1630s via the history painting, and as a consequence broke with the tradition of the militia group portrait. The uncommonly dynamic solution he found is in harmony with the dramatic nature of the lighting, whose fitful pattern of light and shade reinforces the dynamic not a little and even, through its own momentum, helps create it. One might therefore say that Rembrandt has brought his subject into line with what is characteristic for his working method: what is special to it is exploited, and what presents a problem in it is avoided. Against the harmony of the contemporary militia group portrait — static, but more colourful and more detailed — he has set a different harmony, that of an image filled with movement that then not only could be less colourful and detailed but actually needed to be so. The difficulty described by Neumann was met not only here, of course — it extended to any complex picture with a multiplicity of figures; for one thing, it is hard in such cases to find a substitute for colour as an autonomous element. So it is no coincidence that Rembrandt — after his brief, colourful Leiden period during which he nevertheless did produce two multi-figured scenes, the *Stoning of S. Stephen* (no. A 1) and the *History painting* (no. A 6) — indulged his ambitions in this direction more in etchings and (sometimes associated) grisailles such as the *Ecce homo* (no. A 89), the *S. John the Baptist preaching* (no. A 106) and the *Concord of the State* (no. A 135) than he did in paintings. Whether Fromentin had this in mind when he spoke (op. cit., p. 359) of the 'grands sacrifices' that Rembrandt had to make is unclear, but this was certainly one of them. The *Night watch* thus shows us two faces — that of an undertaking that Rembrandt, by bending it to his will, brought to a convincing conclusion better than any other contemporary Dutch painter could have done, and that of an intractable task that forced him to do the best he could with the means at his disposal — which he did with immense flair and success.

It has already been said that allowing forms to retire into the shadows is always Rembrandt's first and most comprehensive way of simplifying a scene. He uses it with a great sense of judgment — the dark passages never appear empty, but rather as matter wrapped in shadow, and the viewer instinctively sees what is in fact not shown. One may suppose the painting to have darkened somewhat; Haverkamp-Begemann (op. cit.[1], p. 20) assumed that Lundens' copy, in which many of the shadow passages have a lighter tone, now gives a truer image of the work's original appearance; the truth may however lie somewhere in between. The relationship still seen in the original between the depth of the shadow tone and the decrease in definition is more convincing than that in the copy. At some points one might expect Lundens' lighter shadows to offer more detail, but the opposite tends to happen. One can also equate Van Hoogstraten's call for more light better with the original than with the copy, where this demand is already met.

A familiar feature in the *Night watch* is the progression via a rich variety in level of illumination towards the highest lights, which compared to the whole occupy a limited area. So as to spread them over a broader front, Rembrandt has divided these highlights into two parts — the figure of the lieutenant and that of the first girl. The distinction made between these two passages, serving to

Fig. 27. Detail



structure pictorial space and possibly also to express the difference in identity, has already been examined when discussing the picture's theme. Both figures were (see under *Paint layer*, DESCRIPTION, and *X-Rays*, f and k) boldly underpainted with light paint as a first step towards creating a vibrant level of light in them. The two figures are separated by a figure in black, Captain Banning Cocq, placed in the same centre of lighting as the lieutenant, and by the part-visible, part-shadowed figure of the musketeer firing his weapon. This area of shadow serves, of course, to simplify the surroundings of the captain and to link his figure with them. One can however also detect a problem in this passage — the fall-off in lighting from the left is helped by having a figure dressed in black, but the increase in lighting towards the right is not. In an individual portrait, setting the black of the costume of an Amsterdam burgher in the centre of the lighting was quite usual for Rembrandt too, as a standard feature of the subject. Seen from the viewpoint of his history paintings, however, with which the *Night watch* in its complexity has much more in common, the occurrence of a massive area of black in the centre is most unusual, since in these the centre is normally made up of light tints. In the *Night watch* it looks like a concession to the portrait aspect of the commission. That Rembrandt, in the figure of the musketeer, ended up with an area of shadow alongside the rich black of the captain's costume instead of an area in an appropriate colour is however above all an illustration of how much his vision was determined by chiaroscuro.

The placing of the light figure of the girl, further back in the picture space, brings about a variation in the interplay of light and dark passages that helps to make the scene more legible. One of the captain's gloves and one of the musketeer's legs stand out against her light dress on the right, as does the butt of the red-clad musketeer's gun on the left. The way the picture develops from the girl towards the left has, as Weisbach has commented (op. cit.[25], p. 351), points of similarity with the composition of the 1636 *Blinding of Samson* (no. A 116). There we find, from the figure of Samson to the left, a succession of the same colours — from light yellows, greys and whites (Samson/the girl) through blues (Delilah's robe and a cloth against the wall/the far smaller area of the girl to the rear) to reds (the Philistine/the musketeer). The resemblance between the two passages is however noticed mainly through the combination of this use of colour with the similar motif of a dark object (the Philistine's partisan/the musket) placed as a repoussoir against a brighly lit area behind. A comparison with the *Blinding* also brings home how much further Rembrandt has placed the corresponding passage in the *Night watch* from the edges of the picture — at the bottom and especially on the left where to get the original dimensions of the painting we have to allow for the wide strip cut off in 1715. He filled these broad zones with shadow areas containing only items of minor importance for the scene. Undoubtedly the circumstances of the painting's original location in the great hall played some part in the way zones of light and shade were distributed across the width of the picture; the wide area of shadow on the left was in a corner of the room that, to judge from the plan (Haverkamp-Begemann, op. cit.[1], fig. 35), did not offer the ideal conditions for display, while the lit figures to the right were more towards the middle of the long wall (in the counterpart, Jacob Backer's militia portrait, Captain Cornelis de Graeff is for the same reason placed far over to the left).

From the radiograph (see *X-Rays*, a) one may infer that at one stage Rembrandt was thinking of including a lit object on the left; the fragment of this seen in the X-ray at the presentday edge of the canvas is however so small that one cannot tell what this was. At all events, Lundens' copy shows that it was painted out again by the time the painting was completed. The sharp fall-off in detail towards the edges is something one invariably finds in Rembrandt's paintings. When the work was removed from its original context and surroundings, the wide area of shadow on the left may have seemed rather empty in a painting of this size, and have marred the balance in a picture that was now being looked at from a different angle; this may have had something to do with its being substantially reduced precisely on this side. Even so, when the components of a picture are laid out, the space surrounding them also has its importance; this relationship was surely impaired, and as has been said before the symmetry in the architectural backdrop was in any case lost. Quite apart from all this, the painting's placing to one end of the long wall will also have accommodated Rembrandt's need to keep his most important items — the fully lit passages — for the centre of the picture.

The difference in intensity of lighting as an expression of distance, front-to-back, is throughout the painting carried through in an interplay with the light which falls, as is usual, from the left. Light and dark zones follow one after the other, the latter partly in the form of black as the local colour of costumes. All taken together, light and shade are distributed over the picture in a dynamic balance. The two most strongly lit passages are set at roughly the same distance on either side of the central axis; the lefthand half of the group has the greater concentration of individually lit areas, but against this the figure of the lieutenant — as the largest lit passage — is placed quite far over to the right where it makes an abrupt contrast with the largest dark zone that follows it to the right. In the latter the

young musketeer [21] who closes off the opening in the group is a modest counterpart to the girl on the left. Like her light figure, the purplish doublet of this character provides variation, and with it the opportunity to show the contours of the darkly-dressed persons diagonally in front of him. One may assume that the reworking of this figure (which as has been noted is one of the most altered in the whole picture, see *X-Rays*, n and o) was done in order to fine-tune this effect. This means that a light/dark variation was used for the strong contrast on the left, and a variation in colour for a more moderate contrast such as here.

Colour

In the militia group portraits by Rembrandt's colleagues the illusion of the lighting is produced by a progression of tint in colours that keep their nature even in the shadows. With him, on the other hand, the shadow areas show their own gamut of subdued colours in which the local colour shown in the lit areas loses itself. As always in Rembrandt's paintings the organization of the chiaroscuro in the *Night watch* dictates that of the colour — the pictorial design of the scene is created via the former and not the latter. The choice of colours itself is in line with this — with Rembrandt it is not the individual nature of a colour that matters so much as its value as a light colour, a dark colour or a middle tint. There are colours in which all this coincides — black, browns, some yellows, white (the colours of the grisaille) — and these, pure or mixed, dominate Rembrandt's palette. With other, obstinate colours like blue, green and bright yellow this is not the case and these are used unbroken but sparingly, in separate strokes or as local colour in small objects or articles of clothing. This is illustrated in the *Night watch* in the treatment of the heraldic combination of yellow/blue as an allusion to the coat-of-arms of the Arquebusiers or that of the Amsterdam War Council: in the fully-lit areas of the girls and the lieutenant the yellow is altered to a pale yellow-white (which tends to appear in reproductions as too warm a tint), and the blue is very much under-represented. In this way the yellow is as much part of the chiaroscuro as a chromatic component of the picture. Red plays a role of its own, which will be discussed in a moment.

The *Night watch* offers the familiar picture of lit areas that emerge, abruptly or gradually, as islands in the zones of shadow surrounding them. In the treatment of these 'islands' one finds a deft use of colour. Examples of this sometimes strike one especially through their daring, such as the combination of strokes of salmon pink and a bright light green in the head of the drummer done with a heavy impasto, or through their refinement, as in the aptly-chosen tint of the shadow of Banning Cocq's hand on the lieutenant's buffcoat; but it is in fact evident everywhere. Rembrandt's tour-de-force in this respect is probably the figure of the girl to the front, a subtly articulated whole of light tints from which graphic contrasts are absent. It is obvious why Renoir, the colourist *par excellence*, had a liking for this very figure (A. Vollard, *En écoutant Cézanne, Dégas, Renoir*, Paris 1938, p. 227, cited by Haverkamp-Begemann, op. cit.[1], p. 93). The figure has the advantage of taking up a relatively large area that can be appreciated at a distance at which most or all of the picture can be surveyed. Many times, however, it is only when one looks at the paint surface from close up that one realises what a varied and judicious use Rembrandt has made of colour. Sometimes, too, as when colourful patterns are being shown, the approach is too diffident to produce much of an effect — few viewers, for instance, will notice the blue stripes in the costume of Sergeant Reyer Engelen [1], or that the bandoleer of the man firing his musket [12] has pale red edges and a lozenge pattern in blue. Rembrandt has here departed from his normal use of colour, in which concentration always prevails over diversity and the anecdotal distribution of local colour.

The general image of the *Night watch* led Neumann (op. cit.[27], p. 303) to speak of 'eine Art Angst für die Farbe'. What is mainly involved however is a choice, a strictly limited selection of colours for rendering the chiaroscuro, which are put to optimum use. Rembrandt's doing-more-with-less has time and again led to ambivalence in assessment, depending on whether greater attention has been paid to one or the other.

In the picture, shadow tints to a large extent determine the appearance of the architecture, and variation in colour contributes to the arrangement of the figures in three zones roughly corresponding to the foreground, middle ground and background. The further an item is to the front, the more intense its colour becomes; a plume on a hat or helmet is at the back painted in black or greys and browns, and in the middle ground in ochre-yellow, while the ostrich feather on Van Ruytenburgh's hat, with the light shining through it, is done partly in a clear white. One can find a similar *pars pro toto* in the scarves draped between the earpieces of helmets: those of the men in the background are done in subdued colours, while that of the man on the extreme right in the middle ground is red. Colour is combined with other devices commonly used in a painting — the size of different areas, a moderate or strong contrast with surrounding areas, and the kind of brushwork — in ways that especially in the foreground and background are geared, respectively, to enhancing and toning down the colour effect. The treatment of the architecture in the background is restrained in the extreme, with

very large areas of subdued colour manifested as forms and planes in translucent gloom and darkness by means of closely juxtaposed tonal values, the absence of clear demarcations and a somewhat open brushwork. The division of the background into three areas with the central one darker than the others lends variety. On the left and right dark hats and helmets stand out against brown, and in the middle lighter hats against the dark of the gateway. This very subdued background has allowed Rembrandt to give the men standing at the back sufficient emphasis while still using moderate means. Major contrast is already brought about by the far more animated variation using small areas. The progression of tones remains even for the most part, and the colour mostly subdued — grey-black, brown-green, numerous greyish browns and brownish greys. In these surroundings the heads stand out; here and there they are combined with collars in greyish and bluish white.

In the flag standing out against the dark gateway, too, the contrast is somewhat more marked. The Arquebusiers' colours of gold and blue are reduced to an ochre yellow, some pale blue, and dark greenish blue and greyish blue. Showing through between the long brushstrokes with which these colours are applied one can glimpse everywhere the darker paint of the gateway and of the wall on the left, on top of which the flag has been painted. This disintegration of the bands of colour into loose brushstrokes further neutralizes the force of the colour in what, in principle, could have been the largest single coloured object. The costume of the ensign is handled in a similar manner. Seen in close-up, there are some quite bright colours — greyish, greenish and bluish tints and ochre colour, placed on top of an underpainting in dark brown and worked up with a light ochre colour and light yellow. The strength of these colours is however dissipated by the way they are applied, with short strokes, spots and dabs. None of them stands on its own, but taken together they give an illusion of shiny stuff — a beautifully judged effect that helps to set the ensign apart from his surroundings yet still keeps him in his place in pictorial space, in the rear row.

The tall hat of the man [16] to the right of the ensign replaces different headgear, which one assumes to have been a helmet (see *X-Rays*, i). All over the painting hats and helmets are used as a means of providing accents — the rendering of material makes the hats into compact patches of colour, while the shiny metal of the helmets takes on the colours of their surroundings but also provides the opportunity for abrupt, animated contrasts in the form of sheens of light. This lastnamed aspect has been fully exploited only in the carefully-done helmet of Sergeant Engelen, (today) on the extreme left [1]. Elsewhere, helmets have at a certain stage of the work occasionally been replaced with hats, as useful vehicles for colour; an instance of this has just been mentioned (see also *X-Rays*, m, n and o).

The rendering of the figures in the middle ground differs from that at the back first of all in the far brighter colours used. Apart from the light tints in the most striking figure — the girl to the front, already discussed — there are red, a bluish green and purple. The red areas, in the man loading his musket [5] and the musketeer blowing the powder from his pan [19], are the most extensive. Red plays a special role in Rembrandt's colour-schemes. Blue, green and yellow are nearly always mixed with other colours, and then take their place in the general gamut as dark or light colours — one does not often find blue and green as pronounced as they are in the drummer's shiny sleeve. Red, on the other hand, is usually (and here too) used on a more generous scale, in passages that are to a large extent toned down in keeping with the lighting, but where in the light the strength of the colour is preserved. Red strikes an effective colour chord with the predominantly warm-tinted range of the other areas. The pregnant character of the colour also however makes it suitable for deploying accents that enhance a position to the front of the picture. Thus in the *Night watch* the pike of Walich Schellingwouw [18], which projects in front of the others on the right (from the background into the middle ground) is not only lit but has also been given a bright red tassel. Close to this we find a similar red in the scarf between the earpieces of the helmet of the man on the extreme right [23], with its red reflexion in the edge of the helmet. Such a use of red in small scattered accents occurs, with Rembrandt, more often in the righthand half of a painting, the part furthest away from the source of light. On the right in the *Wedding of Samson* (no. A 123), for example, the lit edge of the cap of the man standing furthest to the front is painted with dabs of red. Red is the only purely chromatic means used in this way in the organizing of space, which is otherwise based primarily on strong and moderate contrasts of light and dark. Besides, red is of course quite useful as it lends variety to a picture in which other pregnant colours are used so sparingly; it is given this function more and more in the second half of the 1630s. Rembrandt makes the most generous use of red at places that are in the *Night watch* occupied by the two musketeers — against a centre of lighting, so that it adds powerful colour to this and at the same time provides the transition to a more peripherally-placed area of more subdued colouring. Here, in a picture with two centres of lighting, this use of red, too, is doubled — in the musketeer to the right of the lieutenant, an area where pink and a warm red are seen only at the top, and in comparison with this

Fig. 28. Detail of the drummer [24]



more, and a more intense, red in the fully-visible figure of the musketeer on the left who is closer to the light source. This illustrates an advantage that using non-contemporary dress may have offered Rembrandt. In the mid-17th century red occurred in middle-class dress in the Netherlands mainly as the colour of accessories such as the sash worn by Banning Cocq (information for which we are indebted to Mr F. van der Laken of the Historisch Kostuum Museum, Utrecht). In the in fact quite colourful militia portraits of Van der Helst, Backer and Flinck done for the great hall one finds remarkably little red, with one exception that as with Rembrandt makes one think of a subterfuge — in the work by Van der Helst a fiery-red cloak is carried in the arms of a negro boy immediately to the left of Captain Roelof Bicker, an article of clothing that is thus in the picture but not worn, and acts as a colourful exclamation-mark next to the figure of the captain. The role that fashionable

colours in dress may have played is in any case a matter that cannnot be settled here.

Rembrandt has radically changed his mind in the cut of the hat of the lefthand musketeer, depriving the pleated bowl of its modish height and adding a wide and once again contemporary brim (see *X-Rays*, d). In the bowl and further down in the sleeve and white collar there is an animated brushwork that Rembrandt reserved in the *Night watch* for the middle ground (fig. 5). A changing combination of lively brushstrokes and intensity of colour is used for accents of varying force. The outstretched hand of the man seen between the heads of the captain and lieutenant, for instance, is fairly reticently done. The relaxed sketchlike treatment of the glove using light, brownish greys helps create the effect of foreshortening, otherwise produced mainly by using differences in tint from the area lying behind. In the pointing hand of Sergeant Kemp on the right, one of the stepping stones of the light in the dark opening in the group, a bold brushstroke is coupled with warm flesh tints. A firm use of the brush is however linked by Rembrandt mainly with more exuberant colours like the fiery red of the musketeer on the left, the bluish green of the drummer's sleeve (fig. 28) and the purple in the puffed breeches of the musketeer part-hidden behind Banning Cocq, where the lustre on the cloth is suggested with a pinkish white applied wet-in-wet with zigzag brushstrokes. Everywhere the energy contained in the brushwork, which is left clearly apparent, enhances the effect of these colourful passages, which Rembrandt has (of course) kept comparatively limited in extent.

In the two main figures he has given colour maximum impact by applying it as a monochrome field in which the action of painting is entirely masked. This use of colour is diametrically opposite to the treatment given to the costume of the ensign, where the force of the colour is broken by its being dispersed. It is typical of Rembrandt that he has given free rein to colours that do not impinge upon the chiaroscuro — black and light yellow-and-white. The striking effect is besides due to colour contrasts, both within the figures and in their relation to the surroundings. Thus the two black-clad figures on the right in the middle ground — Sergeant Kemp and the pikeman to the left of him — are placed in murky surroundings, while in the case of the two officers most of the areas behind and around them are considerably lighter or darker, with once again an individual role for the red of Banning Cocq's sash, which is used at the lower right to define part of the contour of the figure. Between the two main figures and behind the lieutenant's legs Rembrandt allows the scene to be lost in darkness, as it is on the left in the shadow part of the man firing his musket.

In his treatment of the fully-visible figures he keeps to his standard choice of colours — black, yellow-white and red — and lets one of these for the most part define the whole of a costume. This contributes to the simplification of the picture (variation via light and shade takes precedence), and emphasizes the unity of the figure. In the contrasting areas, invariably placed close to the head, the same colours are used — white collars on the red clothing of the musketeer and the black of the captain (in the latter case a far brighter white than in the bluish/greyish white ruff of Sergeant Kemp on the right) and a partly dark gorget on the costume of the lieutenant. Just as with black, there is in most instances no place for red in the centre of the lighting. We do see it in Banning Cocq's sash, possibly in — as suggested when discussing the painting's theme — an heraldic combination with the black. Examination of a paint sample taken from the sash has shown that in the shadow area there are four layers of red applied carefully (see *Paint layer*, SCIENTIFIC DATA). Only in the Leningrad *Holy family* (Br. 570) of 1645 does one again find such full and evenly brushed red in the centre of lighting, in the blanket on the cradle. The red of the sash, toned down in the shadow, is used cunningly to separate the captain's outstretched arm optically from his body. It makes an appreciable contribution, around the radically foreshortened hand and arm, to the staccato colour — flesh tints/white/warm yellow/black/red/black; only in this 'extreme case' is Rembrandt prepared to employ such an exuberant colour effect. The edgings of light on the fingers and lit parts of the cuff are given the strongest possible emphasis, with monochrome fields of colour used on the smallest possible scale. The use of contrasting colour is thus one of the many forms of accent Rembrandt has placed on his two main characters, together with the space he has allotted to the sweeping action of their walking forward and the radiant light and amazing suggestion of the material of the clothing that Rembrandt has given to the figure of the lieutenant. A sparkling duo, and the worthy focus of a performance that is both complex and controlled.

5. Documents and sources

1. Alongside a drawing of the *Night watch* (cf. 7. *Copies*, 2 and fig. 11) in one of two family albums commissioned by Frans Banning Cocq, at present on loan from the De Graeff family to the Rijksmuseum Amsterdam, there is the following text: '*Schets* van de Schilderije op de groote Sael van de Cleveniers Doelen daerinne de Jonge Heer van Purmerlandt als Capiteijn, geeft last aen zijnen Lieutenant, de Heer van Vlaerdingen, om syn Compaignie Burgers te doen marcheren' (*Sketch* of the Painting in the great hall of the Kloveniers Doelen wherein the Young Lord of Purmerlandt as Captain, gives the order to his Lieutenant, the Lord of Vlaerdingen, to march off his Company of Citizens).

From the content of the notes contained in the albums and the date of Banning Cocq's death, 1 January 1655, one can deduce that the albums were completed in 1654 (Haverkamp-Begemann, op. cit.[1], p. 26 note 13).

2. From Gerrit Schaep's *Memorie ende Lijste van de publieke Schilderijen op de 3 Doelens bewaert wordende: soo als Ick die gevonden hebbe, na mijn wederkomste tot Aemsteldam in Februarij 1653*, Amsterdam Municipal Archives, Ms. 43 (Strauss *Doc.*, 1653/10):
[in the margin] '7 op de grootte kamer boven

Voor de Schoorsteen, op de Grootte Sael de vier overluijden, Burgerm$^{r.}$ Albertus Conradi, Pieter Reael ontfanger van de Gemeene Middelen van Holland, Jan Claessen Vlooswijck ende Jacob Willkes, geschildert bij Govert Flinck.

Ibid. aen de Rechter [i.e. left] syde van de schoorsteen, na den Aemstel toe, Cap$^{n.}$ Cornelis Bicker, heer van Swieten, Lut. Fred. van Banchem de notaris, geschildert van . . . Sandraert a° 1640.

Ibid. aen de slincke [i.e. right] zijde Albert Bas Cap^{n} Lucas Conijn Lut. gedaen bij Govert Flinck, 1645.

Ibid. daernaest aenvolgende Frans Banning Cock Cap^{n}, ende Willem van Ruytenburg, Lut., geschildert van Rembrand a° 1642.

Ibid. volgende als voren Jan Claesz. Vlooswyck Cap$^{n.}$, Gerrit Hudde, Lut. gedaen a° . . . bij [Nicolaes Eliasz.]

Ibid. Cornelis Graef Cap$^{n.}$ Hendric Lourisz, Boeckverkooper, geschildert bij JABacker a° 1642.

Ibid. Voor de Schoorsteen aen 't Inkomen, Roelof Bicker Cap$^{n.}$ Jan Michielsz. Blau Lut., a° 1643, gedaen bij Bartelm. van der Helst.'

([in the margin] 7 in the large room. upstairs

Before the chimney, in the Great Hall the four governors, Burgerm^{r} Albertus Conradi, Pieter Reael receiver of the Public Funds of Holland, Jan Claessen Vlooswijck and Jacob Willkes, painted by Govert Flinck.

Ibid. on the left side of the chimney, towards the [river] Aemstel, Cap$^{n.}$ Cornelis Bicker, Lord of Swieten, Lieut. Fred. van Banchem the notary, painted by . . . Sandraert A° 1640.

Ibid. on the right side Albert Bas Cap^{n} Lucas Conijn Lieut. done by Govert Flinck, 1645.

Ibid. next alongside Frans Banning Cock Cap^{n}, and Willem van Ruytenburg, Lieut., painted by Rembrand a° 1642.

Ibid. following as before Jan Claesz. Vlooswyck Cap^{n}, Gerrit Hudde, Lieut. done a° [1642] by [Nicolaes Eliasz.]

Ibid. Cornelis Graef Cap$^{n.}$ Hendric Lourisz, bookseller, painted by JABacker a° 1642.

Ibid. before the chimney at the entrance, Roelof Bicker Cap$^{n.}$ Jan Michielsz. Blau Lieut., a° 1643, done by Bartelm. van der Helst.)

3. Among the total of 11 depositions made in 1659 at the request of the guardian of Rembrandt's son Titus van Rijn to determine the size of the latter's inheritance from his mother Saskia van Uylenburch who died in 1642, there are two made by two of the militiamen portrayed in Rembrandt's 'schilderije, nu staende op de groote sael in de Cloveniersdoelen' (painting now in the great hall of the Arquebusiers' Headquarters), Jan Pietersz. Bronchorst and Nicolaes van Cruysbergen. The first mentioned a number of 16 persons depicted and said 'dat het ijder van hen, na de geheugenisse, die hij attestant daer noch aff heeft, van schilderen wel heeft gekost dooreen de somme van hondert guldens, d' een wat meer en d' ander wat minder, nae de plaats, die sij daer in hadden' (that each of them, according to the memory that he the deponent still has of it, paid for being painted on the average one hundred guilders, one rather more, another rather less, according with the place they occupied in it). Van Cruysbergen testified 'dat het stuck schilderije staende op de Cleuveniersdoelen door den voorsz. Rembrandt van Rijn geschildert (. . .) van schilderen wel heeft gekost de som van sestienhondert guldens' (that the painting in the Kloveniersdoelen painted by the aforesaid Rembrandt van Rijn had cost to paint the sum of sixteen hundred guilders) (Strauss *Doc.*, 1659/16 and 1659/19).

4. S. van Hoogstraten, *Inleyding tot de Hooge Schoole der Schilderkonst*, Rotterdam 1678, p. 176, in the first chapter of Book V, 'Van 't ordineeren in 't gemeen' (On composition in general): 'Al wat de konst stuk voor stuk vertoont, is een nabootsing van natuerlijke dingen, maer het by een schikken en ordineren komt uit den geest des konstenaers hervoor, die de deelen, die voorgegeven zijn, eerst in zijne inbeelding verwardelijk bevat, tot dat hy ze tot een geheel vormt, en zoo te zamen schikt, datze als een beeld maken: en dikwils een menichte beelden eender Historie zoodanich schikt, dat 'er geen de minste te veel noch te weynich in schijnt te zijn. En dit noemtmen met recht een waerneming der *Simmetrie, Analogie* en *Harmonie*. Ten is niet genoeg dat een Schilder zijn beelden op ryen nevens malkander stelt, gelijk men hier in Hollant op de Schuttersdoelen al te veel zien kan. De rechte meesters brengen te weeg, dat haer geheele werk eenwezich is, gelijk Clio uit Horatius leert:

Breng yder werkstuk, zoo 't behoort,
Slechts enkel en eenweezich voort.

Rembrant heeft dit in zijn stuk op den Doele tot Amsterdam zeer wel, maer na veeler gevoelen al te veel, waergenomen, maekende meer werks van het groote beelt zijner verkiezing, als van de byzondere afbeeltsels, die hem waren aenbesteet. Echter zal dat zelve werk, hoe berispelijk, na mijn gevoelen al zijn meedestrevers verdueren, zijnde zoo schilderachtich van gedachten, zoo zwierich van sprong, en zoo krachtich, dat, nae zommiger gevoelen, al d'andere stukken daer als kaerteblaren nevens staen. Schoon ik wel gewilt hadde, dat hij'er meer lichts in ontsteeken had.' (Everything that art shows item by item is an imitation of natural objects, but placing together and composition comes from the mind of the artist, who has at first stored the parts that are provided pellmell in his imagination, until he shapes them into a whole and places them together so that they make a figure: and often arranges a multitude of figures in a History such that there seems to be nothing whatever either too much or too little. This one rightly calls observance of *Symmetry, Analogy* and *Harmony*. It is not enough that a painter should place his figures in rows one beside the other, such as one can too often see here in Holland in militia buildings. The true masters manage to have their whole work all of a piece, as Clio [i.e. Hoogstraten's third book, in which this quotation appears on p. 116, in the ninth chapter devoted to 'doening' or action] from Horace teaches: Let each work you produce be, as it should, simple and of a piece. This *Rembrant* has in his work in the Doele in Amsterdam very well, but as many feel all too much, observed, making more work of the large image of his choosing, than of the individual likenesses he had been contracted to paint. Yet that same work will, however open to rebuke, in my view outlive all its rivals, being so picturesque in its concept, so dashing in the placement of the figures and so powerful that, as some feel, all other works are as playing-cards beside it. Though I had rather he had put more light in it).
The line from Horace (*Ars poetica*, 23) runs:

denique sit quod vis, simplex dumtaxat et unum.

The Dutch word 'sprong' means, as Haverkamp-Begemann (op. cit.[1], p. 67) remarked, 'varied placement of the figures'. Cf. Van Hoogstraten, p. 190 in the 'Vierde Hooftdeel. Samenbeweging, sprong en troeping, of de Muza der Teykenkonst' (Fourth [should read: Fifth] Chapter. Homogeneity of movement, placement of figures and grouping, or the Muse of the Art of Drawing): 'Laet uwe figuuren met malkanderen een welstandige beweging hebben: niet als de domme toneelspeelers, die de reedenen, dieze elkander behoorden toe te duwen, voor op 't toneel aen de toehoorders komen uitbraken. Neem een aerdige sprong waer, dat is een welkunstige, maer in schijn ongemaekte plaetsing uwer beelden: op dat menze niet, by wijze van spreeken, al te gelijk (als in sommige Doelstukken) de Hoofden kan afslaen. (. . .) Niet dat uwe beelden op elkanderen gepakt schijnen, maer gy moet ze een vrye zwier laten. (. . .) Dit hooftdeel heeft *Leonardo da Vinci* in zijn beroemden Carton van de Bataelje verstandichlijk waergenomen. *Tintoret* en *Paul* van *Verone* waren hier meester in: en den begrasiden *Rafaël* verwonderlijk. *Rembrant* heeft deeze

deugd dikmaels wel begrepen, en de beste stukken van *Rubens*, en zijn navolger *Jordaens*, hebben een byzonder welstandige sprong en troeping' (Let your figures have together a movement pleasing to the eye: not like the stupid actors, who from the front of the stage spew out on the audience the speeches they are meant to direct to one another. Observe a proper placement, that is, an artful but apparently natural placing of your figures: so that one cannot, so to speak, at a single blow (as in some militia paintings) strike off all the heads. (. . .) Not that your figures appear crammed together, but give them room to move. (. . .) This principle was judiciously observed by *Leonardo da Vinci* in his famous Cartoon of the Battle [of Anghiari]. *Tintoretto* and *Paul* of *Verona* [Veronese] were masters in this: and the graciously gifted *Raphaël* most wonderfully. *Rembrant* often well understood this virtue, and the best pieces of *Rubens* and his follower *Jordaens* have a specially agreeable placement and grouping).

5. F. Baldinucci, *Cominciamento, e progresso dell'arte dell' intagliare in rame, colle vite di molti de' più eccellenti Maestri della stessa Professione*, Florence 1686, p. 78.
'Circ'all'Anno 1640, viveva, ed operava in Amsterdam Reimbrond Vanrein, che in nostra lingua diciamo Rembrante del Reno, nato in Leida, pittore in vero d'assai più credito, che valore. Costui avendo dipinta una gran tela, alla quale fu dato luogo nell'Alloggio de' Cavalieri forestieri, in cui aveva rappresentata un ordinanza d'una di quelle compagnie di Cittadini, si procacciò si gran nome, che poco migliore l'acquistò giammai altro artefice di quelle parti. La cagione di ciò fu più che ogni altra, perch'egli fra l'altre figure aveva fatto vedere nel quadro un Capitano, con piede alzato in atto di marciare, e con una partigiana in mano, cosi ben tirata in prospettiva, che non essendo più lunga in pittura di mezzo braccio, sembrava, da ogni veduta, di tutta su lunghezza; il rimanente però, avuto riguardo a quanto doveva volersi. da uomo tanto accreditato, riusci appiastrato, e confuso in modo, che poco si distinguevano l'altre figure fra di loro, tutto che fatte fossero con grande studio dal naturale. Di quest'opera, dalla quale per ventura di lui gridò quell'età, ebbe egli 4000. scudi di quella moneta, che giungono a compire il numero di circa a. 3500, de' nostri Toscani.' See S. Slive, *Rembrandt and his critics 1630–1730*, The Hague 1953, pp. 104ff. Later in his text (op. cit., p. 79) Baldinucci names Bernhardt Keil as his source about Rembrandt: ' . . . come racconta Bernardo Keillh di Danimarca, pittore lodatissimo, che opera in Roma, stato otto anni nella sua scuola . . .'. Baldinucci gives different but probably more accurate information about Keil's sojourn in Amsterdam and his contact with Rembrandt in his *Notizie de'Professori del disegno*, 1st edn Florence 1681–1728, edn Milan 1812, VIII, pp. 414–415; according to this, Keil (b. 1624) went to Amsterdam when he was 18 years old, worked two years with Rembrandt and three years in Uylenburgh's 'Academy'. If Keil did indeed work with Rembrandt from 1642 until 1644, he will have seen the completion of the *Night watch* at close quarters.

According to Baldinucci, the fee Rembrandt received for the *Night watch* was (see HdG *Urk.*, p. 424) 8750 guilders, as against the 1600 guilders mentioned in the depositions quoted under 3. above.

6. From the 11th minutes book of the Amsterdam Treasurers: 1715, 23 May. Present Messrs Pancras, Velters and Hooft, Treasurers.
'Is geordonneert, omme het groote stuk schilderij van Rembrandts hangende op de saal van de Cloveniersdoelen schoon te maken en als dan hetzelve te plaetsen op de Kreygsraats kamer van het Stadhuys' (Resolved, to clean the large painting by Rembrandt hanging in the great hall of the Arquebusiers' Headquarters and then to place the same in the War Council room in the Townhall) (HdG *Urk.* no. 402). The 'War Council room' means the room of the Small War Council on the top floor of the then Townhall (now the Royal Palace). So that it would fit here in between two doors the painting was reduced in size, as related in 1758 by Jan van Dijk, who was entrusted with the supervision and upkeep of the municipal collection of paintings. The records of the Treasurers have for the years 1714–1722 no items relating to the restoration of paintings, so one cannot tell whether this cleaning was in fact carried out (cf. Van Schendel and Mertens, op. cit.[7], p. 14).

For reports of payments for the cleaning and repairing of paintings in the Arquebusiers' Headquarters from 1687 onwards, with no specific mention of the *Night watch*, see W.F.H. Oldewelt, 'Eenige posten uit de Thesauriers-memorialen van Amsterdam van 1664–1764', *O.H.* 51 (1934), pp. 140–142, 162–165, 237–239; cf. also Van Schendel and Mertens, op. cit.[7], pp. 6–16.

7. From J. van Dijk, *Kunst- en Historiekundige Beschrijving en Aanmerkingen over alle de schilderijen op het stadhuis van Amsterdam*, Amsterdam 1758, pp. 58–61: 'No. 27. Hier tegen over hangt het stuk van REMBRANDT VAN RYN geschildert in 1642. Het verbeelt een Schutters gezelschap in het optrekken, men heeft door de veele gekookte Oly en Vernissen, die van tyd tot tyd daar over gehaalt waren, niet meer konnen zien wat voor een Compagnie, veel minder hoe de Hooft-Officieren genoemt waren, want men meende dat het overteert was geworden, maar hetzelve door mij schoongemaakt wordende, bevond dat de Namen zoo wel van de Hooft-Officiers als van de gemeenen, door Rembrandt zelfs zijn opgetekent, als: (. . .) Dit schilderij is verwonderenwaardig, zoo ten opzigt van de groote kragt als bezonderheid van 't Penceel, het is een sterk Zonnelicht, zeer fors in de Verf geschildert, en 't is op 't hoogste te verwonderen dat bij een zo grote Ruwheid, eene zo groote nettigheit heeft kunnen plaats vinden, want het Borduurzel op het Camisool of Kolder van den Luitenant is zoo hoog van Verf dat men Notemuscate daar op zoude kunnen Raspen, en het Wapen van Amsterdam door een Leeuw vast gehouden, zoo net en uitvoerig als of het glad geschildert was, het gezigt van den Tamboer is van nabij als gesmeert, en vertoont zich uit de hand ongemeen fraay, 't is te beklagen dat dit stuk zooveel is afgenomen om tussen de twee deuren te kunnen plaatzen, want op de rechter [i.e. left] hand hebben noch twee Beelden, en op de linker [i.e. right] heeft den Tamboer geheel gestaan, 't welk te zien is aan het egte Model thans in handen van den Heer Boendermaker' (Opposite [i.e. opposite the militia painting by Paulus Moreelse on the chimneybreast] hangs the piece by REMBRANDT VAN RYN painted in 1642. It shows a Militia company marching out, but because of the great deal of boiled Oil and Varnishes that have from time to time been brushed over it one was unable to see what kind of Company much less how the Chief Officers were called, because one thought it was covered with tar, but the same being cleaned by me, it was found that the Names of both the Chief Officers and of the common men were written on it by Rembrandt himself, as: (. . .) This Painting is admirable, in respect of the great power and especially of the Brushwork, it is a strong Sunlight scene, done very forcefully in the Paint, and it is most amazing that with so much Coarseness there could be so much finesse, for the Embroidery on the Camisole or Buffcoat of the Lieutenant is so high in Paint that one might grate a Nutmeg on it, and the Arms of Amsterdam supported by a Lion, so clearly and thoroughly as if they were painted smoothly, the face of the Drummer is from close-to as if smeared, and at a distance shows itself uncommon fine, it is a pity that this piece has had so much removed so that it could be placed between two doors, for on the left side there were two further Figures and on the right the Drummer stood whole, as may be seen from the true Model now in the hands of Mr Boendermaker). The 'true Model' was probably the painting described under *7. Copies*, 1, now regarded as a copy and attributed to Gerrit Lundens.

8. From the records of the Amsterdam Treasurers for 1771: 'Juli 4. Bet[aald] aen Jacobus Buys voort repareren en overschilderen vant schilderij van Rembrandt en onkosten *f* 175,–.' (July 4. Paid to Jacobus Buys for the repairing and overpainting of the painting by Rembrandt and sundry costs 175 guilders).

9. From J. Reynolds, 'A journey to Flanders and Holland, in the year MDCCLXXXI', *The works of Sir Joshua Reynolds . . .*, E. Malone ed., London 1809, III, p. 354: 'Amsterdam.— The Stadthouse / The best picture in this house is painted by Vander Helst (. . .) Of this picture I had before heard great commandations; but it as far exceeded my expectations, as that of Rembrandt fell below it. So far indeed am I of thinking that this last picture deserves its great reputation, that it was with difficulty I could persuade myself that it was painted by Rembrandt; it seemed to me to have more of the yellow manner of Boll. The name of Rembrandt, however, is certainly upon it, with the date 1642. It appears to have been much damaged, but what remains seems to be painted in a poor manner'.

In manuscript notes not included in the printed version (Paris, Fondation Custodia, Coll. Frits Lugt) Reynolds went even further: 'If it is by Rembrandt it is the worst of him I ever saw' (Haverkamp-Begemann, op. cit.[1], p. 3 note 1).

10. From notes in an archive copy of the 14th impression of the *Aanwijzing der Schilderijen berustende op 's Rijks museum te Amsterdam*, 1843: 'in A° 1795 heeft dit stuk eene onkundige restauratie ondergaan, en is ter linker zijde een strook afgesneden, in de achtergrond is op sommige plaatsen geschilderd, onlangs is er bij het stellen der banken voor der vergadering van het Instituut een timmermanshamer ingevallen, waardoor een gat is veroorzaakt.' (in the year 1795 [should be 1715 ?] the piece underwent an unskilled restoration, and a strip was taken off the lefthand side, in the background in some places it has been painted, not long ago during the installation of the benches for the meeting of the [Royal Netherlands] Institute a carpenter's hammer fell through it, occasioning a hole). On this last report, see 3. under Support.

6. Graphic reproductions

1. Engraving by Lambertus Antonius Claessens (Antwerp 1763–Reuil near Paris 1834) inscribed: *Rembrand van Ryn pinx — L.A. Claessens Sculp 1797 / Amsterdamsche Gewapende Burgery 1642./ Gegraveerd naer de Origineele Schildery / Berustende op het Stadhuis van Amsterdam. — Bourgeoisie Armée d'Amsterdam 1642.* (etc.) (see fig. 2, where the print's first state is used as a diagram). Shows the composition framed larger at the left, right and bottom, especially on the left where two more figures can be seen but not a small child as in the copy by Lundens listed under *7. Copies,* 1. The print does not in any case show the painting in its (reduced) state of 1797, and in the main matches this painted copy which however shows more along the top, or one similar to it. It is closer to the original at a number of other points — the cartouche hanging by the gateway is present, and the steps are parallel to the top and bottom of the canvas. The Lundens copy must have been in Paris from somewhen between 1768 and 1777, and nothing is known of Claessens having stayed in Paris before he settled in Amsterdam in 1795. It is very likely that he worked from the watercolour drawing of 1779 by Jacob Cats (see *7. Copies,* 4), as Meijer (op.cit.[20], p. 207) has suggested. This is confirmed by the fact that a lance first absent from the corner in the wall on the right in the Cats drawing is also missing in the Claessens print.

7. Copies

1. Panel 66.9 (± 0.1) × 85.6 (± 0.2) cm (the top and left edges are irregular), Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum (no. C 1453), on loan from the National Gallery, London (no. 289) (fig. 26). Along the left and right sides there are unpainted strips 0.2–0.5 cm and 0.5–0.7 cm wide, respectively[28]. A greatly reduced, competent and mainly faithful (though not mathematically true) copy, attributed to Gerrit Lundens (1622 — after 27 September 1683). This attribution rests on the mention of a painting as 'Het Doele Stuk, daar in komt Capiteyn Banning Kok, met zijn Burgerij, door Gerard Lundens, uytvoerig geschildert, 't best van hem bekent' in the Pieter van der Lip sale, Amsterdam 14 June 1712 (Lugt 233), no. 27; probably the same painting had, albeit less fully described, already been mentioned in 1709 as a work by Lundens (see below). The major importance of this copy lies in the fact that it shows the composition framed larger on all four sides but especially on the left, where two men — one in profile with his hat in the right hand and a musket and gun-fork in the other, and another, hatted, behind him to one side — are seen behind a parapet together with a small child. Despite arguments to the contrary[29] it is today assumed, for sound reasons and especially on the ground of the report by Jan van Dijk in 1758 (see *5. Documents and sources,* 8), that this copy reproduces for the greater part the original appearance of the *Night watch* before it was cut down in size. The main differences from the original are, apart from the larger picture area and a slightly brighter colouring, the somewhat oblique line taken by the steps, the smaller number and different position of the pikes in the background, and the absence of the cartouche hanging from the cornice. One might be tempted to deduce from this that the cartouche had not been added at the time the copy was done; but an infrared photograph made of it in 1953 in the National Gallery, London, shows that the cartouche was indeed indicated (in the underpainting?) and later painted out[28]. The date of the copy (and hence the terminus ante quem for the introduction of the cartouche with the names) may be worked out from various pieces of evidence. The painting must be identical with a work that (together with a copy, also attributed to Lundens and now in Paris, of Bartholomeus van der Helst's *Governors of the Handbow Archers' civic guard* of 1653, Amsterdam, Amsterdams Historisch Museum, in which Banning Cocq is also depicted) occurs in the 1691 inventory of one of Banning Cocq's relatives, Catharina de Graeff née Hooft (as: 'een schildery, verbeeldende een Corporaelschap borgerye') and in that of Pieter de Graeff in 1709 (as: 'een schilderij van een Compagnie burgers van Gerard Lundens'. Cf. A. Bredius in: *O.H.* 30, 1912, pp. 197; for further details of pedigree see MacLaren[28], where the attribution to Lundens is in fact not accepted). There can be hardly any doubt that Banning Cocq himself ordered the copies after the Rembrandt and the Van der Helst, and the date of his death, 1 January 1655, thus forms a terminus ante quem. This is all the more likely since a drawing to be mentioned below, in Banning Cocq's album and certainly done before his death, seems to be based on the Lundens copy. G. Glück (*Niederländische Gemälde aus der Sammlung des Herrn Alexander Tritsch in Wien . . .*, 1907, pp. 18 and 45) points to the similar composition of a *Country wedding* signed and dated 1649 by Lundens, and thought the copy was painted in or before 1649. Though this argument cannot be seen as clinching, the likely dating of 1650 for the drawing probably done after Lundens' copy supports this dating. This may mean that the cartouche painted out in the copy was already present in the original in 1649/50.

2. Chalk drawing with watercolour, probably by Jacob Colijns (Amsterdam 1614/15–1686), in the family album of Frans Banning Cocq entitled *Geslacht/Register der Heeren en Vrouwen/ van/ Purmerlandt en Ilpendam* etc., Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum on loan from the De Graeff family (fig. 11). The two parts were begun before December 1649 and ended in 1654. The drawing of the *Night watch* is on p. 142 of the first part, following a pasted-in document of December 1649 (see Haverkamp-Begemann, op. cit.[1], pp. 25–27). The rather coarse reproduction of the painting seems to be based on copy 1 by Lundens. In the smaller number of lances and the oblique line of the steps it broadly speaking matches this copy rather than the original. In view of the inaccuracy, no special significance can be attached to the fact that the top of the arch of the gateway is cut off.

3. Drawing in black chalk on parchment 43 × 53.5 cm, by Hendrik Pothoven (Amsterdam 1725–1795), signed and dated

Fig. 29. Copy 3. H. Pothoven, black chalk 43 × 53.5 cm. Amsterdam, Rijksprentenkabinet



Fig. 30. Copy 4. J. Cats, chalk and watercolour 33.3 × 42.5 cm. Amsterdam, Rijksprentenkabinet



1762, Amsterdam, Rijksprentenkabinet (fig. 29). In 1800 and 1811 in coll. Ploos van Amstel sales; sale Amsterdam (R.W.P. de Vries) 15 December 1926, no. 1375 (pl. XLVIII); coll. C.G.'t Hooft, sale Amsterdam (Mak van Waay) 17/18 April 1962, no. 144. Reproduces the painting in a state matching that today (i.e. reduced).

4. Watercolour drawing 33.3 × 42.5 cm by Jacob Cats (Altona 1741–Amsterdam 1799), signed and dated 1779, Amsterdam, Rijksprentenkabinet (fig. 30). From the Wurfbain family. On the evidence of the framing (which is larger than that of the painting in 1779), of the number of lances and of the oblique line of the steps, it reproduces the Lundens copy described above under 1. For the first time this work misses out the lance (still seen in Lundens) roughly in the corner of the building on the right. This lance is also absent from the Claessens engraving (see *6. Graphic reproductions*, 1), which shows that that print was based on the Cats copy.

8. Provenance

- Until 1715 in the great hall on the upper floor of the Arquebusiers' Headquarters (Kloveniersdoelen) in Amsterdam; in (or soon after) that year it was moved to the Small War Council room in the Townhall (see *5. Documents and sources*, 6).
- In 1808, when King Louis Napoleon took over the Townhall for use as his royal palace, it was for a short while in the Amsterdam Trippenhuis, then inhabited by the art dealer C.S. Roos (E.W. Moes and E. van Biema, *De Nationale Konst-gallery . . .*, Amsterdam 1909, pp. 188–190), and was then returned to the previous Townhall.
- In 1815 in the Royal Museum in the Trippenhuis.
- In 1885 in the new Rijksmuseum.

9. Summary

As the sources show, the *Night watch* — dated 1642, i.e. the year in which it was completed — very soon became Rembrandt's most famous work; it remains so today, under a name that is no older than the end of the 18th century. The painting was intended for the great hall of the new building, completed some time before, of the Kloveniersdoelen (one of the three Amsterdam citizens' militia headquarters); its decoration also included group portraits by Nicolaes Eliasz., Joachim von Sandrart, Govaert Flinck and Bartholomeus van der Helst from the years 1640–45. In 1715 Rembrandt's painting was moved to the Amsterdam Townhall, at which time it was substantially reduced especially on the lefthand side.

In interpreting what the *Night watch* represents, the connexion with contemporary events has generally played a role, either (initially) in a direct sense with the picture seen almost as a 'snapshot' or (more recently) as a general frame of reference. In connexion with the caption to a drawn copy in the family album of Captain Banning Cocq, looked on as explaining the entire scene, the action depicted has usually been seen as the preparation for an orderly marching-out of the company of militia. The picture would thus derive its cohesion not only from the action actually shown but also from the intended outcome. Such a projection forward in time can be regarded as a rationalisation that has still played a role in recent commentaries. It seems more adequate to assume that the picture has a more general, symbolic meaning for which the unity of time and that of action are irrelevant. In earlier commentaries a symbolic explanation has indeed already been given to a number of figures — the two girls, one of whom bears a bird's claw as the symbol of the Arquebusiers, and the musketeer discharging his weapon in the centre as a personification of musketry. On the basis of this and of the numerous archaic features of dress and weaponry in a large proportion of the persons portrayed, the comments offered here interpret the whole picture in this sense. Some evidence for the nature and meaning of the central theme can be found in similarities of motif (some of them pointed out long since by Schmidt-Degener) with the *Concord of the State* (no. A 135). Just as there, the action and attention in the *Night watch* seem to a great extent to be determined by, or indeed directed towards, centres

of symbolic meaning — the girls already mentioned, and a number of musketeers who illustrate the various stages in the handling of the firearm.

The highest-ranking officers forming the pivot of the composition are, through the incorporation of the city arms of Amsterdam in the lieutenant's costume, emphasized by the cast shadow from the hand of the captain whose clothing can perhaps be seen as displaying the heraldic colours of these same arms, drawn into the whole complex of symbolic allusions. Thus one may look on the picture not as a full-fledged allegory so much as a 'role portrait', whose theme may be described as 'the militant citizen'.

As was realised by quite early commentators, Rembrandt has subordinated the norms that applied to the traditional group portrait to the requirements presented by the dynamic of his composition. This dynamic is very much enhanced by his use of chiaroscuro, which enabled him, in rendering the multiplicity of motifs, to work selectively in terms of formal definition and detail. The grouping too, with its numerous overlaps of figures, helps bring about a simplification that serves to achieve both the unity of the picture and the optimum effect of what is being accentuated. The treatment of the figures, and especially of the heads, varies from one to the next, and shows only few points of resemblance to Rembrandt's individual portraits (though one can point to one or two); in motif, too, there are some parallels to be found. The colour — its intensity in particular — is subordinated to the chiaroscuro, as it usually is in Rembrandt's paintings. At some points the handling of paint bolsters the effect of the colour; in the figures in the middle ground pregnant colour in small fields is coupled with an animated brushwork, while in those of the two officers the colour (black in the captain's costume and yellow and white in that of the lieutenant) is applied in almost monochrome areas, and thus lent the most autonomy.

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Paintings Rembrandt's authorship of which cannot be positively either accepted or rejected

B 9 Ahasuerus condemning Haman, who begs mercy of Esther

BUCHAREST, MUZEUL DE ARTĂ AL REPUBLICII SOCIALISTE ROMÂNIA, INV. NO. 8.187/221

HDG 47; BR. 522; BAUCH 40; GERSON –

1. Summarized opinion

A poorly preserved painting that according to the X-rays conceals under an almost total overpainting, which was probably carried out in Rembrandt's workshop in the 1660s, a wholly or partly completed and possibly authentic Rembrandt work from the years around 1635.

2. Description of subject

The subject is taken from Esther 7:7–9. After Esther had at the banquet revealed to King Ahasuerus Haman's plan to slaughter the Jews, and the king had gone out into the palace garden 'in his wrath', Haman fell 'upon the bed whereon Esther was'. The king found him there when he returned, and at the suggestion of the chamberlain Harbonah (who is not depicted) had Haman hanged on the gallows, fifty cubits high, that the latter had himself prepared for Mordechai, Esther's cousin.

On the left, on a raised platform with steps the front of which is decorated with a cherub's head, sits Esther, wrapped in a yellow gown and heavy gold-brocade cloak lined with ermine; she wears a large headdress with a veil hanging from it, a circlet of pearls (with a dark stone in the centre) round her forehead, and a long ear-drop. Her right hand rests on her hip, while with her left arm she leans on a table covered with a dark cloth. In front of the table, on the right at the foot of the steps (and only partly visible), Haman kneels with bowed head and raised hands. He wears a wide gold chain over a red tabard. Behind the table, to the right of Esther, one sees Ahasuerus from the waist up; he appears to lean forward slightly, pointing downwards with the sceptre held in his left hand. He turns his head, topped by a turban above which project the tips of a small crown, sharply to the right towards two soldiers whose upper bodies stand out against the dark background on the right above the table.

3. Observations and technical information

Working conditions

Examined on 7 August 1972 (B.H., E.v.d.W.) in good daylight and out of the frame, with the aid of a number of infrared and ultraviolet photographs and a mosaic of 40 radiographs together covering the whole painting. Of the latter, a print of the whole mosaic and contact prints of some of the individual films were available subsequently.

Support

DESCRIPTION: Canvas, lined, 234.8 × 187.5 cm. Single piece.
SCIENTIFIC DATA: With the aid of the available contact prints of the radiographs, cusping could be seen over a length of 85 cm along the righthand edge. This varies in pitch from 11 to 14 cm, and extends some 10 cm into the canvas. It is however so little pronounced that one has to assume that a strip of considerable width — about 10 to 15 cm — is missing along this side. Much the same can be said about the lefthand side, where the observations covered a length of only 30 cm; here the cusping, with a pitch of 10 and 10.5 cm, is rather more distinct and extends about 13 cm into the canvas, so that it may be assumed that there is about 7 to 12 cm missing on this side. There is no sign of cusping along the top and bottom edges. It may be supposed that the canvas originally came from a strip *c.* 210 cm (= 3 ells) wide, and that the painting may also have had the same width; this is supported by the way the composition ends abruptly at the left and right. Threadcount: 17.5 vertical threads/cm (17–18) and 12.5 horizontal threads/cm (11.5–14). Given the dimensions of the canvas, the greater regularity of the vertical threads and the high incidence of long thickenings in the horizontal threads, it can be assumed with certainty that the warp runs vertically.

Ground

DESCRIPTION: None seen.
SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

Paint layer

CONDITION: In general badly flattened. The weave has been pressed through the paint layer over large areas; only in the impasto parts such as the tablecloth, sceptre and Esther's cloak is this not the case. Recent overpaintings or locally-applied varnish are, according to the UV photographs, to be found in many dark passages — in the tablecloth, especially the part hanging down over the steps to the left of the kneeling Haman, around his fingers and at numerous places in his face and clothing, in Esther's hair and eyebrows, in Ahasuerus's face and clothing, and in and around the two soldiers. One furthermore gets the impression that there are older overpaintings in the faces of Esther and Ahasuerus. In general it may be said that thinly painted parts are worn and extensively restored, while the thicker areas are better preserved but flattened. Craquelure: in general there is an irregular pattern of crackle with much cupping. In and to the right above Ahasuerus's turban (where the X-ray shows a turban painted earlier, with a different shape), by the outline of his shoulder on the left and in the tablecloth the cracks are particularly wide.
DESCRIPTION: The background has an almost even tint and is done in a very dark, blackish paint that on the left, above Esther's shoulder, leaves some strokes of red-brown partially exposed. The soldiers standing out above the table on the right are painted thinly and rather clumsily, with an indication of subdued catchlights on the poorly-formed helmet of the one to the right.

In the figure of Esther it may be suspected that at a number of points there is an earlier paint layer hidden beneath the present top layer. Her skirt is painted in the lit areas with distinct strokes of yellow paint, and in the shadows more vaguely in tints of yellow and yellow-brown. The paintstrokes that are visible in relief are far from always matching the shades of colour. The righthand contour along the thigh is formed by an irregular stroke of rather dry paint, and along the lower leg and shoe by the dark paint of the tablecloth being laid over this. Along the hem of the skirt there are strokes that have only partly remained visible. Esther's brocade cloak shows, in the light, long, broad and sometimes curving strokes mostly in thick paint in yellowish and grey colours, with thick, bright yellow touches and short curved strokes some of which lie over an underlying relief. In the half-shadow a red-brown colour dominates, and in the shadow a blackish brown and ashen grey with strokes of dull yellow and red. Along the ermine lining, which is done with a lead-coloured grey and a few touches of yellow, there are strokes of a cooler and partly translucent red. The bodice is painted with large, random strokes in the same kind of colours as the skirt, as are the sleeves where at the wrists a light red, mixed with an ochre yellow, exposes here and there a thin and overcleaned black; a lighter colour can be glimpsed through the latter. The hand on the left, resting in te hip, is sketched roughly in a violet-grey, while the other hand is also painted very vaguely in a warmer grey with strokes of dark brown between the fingers. The head is (because of overpaintings) difficult to assess; the flesh colour at the throat, darker and tending to a reddish grey on the breast, is applied flatly. An underlying relief of a yellow that shows through can be seen in the breast area. In the headdress strokes, touches and blobs of paint in a wide variety of colours — light and dark yellows and browns, red-brown, white and blue-green — have been placed against and over each other, partly wet-in-wet.

The almost black paint of the tablecloth, in general badly cracked, shows along the upper edge and along the heavy fold on the left a tinge of blue-green. The very dark blue-green cloak of the standing Ahasuerus has scant indication of form; dark hints of folds have been for the most part overpainted. The clasp

Fig. 1. Canvas 234.8 × 187.5 cm



Fig. 2. X-Ray

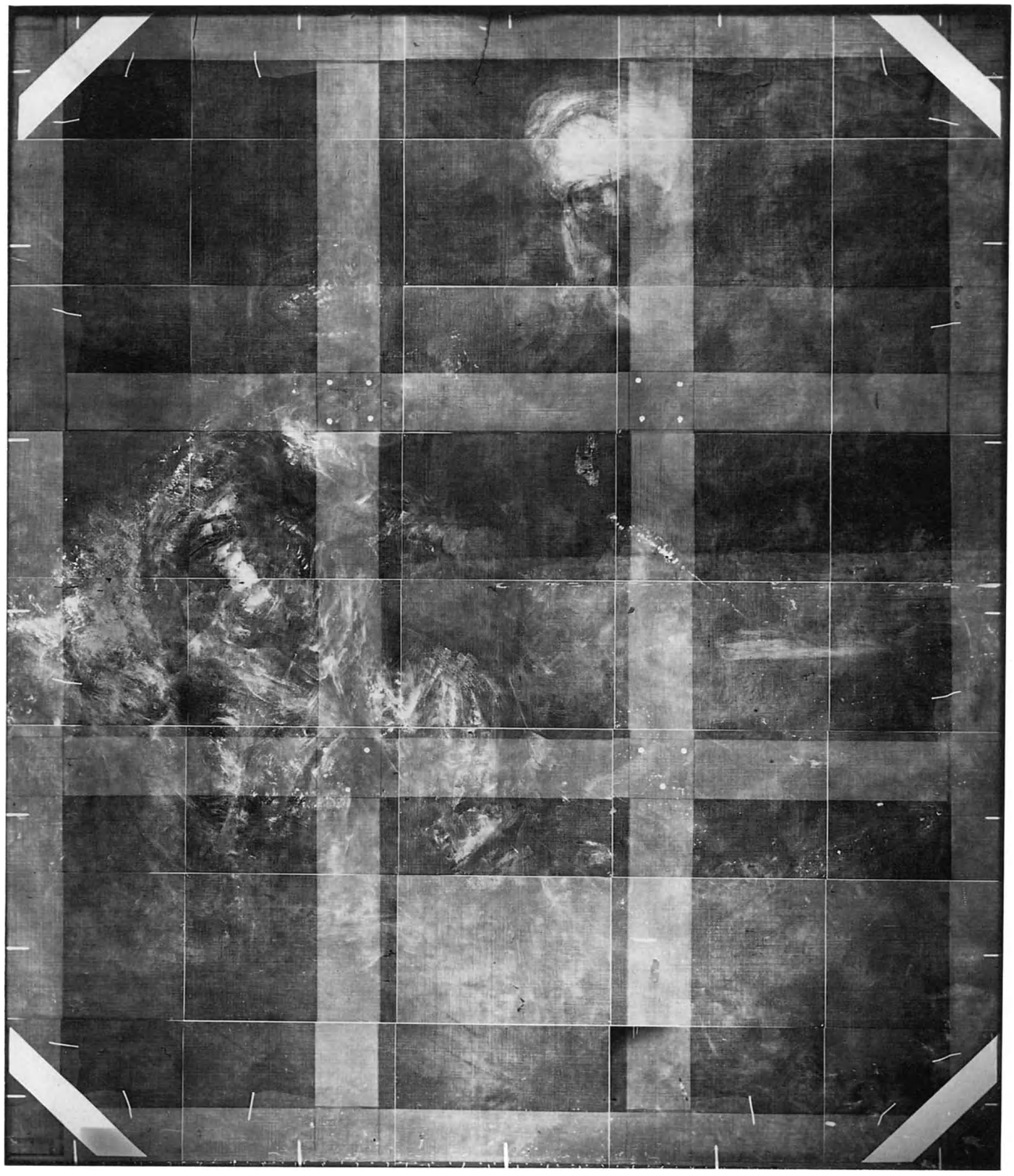


Fig. 3. Detail (1 : 4)

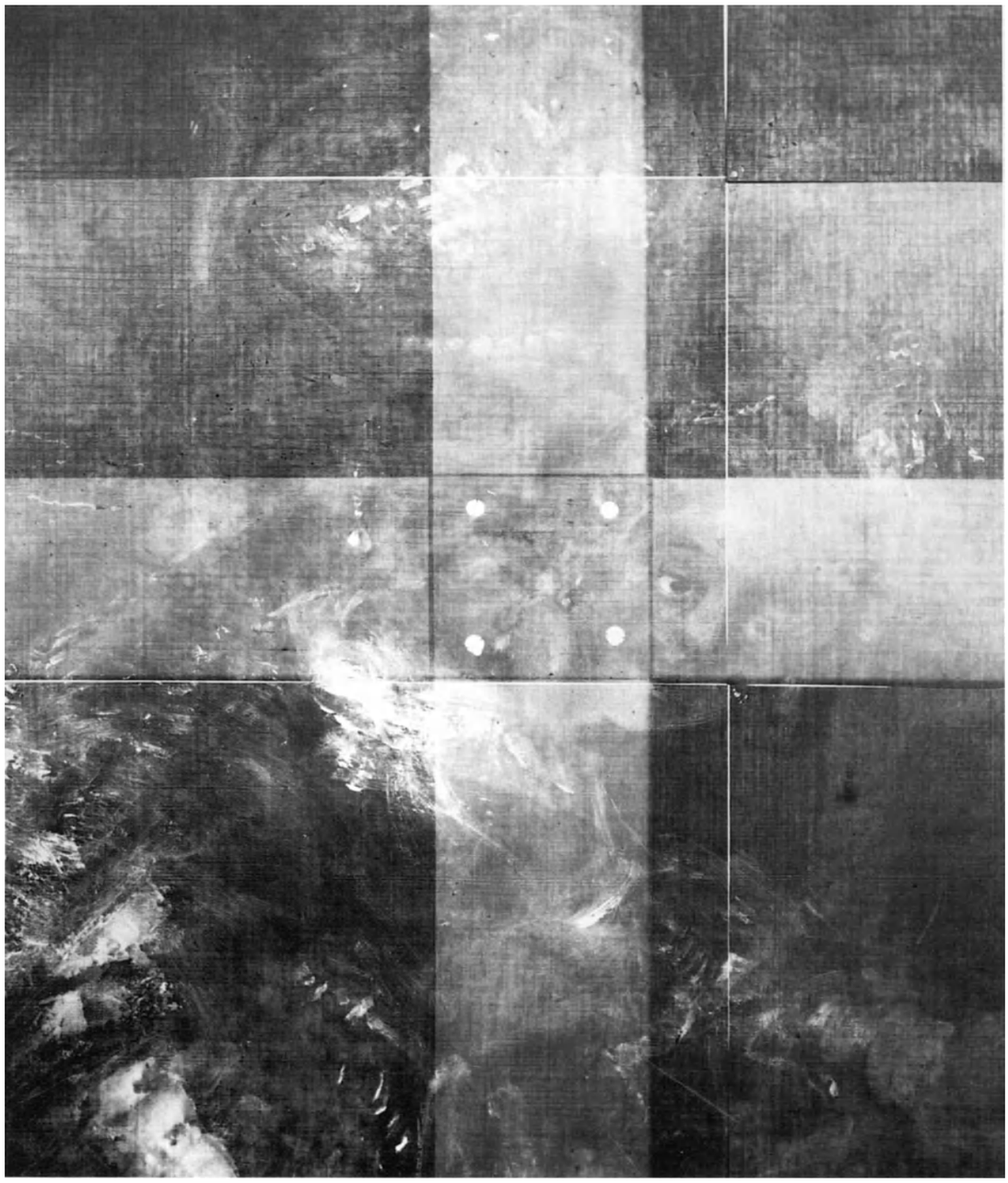


at the shoulder is shown very cursorily with blobs of pink and yellow paint, and the sceptre is in a flat ochre brown with lumpy yellow highlights. The hand (holding the sceptre in a way that is unclear) is painted rather broadly, in a ruddy brown in the light and grey-black in the shadows; hatching between the fingers detract somewhat from the suggestion of form. The turban is painted with unorganized strokes mainly in subdued ochre colours and brown, with a few ochre-coloured accents and a little blue above the neck. The patchy appearance of the face is due partly to overpaintings. The intact flesh colour at the throat consists of a flatly-brushed ochre-yellow and pink, standing out hardly at all against the neckerchief.

The head of the kneeling Haman shows broad strokes of orangeish flesh colour, in which red-brown strokes lie along the eyebrows and root of the beard, and dark patches indicating the eye and nostril. The hair and beard are shown with nervous strokes and dabs of greyish paint. Both the hardness of the contours and the patchy appearance of the hands seem to be due to restoration; retouches in the background have made the index finger of the left hand thinner, and the outline of the thumb has been moved to the right. Both his sleeves are in a deep red, used partly as a glaze, over which (especially in the left sleeve) a bright and almost orange red has been placed with small brushstrokes over the folds. The cloak is executed in similar colours, almost black in the deepest shadows.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

Fig. 4. X-Ray



X-Rays

The radiographic image shows clearly parts of a picture hidden beneath the present painting; the existence of this can already be suspected from underlying brushstrokes and colours seen at the surface in the figure of Esther and, at some places, from the nature of the craquelure. The shapes interfere with those of the top layer; the stretcher with its cross-battens somewhat disturbs the image.

Large parts of Esther's clothing show up light and clearly recognizable in a pattern of strong strokes, some of which coincide with highlights and strokes of light paint that can be seen at the surface. Folds seem to run down obliquely from her right leg at the point where in the present picture the cloak with its ermine edging lies over the yellow skirt; there is no image of the ermine lining. The righthand contour of the other leg, which is now formed by the paint of the tablecloth being placed over the skirt, seems to have been further to the right. Of the arms, that on the left appears in much the same position as today, but that on the right — only partly matching the present arm — seems to extend almost horizontally and to end in a vague patch that might be (the underpainting of) a hand. While it is not entirely clear whether these changes represent different phases of a single execution or different designs — the image of bold strokes is so dominant that one tends towards the former — there are very clearly two designs in the case of the head. The

Fig. 5. X-Ray



presentday head appears rather vague in the X-ray, and is most distinct in the headdress, the pearls across the forehead and the eye-sockets. Somewhat lower and more to the right one sees the image of an (evidently completed) very detailed and quite different head, tilted well forward and with, hanging down on the right, a veil or hair for which a reserve can be seen in the background, which shows up lightish (and more strongly further up). The light image of a shoulder joins this head on the left; its contour runs just below the present ear-drop, and does not coincide with any element in the present design. Read in combination with this shoulder-line, the X-ray image of the present forearm on the left appears to project forward (perhaps resting on a chairback), and is more readily understandable than the arm is today, seen with foreshortening that remains somewhat unclear.

The present tablecloth provides a fuzzy image; the upper edge forms a long horizontal dividing line. Some 16.5 cm lower down there is however the upper edge of what is obviously the lit top of another covered table on which one can make out the shapes of gleaming vessels. The cloth on this earlier table, seen in a variety of shadow gradations, is intersected just below the clearly-recognizable present sceptre by a dark reserve for the head and body of a kneeling man, undoubtedly an earlier and different version of the figure of Haman. The outline of his shoulder and back can be clearly followed, and his waist coincides with the chain draped over the shoulders of the present Haman, whose head (almost invisible in the X-ray) is further to the right and considerably lower down than that of the previous version of Haman seen in the radiograph.

Finally, the figure of Ahasuerus too must have a totally different version beneath the present paint surface. One can tell this from the vaguely-seen contours of his body — least indistinct on the left, where the shoulder runs much lower than in the present picture — and far more clearly from the head and turban, which provide a strong image. They are rather higher up than the present head and turban (which cannot be seen in the X-ray) and are on a somewhat larger scale. The face is seen almost square-on, and is tilted forward. The picture is dominated by forceful brushstrokes, which are long in the turban. If the sceptre in its present position has to be related to this figure, one would have to assume that it is held in the man's right hand.

Signature

None.

Varnish

No special remarks.

4. Comments

The painting visible at the surface reflects, in the ragged painting technique and variegated colours over large areas, Rembrandt's style of the 1660s. In these areas there is — so far as the state of preservation allows a judgment — so little formal discipline, countered by such lifeless painting of various items (especially in the two male figures and the whole setting) that there can be no question of an attribution to Rembrandt himself. The attribution was already meeting with suspicion in 18th-century Paris; when in 1772 the sculptor Falconet suggested the painting as a possible purchase for Catherine II of Russia, Charles-Nicolas Cochin, secretary to the Académie Royale, wrote that the painting had been in Paris 'for 15 years without finding a buyer. To attribute it to the great master would be an insult to his memory'[1]. In the following years the painting changed hands rapidly, and when around 1820 it ended up with the art dealer Richard Mortimer it must have been drastically restored (see *8. Provenance*). Later, when the painting was in Romania, the attribution to Rembrandt was at first generally accepted by scholars such as Bode, Valentiner, Hofstede de Groot and Bredius[2], but was then — after it was restored in 1936 and the overpaintings shown in older reproductions were removed — doubted by Benesch, Bauch, Gerson[3] and Tümpel[4]. Gerson thought, remarkably, of Jan Victors, with whose work the manner of painting seems to show not the slightest resemblance. One would rather have to consider an artist in Rembrandt's workshop in the earlier 1660s.

New light was shed by a full X-ray examination, a small reproduction of which was published by Benedict in 1969[5]. This author spoke, on the grounds of the differing figures of Esther and Ahasuerus apparent in the X-rays, of an 'initial composition', and he compared the type of the earlier Esther with that of the 'Saskia' figure in Rembrandt's work from 1634/35, in the Leningrad *Flora* (no. A 93) and in the Madrid *Sophonisba* (no. A 94). Y. Kuznetsov told the museum verbally in 1974[6] that he dated the first version of the painting in 1635/36, and the one visible today in the years 1655–60.

The conclusion that there is, hidden under the top layer, another painting that seems to exhibit features of Rembrandt's style from the mid-1630s can be wholly supported, and the following comments may be added. Not only were, on the X-ray evidence, substantial changes made to the figures of Esther and Ahasuerus, but the pose of the kneeling Haman was originally different — his head was higher up and further to the left, and his waist was at the point where now the chain lies over his shoulder — and the slightly illuminated top of the table was substantially lower than its upper edge today. Moreover, the presentday format seems unsatisfactory for both the present and the original composition: the way the figure of Haman is cut off at the bottom and righthand side, and the figure of Esther by the lefthand side, suggests that strips of canvas have been removed here, and this is confirmed by the vestiges of cusping along these sides. The dimensions given in 18th-century sales catalogues differ quite considerably from one another — in 1769 they were the largest (*c.* 280 × 200 cm), in 1787 and 1789 the smallest (*c.* 222 × 162.5 cm) and even smaller than they are today (*c.* 234.5 × 187.5 cm) — and though it seems that these discrepancies can be put down largely to inaccuracy, it is not impossible that there was then (probably before 1787) a reduction in size. This would then probably have taken place after 1742: in the Von Gise sale in Bonn the painting appeared as a 'Compagnon' to a painting that can be identified as the Leningrad *Return of the prodigal son* (see *8. Provenance*). The dimensions of that painting (262 × 205 cm) might thus give an indication of the original size of no. B 9; this would mean some 30 cm are missing from the height — which could have been filled by the figure of Haman — and about 17 cm from the width. This latter figure chimes well with the cusping found, which suggests that the canvas was once 7–12 cm wider on the left and 10–15 cm on the right (see *Support*, SCIENTIFIC DATA), and with the probable standard width of 3 ells for the strip of canvas used.

It is besides not easy to form any proper idea of the original version from the X-rays. It is obvious that the type and pose of the original Esther figure were different from what they are today; it is especially the radiographic image of her (evidently completed) round face with wide-open eyes that make this a certainty. The fact that yellow paint shows through in the bosom furthermore suggests that she wore a yellow gown, like the present figure; it is thus not impossible that in the present yellow skirt there is still some of the original paint surface to be seen. Esther's shoulder contour must have run rather lower than it does today, and one gets the impression that both arms were extended diagonally forward, placed for example on the armrests of a chair. The hand on the right may be recognizable in the X-ray in a fairly shapeless light, round patch that gives the impression of being at most a crude underpainting. The whole figure would then have the character of someone tense — with fear or indignation — and leaning forward, sitting higher up than the level of the covered table in its original position. In front of this table knelt Haman, with his head raised. The head of Ahasuerus visible in the radiograph is surprisingly large in scale, and striking because of the broad brushwork. The head tilted

Fig. 6. Rembrandt school, *Ahasuerus condemning Haman, who begs mercy of Esther*, pen drawing, 16.9 × 12.6 cm (Ben.A 63). Amsterdam, Rijksprentenkabinet



Fig. 7. Rembrandt, Studies in pen and bistre, 13.2 × 10.3 cm (Ben.1005). Amsterdam, Rijksprentenkabinet



towards the central axis shows that the figure had a different function in the composition than it has today, but it is unclear how his pose should be read, or whether he was holding a sceptre. There is no trace in the X-rays of the two soldiers standing to the right of him; by itself, this does not necessarily mean that they were not there — the background at this point has too little radioabsorbent paint for one to be able to say definitely that there was no reserve left for them — but what can be deduced, from the radiograph, about the earlier composition with Ahasuerus looking to the front makes their presence in the first version unlikely.

Whether this earlier version was a work by Rembrandt must remain an open question, though it is not improbable. Not only does the type of the earlier Esther figure, which Benedict already recognized in his work of 1634 and 1635, prompt this assumption, but the character of the large-scale composition, with a relationship between the figures determined by the dramatic situation, also fits in with the years during which works like the Munich *Holy family* of *c.* 1634 (no. A 88), the London *Belshazzar's Feast* of *c.* 1635 (no. A 110), the Leningrad *Abraham's sacrifice* of 1635 (no. A 108) and the Frankfurt *Blinding of Samson* of 1636 (no. A 116) were produced. If this were indeed a Rembrandt work, Kuznetsov's dating in 1635/36 would be plausible. The coarse manner of painting shown in the X-ray image of Ahasuerus's head — perhaps due to an underpainting — finds its closest analogies with precisely the works from those years. It is however unclear whether the painting ought to be looked on as completed in its first version; one can assume this with reasonable confidence, from the X-ray evidence, only in respect of Esther's head and the covered table, and from this it may be deduced, on the grounds of the usual manner of working, that the background and figure of Ahasuerus, too, must have been in an advanced stage.

What happened after that to the more or less fully-finished painting is largely a matter for conjecture. In the 1656 inventory of Rembrandt's possessions a painting of this subject is not mentioned; at most, it might be concealed among the 'Tien stucks schilderije soo cleijn als grooter, van Rembrant' (10 paintings, small and large, by Rembrant) that were then found in the small office (Strauss *Doc.*, 1656/12. no. 349).

That it remained in Rembrandt's possession and was later painted over in his workshop is likely, mainly because of a drawing in Amsterdam (Ben. A 63; our fig. 6) that has long been linked with the compositon of the Bucharest painting but was already regarded by Benesch (and before him by Henkel) as not being by Rembrandt himself; Sumowski (*Bemerkungen zu Otto Beneschs Corpus der Rembrandt-Zeichnungen II*, Bad Pyrmont 1961, p.25) ascribed it to Jan Victors. The comment has not yet been made that this drawing contains motifs from

Fig. 8. J. Victors, *Ahasuerus condemning Haman, who begs mercy of Esther*, 1642. Braunschweig, Herzog Anton Ulrich-Museum



both versions of the painting. This can be seen most clearly in the figure of Haman, who is shown once with raised head and clasped hands and once (as in the painting in its present state) with a lower outline to the back, and bowed head. In the former version, which coincides roughly with the X-ray, the head intersects the upper edge of the table, as can be seen there. The particularly confused manner of drawing makes it hard to understand the figure of Esther, but she has a hanging veil or hair (as in the X-ray) and the position of her left arm is at all events not that seen in the painting. The very summarily-indicated figure of Ahasuerus matches, at least where the position of his left hand is concerned, that in the present painting. A second drawing, now in Moscow (on the verso of Ben. 747)[7], seems to be from the same hand; it too shows traces of the first and second versions of the painting, but not simultaneously as the Amsterdam drawing does. The Esther figure matches, in her pose, that in the Amsterdam drawing, but shows a large and more detailed headdress. Ahasuerus is sketched crudely in the same pose, with alongside him two very cursorily indicated soldiers. The kneeling Haman is, so far as an incoherent set of lines at the lower right can be interpreted, shown bending far forward. One gets a very strong impression that the artist who did the drawing was the same as did the overpainting, and that the two drawings served — working from the existing first version — to give form to his ideas for the new design. That this artist did indeed work in Rembrandt's studio, or at least had access to Rembrandt's workshop material, can be seen from the fact that when repainting the figure of Haman he made use of a drawing now in Amsterdam (Ben. 1005; our fig. 7) that depicts five times the bowed head of a bearded man seen in profile. This drawing, which has long been linked with this figure, is usually attributed to Rembrandt; it gives the impression of having been copied by him from a — still unidentified — prototype. Benesch dates it with great confidence around 1656; if this is correct, then the drawing would predate the repainting of the Bucharest work by several years, and it is in any case improbable that it was made with this in view.

Other drawings attributed (with greater or lesser reason) to Rembrandt appear to reflect the composition of the painting to some extent, but in most instances bear too little similarity to it to provide reliable information about its genesis. A drawing previously in Bremen might be a free imitation by Jan Victors, with whose 1642 painting in Braunschweig (canvas 192 × 167 cm; cat. 1976 no. 253; our fig. 8) it was already linked by W.R. Valentiner (*Rembrandt. Des Meisters Handzeichnungen* I, Berlin-Leipzig [1925], no. 204); here the head of Ahasuerus is not yet, as in Victors' painting, turned aside. Another drawing, in Rotterdam (Ben. A 114), is interesting because the head of Ahasuerus bears some resemblance to that in the previous version of the Bucharest painting, as seen in the X-rays; if here the Ahasuerus figure follows the first version of the painting, then this would have shown his left hand raised slightly — and yet the X-ray gives no sign of this.

One complication, but also a confirmation of the idea that there was already a picture of this subject by Rembrandt in the 1630s, is the painting of the same subject already mentioned, dated 1642, by Jan Victors in Braunschweig, which Tümpel[4] has already connected with the Bucharest painting. The composition of this is very largely based on what the radiographs of the Bucharest show to be the first version, the figures from which (though not the table) mostly appear in reverse. Here, however, one already has the motif of Ahasuerus turning towards the soldiers, and it can hardly be supposed that this was an invention of Victors that was later, in the 1660s, used again by the unknown artist who repainted the picture. It is more likely that Ahasuerus's pose was altered before 1642, but with paint that had so little radioabsorbency that there is no trace of it in the X-rays. Speaking generally, however, Victors' painting (which Tümpel assumed to have perhaps been based on a lost work by Rembrandt) supports the assumption that the first version of the Bucharest painting was indeed a work by Rembrandt.

Little need be said about the subject depicted. Already in the 18th century (see *8. Provenance*) the titles 'Mordechai before Esther and Ahasuerus' and 'Haman before Esther and Ahasuerus' were

appearing by turns. The former, wrong interpretation is frequently found in the literature, but Kahr[8] and Tümpel[4] gave ample proof that the latter title is the right one.

5. Documents and sources

None.

6. Graphic reproductions

Smith[9] mentioned a mezzotint by J.G. Hind entitled 'Haman and Mordécai', which is unknown to us (not in Charrington).

7. Copies

None.

8. Provenance

*- Sale Amsterdam 10 August 1734 (Lugt -), no. 16: 'Een kapitaal stuk, verbeeldende Mordechai, geknielt voor de voeten van den Koning Ahasverus en van de Koninginne zyne Gemalinne, door Rembrand van Rhyn' (A capital work, showing Mordechai kneeling at the feet of King Ahasverus and of the Queen his wife, by Rembrand van Rhyn). A copy of the catalogue is in the Amsterdam city archives. The sale included paintings from at least four anonymous owners; they also included, as no. 17, Rembrandt's *Claudius Civilis*, now in Stockholm, but this had a different owner from no. 16[10].
- Coll. Johann Heinrich von Gise, Hofrat and physician to the Elector-Bishop of Cologne; sale Bonn 30ff August 1742 (Lugt 560) no. 38: 'Ein Compagnon von selbiger Grösze [i.e. as no. 37, 'Ein sehr grosses Stuck den verlohrenen Sohn repraesentirend. Original von Rheinbrand', according to the French edition 'haut 8 p. 1 pou, large 6 p. 3 pou' = 252.2 × 195 cm], die Esther und Assuerus debout à côté d'elle, commande aux Officiers, qui sont guilders). According to a note reported by Hofstede de Groot[11], bought in. While the *Prodigal son* ended up in the collection of Clemens August, Elector-Bishop of Cologne, and appeared in the latter's sale in Bonn on 14ff May 1764, this did not happen with no. B 9 as the sales catalogues of 1769 and 1787, and Hofstede de Groot, wrongly state. No. B 9 must indeed have been acquired, by a route unknown to us, by Neveu, an agent for the Paris dealers Boileau, Colins and Joullain, who also in the Cologne Elector's sale bought the *Prodigal son*[12].
- Sale (' . . . la plus grande partie venant de la Vente de Feu S.A. Electeur de Cologne . . .) Paris 10 December 1764 (Lugt 1413, no. 21: 'Un Tableau peint sur toile, représentant Aman à genoux en suppliant aux pieds d'Esther, qui est assise sur un Thrône : Assuerus debout à côté d'elle, commande aux Officiers, qui sont près de lui, de se saisir d'Aman pour le punir. Les figures sont grandes comme nature, & d'une riche composition. Il a sept pieds neuf pouces de haut, sur cinq pieds dix pouces de large [= 251.1 × 189 cm].' Like no. 22, the *Prodigal son*, bought in (at 3000 livres), and like that painting sold privately to the next owner.
*- Sale [Abbé Guillaume] Paris 18ff May 1769 (Lugt 1763), no. 80: 'Un Tableau capital peint par Raimbrant, représentant Mardochée aux pieds d'Assuerus; h. 8 pieds 8 p., l. 6 pieds 2 pouces [= 280.8 × 199.8 cm]. Ce Tableau vient du Cabinet du feu Electeur de Cologne.' The latter information, probably based on the title-page of the sale of 10 December 1764 (see above), must be incorrect. The *Prodigal son* does not appear in 1769 sale, since it was acquired in 1766 for Catherine II of Russia.
- Coll. Duc d'Ansesume, Paris (according to sales catalogues of 1787 and 1789, see below).
- Coll. Beaujon, Conseiller d'État, Receveur des Finances of Rouen; sale Paris 25 April - 4 May 1787 (Lugt 4178), no. 34: 'Rembrandt Van Rhyn. Assuerus, Esther et Mardoché, figures forte nature. Ce Tableau étoit fort estimé chez M. de Duc d'Ansesume, il est peint sur toile. Hauteur 6 pieds 10 pouces, largeur 5 pieds [= 222 × 162.5 cm]'. (731 livres to Lebrun).
- Sale colls. Coclers (Liège) and D[esanterre or Desentelles?], Paris (Lebrun) 9ff February 1789 (Lugt 4391), no. 36: 'Par le même [Rembrandt van Ryn]. Mardochée aux pieds d'Esther devant Assuerus, figures de grandeur naturelle. Ce Tableau, l'un des plus capitaux de ce Maître, est de sa plus belle maniere. Il vient des Cabinets de M. le Duc d'Ansesume & de M. de Beaujon. Hauteur 6 pieds 10 pouces, largeur 5 pieds. T.'
*- C.A. de Calonne sale, London 23-28 March 1795 (4th day) (Lugt 5289), no. 55: 'Rembrandt. Esther, Haman, and Ahasuerus, very expressive. We have to lament that Rembrandt had not studied in Italy, he was a most surprising genius for colouring and forcible effect, surpasses all competition — a very noble and capital picture' (£58.16s.). Cf. HdG 48c.
- Coll. Lord Rendlesham (Suffolk), sale London 17-18 May 1809, 1st day, no. 64: 'Rembrandt. Esther and Ahasuerus — a noble performance of this great Master; embracing all his transcendant merits; the drapery of the principal Figures Painted in his bold manner, and fire and full charged Pencil; the general effect grand and imposing; the kneeling Figure of Mordecai uncommonly impressive and characteristic — capital' (£210).
- Coll. Richard Mortimer, sale London 28 (originally 29) April 1829, no. 55: 'Rembrandt. Haman, Esther and Ahasuerus. The moment chosen is when having heard Esther's charge, the King rises in anger, and Haman falls prostrate at the foot of the throne. The characters are happily conceived and finely contrasted, but it is in the colouring we look for Rembrandt's consumate skill, and the details of this rare chef-d'oeuvre abounds with incontestible marks of his great genius. This noble picture was a prominent ornament in the inestimable Collection of Mons. de Calonne, Prime Minister to Louis XVI. — canvas 8 feet 1½ by 6 feet 7½' (£1829, bought in; £860 according to a note in another copy in RKD). According to the RKD copy previously the property of Sir William Beechey RA (1753-1839), pen inscription on title page 'Mortimer commonly called ugly Dick'. From *Advertisement* [p.3]: '...Rembrandt is here in his full glory, his pencil revelling in a gorgeous splendour, producing an extraordinary effect, defying rivalry and baffling successful imitation; his work is of rare occurrence, and so extremely interesting to the whole body of Artists, as to excite a hope, that the Directors of the National Gallery, will avail themselves of this opportunity of enriching the Public Collection.' Below this, in Beechey's handwriting: 'a very false description, the best parts of the Picture rub'd out, and cracked all over in such deep cracks that the parts are not to be distinguished[.] It has been also *restored* by Mortimer, who was Picture Dealer.'
- Sale London 5 May 1860, no. 325.
- Unidentified sale Paris 1860, according to Hofstede de Groot[11].
- Coll. J. Husson Yvon, 1876[11].
- Coll. Felix Bamberg, Messina, 1877, ms. cat. 1879, no. 14[6].
- Coll. King Carol I of Romania (1839-1914), 1879[13] and his successors.
- Since 1948 moved from Peleş Palace at Sinaia into possession of the museum[6].

9. Summary

The attribution of the painting to Rembrandt (already doubted earlier) cannot be accepted. It was originally larger and was in its present state probably done in Rembrandt's immediate circle around 1660/65. It is however clear from the X-rays that it was painted over an at least partially completed earlier version. It cannot be proved that this earlier version was done by Rembrandt, but there is evidence to support the idea. The figure of Esther

seen in the radiograph, and the character of the composition, fit in well with Rembrandt's work from around 1635. Jan Victors must have taken this composition as his basis in a painting dated 1642. It may be deduced, from the use made of a drawing by Rembrandt for the head and upper body of Haman, that the repainting was done in his workshop, or at least using his workshop material. Two non-autograph drawings of the composition, probably done by the same hand as did the overpainting, show motifs from both the first and the second versions.

The subject was misinterpreted in the 18th century, as well as in more recent times, as Mordechai before Esther and Ahasuerus.

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B 10 Bust of Rembrandt with an architectural background

PARIS, MUSÉE DU LOUVRE, INV. NO. 1746

HDG 568; BR. 29; BAUCH 310; GERSON –

Fig. 1 Panel 80.5 × 62.8 cm



Fig. 2. X-Ray



1. Summarized opinion

A work painted, in two phases, on top of an earlier picture (which was done while the panel was still rectangular). The part still visible from the first phase comprises little more than the face and lit part of the shirt. It is not impossible that Rembrandt himself was responsible for it, around 1639, but it could also have been produced by a pupil shortly after 1640. The costume and background were given their present appearance later, and elsewhere.

2. Description of subject

The sitter, who has the facial features of Rembrandt, is seen to the waist with the head three-quarters to the right and the body almost in right profile. He wears a black velvet cap, encircled by a gold chain, over hair that hangs down to below his shoulders; an earring has a pear-shaped pendant. The body is mostly covered by a black velvet cloak with a gold edge along the top, where it is held by a gold clasp. Above this, a finely-pleated shirt has an upstanding and ornamented neckband with a piped edge. The light falls from the left; the figure is in front of a curtain on the left and a ledge on the right with a fluted pillar rising above it. Beyond the latter can be seen part of a rectangular doorway topped by a half-round tympan.

3. Observations and technical information

Working conditions

Examined in October 1968 (S.H.L, E.v.d.W.) in reasonably good daylight and out of the frame; a copyfilm of an X-ray of the head was received later. Examined again in December 1985 (J.B., E.v.d.W.) in good light and out of the frame, with the aid of a microscope. A print of a complete X-ray mosaic was received later.

Support

DESCRIPTION: Oak panel, grain vertical, oval 80.5 × 62.8 cm. Thickness 1.1 to 1.3 cm. Three planks, of width (l. to r.) 18.8, 24.3 and 19.7 cm. The back is clearly bevelled only at the top, along a virtually straight ridge, showing that the panel was in all probability originally rectangular. At the bottom edge, just to the right of the lefthand join, there is a short vertical crack.
SCIENTIFIC DATA: Dendrochronology (Prof. Dr J. Bauch and Prof. Dr D. Eckstein, Hamburg) showed the youngest annual ring of heartwood to be in the centre plank, dating from 1622. The earliest possible felling date is therefore 1631, but in view of the age of the tree — over 200 years — allowance has to be made for 15 rings of sapwood, and a felling date of 1637 or later.

Ground

DESCRIPTION: A yellowish colour, possibly the ground, can be seen in a number of cracks in the paint and where, along the lefthand edge, some paint is missing.
SCIENTIFIC DATA: According to an otherwise undetailed communication from Mrs Hours[1], the ground is thicker than in other earlier Rembrandt works in the Louvre. This statement may be based wholly or in part on the presence of an underlying paint layer not recognized as such (see *X-Rays*).

Paint layer

CONDITION: Good, so far as can be judged through the quite thick varnish. Retouches can be seen here and there, e.g. where the hair on the right falls on the shoulder (in a brown-yellow that continues in the craquelure), and in the architecture (in brown). Craquelure: a normal, fairly regular craquelure is found only to a moderate extent in the lit parts of the face and in the shirt-collar, as well as in the grey paint of a small part of the gateway in the background. Elsewhere severe shrinkage cracks predominate, in particular around the clasp of the cloak, and there are long, parallel cracks curving to the upper left in large areas of the grey architecture and in the hair on the right (see also under *X-Rays*).
DESCRIPTION: As will be apparent from the description of the craquelure and will be explained in more detail below, the painting was done in two distinct phases on top of an earlier picture that is visible only in the X-ray. The present paint surface was formed to a large extent in the second phase, covering over other shapes that can be detected partly in relief and seen in the radiograph; originally the cap must have been narrower and taller, the hair shorter and the background a more or less light grey (?).

The first phase can be considered to have included large parts of the face and the lit part of the shirt. The lit half of the face is executed with careful and mostly short brushstrokes (sometimes no more than dabs) in a yellowish flesh colour, with a light pink on the cheek and elsewhere (such as the tip of the nose) a pink glaze placed over the flesh colour; a light grey glaze renders the stubble along the jawline. The ear on the left is modelled broadly, with the ear-drop in brownish and yellowish tints with meticulously placed catchlights. The cast shadow from the cap on the forehead is painted in browns and greys over what seems to be a brownish-grey underpainting.

This can also be seen in the area round the eye on the left, in the browns and brown-greys used to give an effective rendering of the shadows in the eye-socket, on the upper eyelid and along the underside of the lower eyelid. The flesh colour in the eyelids shows pink, a pinkish white and white, and they are quite clearly modelled. In the white of the eye, done on the left in broken white and on the right in a light grey, the iris is shown as a pure round shape in greys, darkest along the edge and lightest at the lower right along the black pupil which, at the top left, has a tiny catchlight. The eyebrow is in thin strokes of black, along the shadow of the eye-socket.

The nose, modelled with fine variations of tone, has on the underside a red shadow in which the nostril is indicated in a flat reddish black. The latter colour is also used for the mouth-line, built up from small, narrow brushstrokes. Small strokes of red and pink with some grey in the shadow form the lips, which offer little plasticity and in which the mouth-line appears rather isolated. The same grey is used in the lip-beard, and some white in the lit part of the moustache on the top lip. What looks — deliberately or otherwise — like the curling hairs of the moustache on the left is not paint placed on the flesh colour but seems to be an underlying darker colour (made apparent through small scratchmarks ?). A flat grey shows the corner of the mouth, extending to below the moustache.

In the shadow part of the face the eye has to a great extent kept its original appearance. It is rendered mostly in greys with some pink and white on the lit parts of the lids. The carefully-done flesh passages here may still come, to a greater or lesser degree, from the first phase, though on the right this seems not to be the case and the contour is determined wholly by the hair which (as we shall see below) belongs on the righthand side entirely to the second phase.

The lit part of the shirt is given considerable detail. The upstanding part of the collar is painted in broken white and white, which on the right lies over the grey of the shadow; the decorative pattern is rendered meticulously with tiny dots of white outlined with light brown. The pleated edge is formed by a squiggly line of white with a little grey in the patches of shadow between the loops, placed over an underlayer (also evident in the X-ray) set down with long brushstrokes. The relief of long strokes of a greyish white can also be made out through the paint of the pleats. In the grey shadow a couple of buttons are indicated by two accents in an ochre colour.

The hair on the left is, in the area above the lower edge of the ear, executed with short strokes of grey-brown paint running in

Fig. 3. Detail (1 : 1)



Fig. 4. Detail (1 : 1)



various directions, with a few light touches showing the sheen of light. The area further down is handled quite differently, with a more reddish brown applied with thin semicircular and slightly curved strokes; a few scratchmarks reveal a fairly light layer (probably the background from the first phase of production). This extension of the hair belongs to the second-phase paint layer, which covers a sizeable part of the painting (i.e. the area that has not yet been described). This can be said of the whole of the hair on the right, done in a reddish brown with thin curved strokes of grey-black (and occasional grey that shows through); the outline against the background is unsharp. The same is true of the cloak, which is now seen as a large field of black with two strokes of light grey to show sheens of light, and a gold edging rendered as a band of ochre brown with haphazard and rather shapeless dots of yellow-white and red. Very similar in execution is the whole — or almost the whole — of the cap done in black paint, through which may be glimpsed a variety of substances; the earlier taller shape already mentioned (see CONDITION above) is visible in relief and the righthand tip (with a strange tassel?) shows deep cracks in the lumpy paint. The flat dark-grey used for the curtain in the left background also belongs to the second phase, as do most of the lighter greys that give a blotchy indication of the architecture, which has yellowish strokes to represent the rims of light on the fluted pillar. At various points a grey can be detected with the microscope, beneath the present paint surface.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

X-Rays

The striking differences shown by the radiographic image from what can be seen at the present paint surface are due to two things — an earlier version of the present bust portrait, and a quite different picture beneath this. The way these paintings interfere with each other makes it hard to interpret the X-rays.

If the X-rays are turned through 180 degrees, one sees that a scene was painted — or perhaps merely begun — on the (originally rectangular) panel; the clearest feature of this is a reserve for the head and upper body of a relatively small figure in left profile, whose lower trunk and legs are intersected by the lefthand side of the face and the lit ear of the present portrait head. In front of the ear and in the cap there is a vertical dark band the significance of which is unclear. On the left alongside the partially legible figure it is impossible to make out any elements of the original picture through the to a large degree blotchy image of what seems to be chiefly the background of the first version of the bust portrait. In the dark reserve for the body part of the portrait, however, one can see a lit wall with a window above a dark rectangular reserve, and below this a diagonal shape. To the right, behind the back of the figure, the image is determined to some extent by the radioabsorbent paint of the background of the first version of the portrait, but interfering with this there are forms that can be read as a gatehouse and something resembling an obelisk. These various observations taken together make up a picture that shows

Fig. 5. Detail with signature (1 : 1)



amazing points of similarity with Rembrandt's little etching of *Christ and the woman of Samaria: among ruins* (B. 71; our fig. 6). The figure seen in profile facing left matches the Samaritan woman, the shapes above her correspond to the ruined building and the pulleywheel held between wooden arms above the well and those to the right to the obelisk and gatehouse, while at the bottom one can make out an indication of the lit ground with on the left the diagonal shape of the ledge on which Christ is seated. Only of the figure of Christ can no trace be found.

It has already been noted from the paint surface that the first version of the bust portrait, painted over this initial scene, differs from the portrait seen today; this is confirmed and shown in somewhat sharper detail by the X-rays. The background must have been fairly radioabsorbent, although the level of radioabsorbency is in many places partly determined by the underlying layer of paint. On the right alongside the head the image is dominated by patches and edges appearing more or less light; among these one can also see (in addition to some fine and roughly horizontal cracks) the long splits running obliquely upwards to the left that were noted at the paint surface. It is unclear whether the erratic pattern of radioabsorbency corresponds to the paint of the background itself or to a light intermediate layer that might have been applied during the second phase. The reserve left for the figure seems, on the right at shoulder height and lower down, somewhat different from its present shape, and the cap must have been laid-in considerably less wide. The erratic cracking in the area where the cap was extended to the right in the second phase is also apparent in the X-ray.

The face and lit part of the shirt, the gold edging on the cloak and a hint of folds below this show up as one would expect from the paint surface. The bold strokes beneath the finely-executed shirt-collar give a strong radiographic image.

Signature

On the right on the grey-brown of the balustrade in dark paint *<Rembrandt f./1637>*. The letters and figures are written rather hesitantly, using a thin brush, sometimes with a certain elegance but mostly with a patent clumsiness that results in a lack of spontaneity and cohesion. The even consistency and condition of the inscription seem, given the slight wearing of the paint at this point, to indicate that it is a later addition.

Varnish

A quite thick layer of varnish hinders observation to some extent.

4. Comments

Though Waagen[2] cast doubt on the Rembrandt attribution as long ago as 1839, the painting has generally been counted as an authentic work in the literature from Vosmaer[3] to Bauch[4]. Gerson[5] suspected that there was a problem: '... until the picture is cleaned, it seems wiser to withhold final judgment as to its authenticity, though even in its present condition an attribution to Flinck seems to me reasonable.' Brejon, Foucart and Reynaud[6] went

Fig. 6. Rembrandt, *Christ and the woman of Samaria: among ruins*, 1634, etching (B.71)



further still and called the painting 'sans doute travail d'un imitateur, sinon d'un élève de Rembrandt, qui a pu être fait dans l'atelier du maître.' Though this view is perfectly understandable given the overall impression the painting makes in its present state, it ought now to be looked at more critically. The lack of pictorial cohesion between the fine execution of the face — the atmospheric quality of which cannot be denied —, the insensitive and almost flat painting of the black costume and curtain, and the strangely patchy treatment of the architecture is, as we have shown when describing the paint layer and X-rays, the outcome of a complicated sequence of production. The portrait one sees today came into being in two phases, and these were preceded by an even earlier picture done on the panel; only the X-rays can tell us anything about the latter.

What the X-rays show of the underlying picture offers similarities with Rembrandt's etching, dated 1634, of *Christ and the woman of Samaria: among ruins* (B. 71; fig. 6) on so many points that there can be hardly any doubt that the panel — which to judge by the presence of a straight bevel was probably once rectangular — was used first for a greatly enlarged copy after an impression of the etching (see under *X-Rays* above). Although we know of no other example of this happening, one can well imagine it occurring in the studio. One may doubt whether the picture was ever completed; the setting gives the impression of being more fully worked-up than the figure of the Samaritan woman, and the fact that one finds no trace of the figure of Christ in the X-rays could have to do with this figure having been

in a primitive stage. The importance of identifying the underlying picture lies mainly in the consequences this has on dating — 1634 has to be seen as a *terminus post quem* for the first painting on the panel. This date fits in with the results of dendrochronology, which set the earliest felling- date of the tree at 1631 and thus allow the painting of the panel to be put at *c.* 1633 (though the age of the tree would point to a rather later felling date).

As we now know, it was not unusual for a bust portrait of Rembrandt — done by himself or a pupil — to be painted on top of an earlier picture (see nos. A 20, A 33, A 58, C 96 and later examples such as Br. 38 and 43). Whether we ought, in this case too, to think that a bust of this kind was painted on the panel while still rectangular is far from sure, and not all that probable; compared to, in fact, any other example from the mid-1630s the figure would have been framed very wide indeed, and the present oval seems a more comfortable format. Bearing in mind the little that can now been seen of the first version — barely more than the face and lit part of the shirt, and even this not without certain doubts in respect of, especially, the shadows and righthand contour of the face — the X-ray has to play a major role in visualizing what it looked like, with all the lack of certainty that interpreting the image can involve. It is important to say, however, that the brushstroke pattern that shows up in the radioabsorbent areas is wholly in line with what one would expect from the paint surface, and confirms the impression that in the face and lit part of the shirt we are seeing a still visible section of the first version.

Any conclusion as to whether the portrait was from Rembrandt's own hand therefore has to be based on this area. Reaching a judgment is of course made very difficult by its being seen in isolation, so that an opinion as to the work's authenticity is hard to give. In favour of its being autograph is the sureness that marks the execution and is reflected in the X-ray image. One finds a similar treatment in, for instance, the face of the Kassel *Self-portrait with helmet* of 1634 (no. A 97), though in that work the handling of paint is everywhere (most clearly in the mouth-line, nostril and eyebrows but also e.g. in the eyes) rather more free, and linear elements (the mouth-line especially) are more happily integrated with the plastic form than in the Paris portrait. The rather precise character, leaning towards an illusionistic effect, is here even more strongly felt in the lit part of the shirt, the pleated part of which is not painted very imaginatively, the ornamented upstanding collar of which is done meticulously, and whose pleated upper edge is drawn with a clearcut line looping back and forth. One may, in view of the bold white brushstrokes running lengthwise along the collar that can be seen in the paint relief and the X-rays, wonder whether the present state of the shirt does in fact belong to the first version, or is more likely part of the overpaintings done subsequently. This passage is however so close in character to the face that the latter possibility is not all that strong; the bold strokes of white underneath the present collar must rather be read as a broad indication in the underpainting. The style of what can still be seen of the first version makes it difficult to be sure of Rembrandt's authorship of it: while it has considerable quality and the execution is free of weakness or uncertainty of the kind found in some portraits of Rembrandt known to have been done by his pupils (see nos. C 92 and C 96), one can still detect a tendency to an almost exaggerated attention to modelling and detail, to an extent hard to find in authentic works. One is even reminded of what one can see in this respect in some parts of the Kassel *Half-length figure of Saskia van Uylenburgh* (no. A 85). This could be advanced as an argument for the view that Rembrandt himself was responsible for this aspect in the later 1630s, when a similar refined illusionism can be found in the *Portrait of a man holding a hat* in the Armand Hammer Collection (no. A 130), the 1639 *Portrait of a young woman (Maria Trip?)* in Amsterdam (no. A 131), or the London *Self-portrait* of 1640 (no. A 139). Some parts of the latter have detailing that is somewhat similar, albeit more subtly combined where suggestion of depth and handling of light are concerned. One of the authors (E.v.d.W.) would like, in fact, to voice his conviction that the head and collar are the vestiges of an autograph self-portrait from the late 1630s. It is however not impossible that the slight difference in temperament shown in the part of the first version of the Paris portrait that is still visible ought to be interpreted as betraying the hand of a pupil who must have been a very competent imitator of his master. In that case a date around 1640 would be the most likely, in general because of a tendency to refine the surface structure apparent in Rembrandt's work from this period, and in particular because of a resemblance to the 1640 *Self-portrait*.

Hardly less hedged round with uncertainties is the reworking of the painting — the second version of the portrait that, as may be seen from the X-rays, now occupies large areas of the paint surface. It is impossible to say whether there was any particular reason for going over the painting again — it could have been uncompleted, or traces of the underlying painting could have become obtrusively apparent. There are other instances of the work of Rembrandt or from his school being wholly or partly overpainted or added to either in his workshop (by himself or someone else), or elsewhere (see, for example, nos. A 85, A 119, B 9, B 11 and B 12). In the case of the present work this involved an extension of the hair on the left and the repainting of the hair on the right, of the cap and chain, the gold-edged cloak and its clasp, of the part of the shirt in shadow, and of the whole

background comprising the curtain, ledge, pilaster and view-through. This operation can in some ways be compared with what was done in the *Half-length figure of a youth* in Florence (no. B 11), where the lengthening of the hair by another hand was similarly accompanied by major changes, or in the Berlin *Bust of Rembrandt* (no. C 56) a first version of which was produced by a pupil (Govaert Flinck?) and the hair then lengthened and a cap, different clothing and a different background added by the same hand. One can rule out one and the same hand having painted first the initial version and then the changes mentioned — the difference in execution between the hair of the first version and that of the second is by itself conclusive on this point. The insensitivity of the black costume, the curtain and the ledge painted in this phase, and the strange hesitancy in the architectural features, are also out of keeping with the stylistic character of the first version. Everything points to all of the changes and additions made subsequently having occurred in a single phase — we have at all events found no evidence to the contrary; but when and where this was done is far from clear. The most one can say is that there is nothing obviously rembrandtesque about the passages in question. The sheens of light in the black cloak and cap create a paltry effect, and the background does not accord with what was normal in Rembrandt's studio in terms of either motif or execution. One has only to think of how the architecture is rendered in the 1639 *Portrait of a man standing* in Kassel (no. A 129) to realise how differently Rembrandt dealt with a view-through like this in the late 1630s. The extension of the hair and widening of the cap could very well be based on Rembrandt's etched *Self-portrait leaning on a stone sill* of 1639 (B. 21) rather than on a drawing in red chalk in Washington (Ben. 437 recto) that is sometimes linked to the Paris painting and in which neither the shape of the cap nor the silhouette of the hair matches that in the painting. The etching might also have provided the idea of a stone ledge (though it is here placed behind and not in front of the figure). All this considered, it seems reasonable to look on the changes in clothing and background made in the second phase as having been done elsewhere and at a later (though hard to determine) date, just as one does for example in the case of the changes in the clothing and background in the Kassel *Self-portrait with helmet* (no. A 97).

In interpreting the portrait the opinion has been expressed, on the grounds of their present state, that the curtain and architecture in the background are intended 'to lend grandeur to the sitter', and they have been ascribed to Rembrandt's social ambitions[7]. If the motifs in questions have any iconographic significance, it must be said that such an interpretation stems from an anachronistic view of class consciousness as an iconographic motif.

5. Documents and sources

None.

6. Graphic reproductions

1. Etching by Johannes Pieter de Frey (Amsterdam 1770What looks–Paris 1834) inscribed: *Rembrandt, pinx. — Dabos del. — De frey Sculp./Portrait de Rembrant* in: *Musée Français*, Paris 1803–1809, vol. II. A not entirely faithful reproduction of the original in its present state and in the same direction. An etching by Jean Nicolas Le Rouge (Paris *c.* 1776–?), in the same direction, seems to have been done after this.
2. Etching by Philibert Boutrois (active Paris *c.* 1775–1814) inscribed: *Dessiné par Plonski. — Gravé par Boutrois/ Portrait de Rembrandt* in: Filhol, *Galerie du Musée Napoléon* IV, Paris 1807 no. 263. A not entirely faithful reproduction of the original in its present state and in the same direction.

7. Copies

None.

8. Provenance

- Coll. Louis XVI of France; purchased in England in 1785[6].

9. Summary

From observations at the paint surface and the X-rays it may be concluded that the present bust portrait was produced in two phases, and was preceded by another — completed or uncompleted — picture on the (then rectangular) panel. The latter picture appears to have been a copy after Rembrandt's 1634 etching of *Christ and the Samaritan woman: among ruins* (B. 71). Only a small part (the face and lit part of the shirt) of the portrait that was then painted over this on the panel — probably by then made into an oval — is still visible. Though a Rembrandt attribution is not impossible, one could also think in terms of the work of a pupil; in the first case a date around 1639 is the most likely, and in the second case one shortly after 1640. One cannot say with any certainty when the hair, costume and background were given their present appearance, but it was in all probability not done in Rembrandt's circle.

REFERENCES

1 M. Hours, 'Rembrandt. Observations et présentation de radiographies exécutées d'après les portraits et compositions du Musée du Louvre', *Bulletin du Laboratoire du Louvre* 6 (1961), p.[18].
2 G.F. Waagen, *Kunstwerke und Künstler in Paris*, Berlin 1839 (Kunstwerke und Künstler in England und Paris III), p. 585.
3 C. Vosmaer, *Rembrandt Harmens van Rijn*, The Hague 1868, pp. 94, 449; 2nd edn 1877, pp. 170, 515.
4 Bauch 310.
5 Br.-Gerson 29.
6 A. Brejon de Lavergnée, J. Foucart, N. Reynaud, *Écoles flamande et hollandaise*, Paris 1979 (Catalogue sommaire illustré des peintures du Musée du Louvre I), p. 112; J. Foucart, *Les peintures de Rembrandt au Louvre*, Paris 1982, p. 93.
7 S.A. Sullivan, 'Rembrandt's Self-portrait with a dead bittern', *Art Bull.* 62 (1980), pp. 236–243.

B 11 Half-length figure of a youth in a cap and gorget

FLORENCE, GALLERIA DEGLI UFFIZI, INV. NO. 3890

HDG 538; BR. 20; BAUCH 306; GERSON 144

Fig. 1. Panel 62.7 × 54 cm



Fig. 2. X-Ray



1. Summarized opinion

An uncompleted work, disfigured by two, in part certainly later, additions by another hand; the original parts may well have been painted by Rembrandt himself around 1639.

2. Description of subject

A young man is seen to the waist with the body turned three-quarters left; his head is turned to the right and tilted slightly to the left, and he looks at the viewer. Over his left shoulder, turned towards the front, he wears a cloak of brown-red velvet held together at the front by a gold chain with large links and a pendant on the left. The cloak reveals an apparently short-sleeved doublet, ornamented at the front with vertical bands of stitching and two lines of braiding at the top, and a three-part gorget; along the top of the latter one sees a narrow, pleated collar. The light falls from the left; the rear wall is lightest on the left at shoulder-height, and darkens quite abruptly lower down.

3. Observations and technical information

Working conditions

Examined on 10 September 1972 (J. B., P. v. Th.) in poor daylight and with the aid of artificial light and out of the frame, and again in the frame on 8 May 1983 (J. B.) after four X-ray films together covering the whole painting had been received; examined a further time in January 1986 (E. v. d. W.), in good daylight and artificial light and out of the frame.

Support

DESCRIPTION: Panel, most probably poplar (fine-grained, and light in colour and weight), grain horizontal, 53.9 × 54 cm. Thickness *c.* 1.8 cm. At the bottom a plank of the same thickness, 8.8 cm wide, has been added bringing the total height to 62.7 cm; this plank, likewise with the grain horizontal, is attached by means of a 9 cm-wide lip let into the back. The entire panel that results is bevelled rather unevenly on all sides at the back, down to a thickness of about 0.8 cm, and painted black. Nothing can be said with certainty as to the original height of the panel; its present width is undoubtedly not the original, as is shown by an incomplete inscription at the lefthand side (see *Signature*).
SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

Ground

DESCRIPTION: A light tint shows through in the hair and in the lower left background, and is exposed in a scratchmark in the hair on the left.
SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

Paint layer

CONDITION: Good, so far as can be seen through a layer of yellowed varnish, apart from overpaintings applied at some stage (see below).
DESCRIPTION: What one sees at the paint surface, and is especially apparent in the X-rays, is that apart from the painting on the added plank (which is thin and smooth, and quite distinct from the rest) the paint layer is of an appreciable thickness down to a roughly horizontal and not entirely straight boundary some 18–20 cm above the present bottom edge and *c.* 9 cm (on the left) to *c.* 11 cm (on the right) above the present border of the original panel, just below the point where the gold chain is attached to the cloak. While above this boundary the background is done with short brushstrokes of an occasionally rather translucent grey, the paint changes quite abruptly at the border to a darker and smoother consistency that allows a light underlying layer — perhaps the ground — to show through to some extent. This transition is also evident in the clothing; the brownish paint of this becomes somewhat translucent towards the bottom, and the brushstrokes change from slightly sinuous to straight.

Above the roughly horizontal boundary just described the background takes on a rather blotchy appearance. Starting just above the boundary, for instance, there is along the lefthand side a quite clearly defined vertical band of somewhat darker grey, part of it applied with horizontal strokes. Above the cap is a wide zone of rather darker paint brushed thickly along the upper contour, suggesting that originally a larger reserve was left for the cap. Along the body contours, and brushed with them, the paint lies extra thick — on the left in a lighter grey, and on the right along the cloak in a warm ochre brown. The X-rays confirm that in both instances there have been corrections.

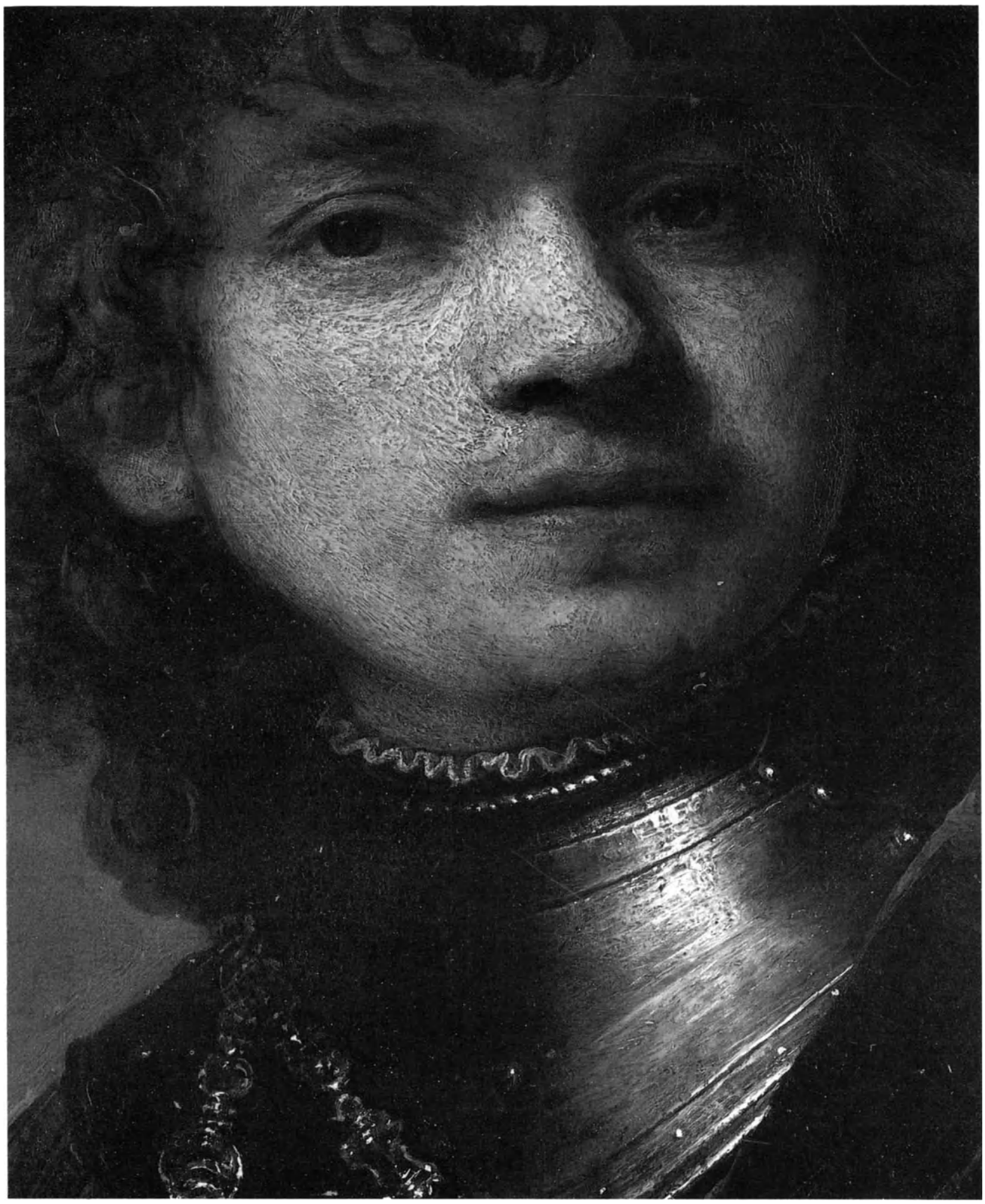
The lit parts of the face are executed in a fairly thick flesh colour, which in the less strongly lit areas (on the left along the jaw and on the right on the cheek) is brushed with the form. In the highlights there is a relief, evidently due to a dabbing and pushing brush action, in which no individual brushstrokes can be made out; accents of light are added to the areas of half-shadow round the eyes in a similar way. A flatter pink is used on the lefthand cheek. An area of brown shadow, probably done wholly or partially as an underpainting and thinner than the light flesh colour and partly covered by it, occurs here and there — for example along the underside of the nose. The edge of the lefthand wing is marked by a reddish paint, and the nostrils are in a thick, dark grey-black. The shadow on the right cheek is done in an opaque dark brown-grey with a lighter brown, showing a reflexion of light, along the contour. The cast shadow below the nose is in a warm brown showing a thick edge at some places. The same brown has been used for the thickly-applied lines that border the eyelids. In the eye on the left the white, seen partly in shadow, is rendered with grey paint placed partly on top of a brownish zone; in it the iris is shown in a darkly-rimmed grey with a small catchlight in the black pupil. The corner of the eye recedes into the rather indeterminate shadow on the right, and the lower edge of the eye is formed by small patches of flesh colour that continue into the reticently-drawn eye-pouch. To some extent the right eye is done in the same way, and for the rest is drawn with dark grey or black and brown lines.

The mouth area has a quite dark red in the upper lip and a lighter red, with white and pink highlights, in the lower, separated by a firm mouth-line in a reddish dark grey. The edges of the lips and the shadows around the mouth are shown with translucent paint, producing a strikingly atmospheric effect.

The hair seems originally to have been shorter. On the left, above and alongside the ear, it is executed with free strokes of a translucent greyish and brown paint that allow large patches of the light ground to show through; lower down it is in a rather muddier paint that is for the most part opaque. Ochre-coloured strokes rendering the lit curls are found in both the lower and upper parts of the hair. On the left, in the translucent area, there is a scratchmark that goes right down to the ground. On the right, by the cheekbone, the hair is painted in a very dark, thin grey while the wider part lower down is a thicker and rather more opaque dark grey that also defines the contour against the background. The curls dangling down over the forehead are set down, with broad curving strokes, in a similar paint.

The cap is painted in a quite thick dark grey-black with, along the top edge at the right, fine strokes of grey that (in a rather primitive way) shows sheens of light. The paint of the cap seems to a great extent to lie over that of the background. The gorget is done mostly in a fairly thick grey-black, with on the extreme left somewhat lighter grey plus a little ochre yellow. The highlight is in white paint, applied with dabbing touches brushed out long towards the bottom. The joints between the overlapping sections are shown with thin brown lines. The rivet-heads are

Fig. 3. Detail (1 : 1)



rendered effectively with various shades of grey with white catchlights. The links of the gold chain are given a clear shape with strokes and dots of ochre-yellow, dark grey, broken white and white, which are lighter and thicker where they catch more of the light. Just to the right of the present chain a trace of light paint shows through the obviously slightly worn paint surface — perhaps an earlier version, or the underpainting for it. Below the pendant an oval shape can be seen in relief, showing that this was longer in the underpainting (see also *X-Rays*).

The velvet cloak is done with fairly broad brushstrokes in a ruddy brown, in which at the upper part only there are long, narrow strokes of ochre-brown long strokes giving the sheens of light. As has already been said, a clear difference between an upper and lower section — along the line that is clearly apparent especially in the X-ray — can be seen in the thickness of the paint layer as well as in the paint consistency and brushwork. An oblique shadow, brushed broadly in black, seems to have been applied on the added piece; on the plank added at the bottom the paint is different from that above it.

In the doublet, too, the paint on the added plank differs from that further up, though the discrepancy between that above and that below the horizontal boundary is less evident than in the background. The fairly thick browns, which are a little thinner below the boundary, are above it worked up mainly with fine touches and long strokes of light brown and ochre-yellow, and below with dark reddish-brown lines (that have, perhaps later, been continued upwards).

SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

X-Rays

The join between the 8.8 cm-wide plank at the bottom (in which the grain is only vaguely seen) and the original panel is clearly apparent. At 9 cm above this can be seen the edge of the lip recessed into the panel (see *Support*).

Some 18–20 cm above the present bottom edge the radiograph gives the impression that the painting on the panel stops along an uneven line that rises slightly from left to right. Brushstrokes coming from above, and partly clearly recognizable as such, end at this line; here and there on the left radioabsorbent paint appears to have been brushed away. In the lower part of the original panel, and (though less clearly) elsewhere, there are traces of the horizontal grain and of horizontal brushstrokes applying the ground.

The radiographic image shows distinctly the thickly painted lit parts of the face, the gorget and the chain, as well as the underpainting (already seen in relief) of a link underneath the pendant. Around the figure the image of the background is patchy yet related to what is observed at the surface. Some passages that there appear to be thicker and darker — a band along the lefthand side, and a zone above the cap — are here seen as lighter than their surroundings, evidently because of the greater radioabsorbency of the more thickly applied paint. Along the outline of the cap this quite plainly involves an overgenerous retouch done to reduce the reserve left for the cap. The lefthand shoulder contour, too, has been retouched — originally there was a reserve here for the shorter hair and, below the neck, a rather broader shape that has been reduced somewhat by background paint applied later on. It is less easy to see how the righthand contour of the hair and shoulder came about; by part of the lowest lock of hair, which here too seems to have been extended, there is a light patch adjoining the background. The rather blotchy image in the cloak, and the mainly vertical brushmarks in the doublet, are probably connected in the main with an underpainting.

Signature

Just above the join with the added plank, hard against the lefthand edge in dark paint <*ndt.f*>. In themselves, these letters provide insufficient evidence on which to judge their authenticity. The inscription could of course be genuine only if the paint in the lower part of the original panel, on which the letters stand, were authentic; this is however contradicted by the X-rays. The fragmentary state of the inscription shows that the panel was once quite a little wider.

Varnish

A layer of yellowed varnish hampers observation.

4. Comments

Quite apart from the matter of authenticity, the painting presents first the problem of its genesis. It is obvious that at all events the plank, almost 9 cm wide, along the bottom was added and painted at a later stage. Bode and Hofstede de Groot[1] already commented on this, and Winkler[2] coupled with it the suggestion that the velvet cloak in its entirety was a subsequent addition ('Denkt man sich den Mantel fort, ist das Bild weniger malerisch drapiert, aber es scheint sich dann der Reynold'sche dekorative Geschmack zu verlieren, der das Bild jetzt prägt'). Bode and Hofstede de Groot further remarked on the fragmentary inscription at the extreme lefthand edge, and interpreted the retouches visible in the background above the cap as evidence that the latter originally has a higher shape; they concluded from this that the panel has been cut down on the left and at the top. Gerson[3] adopted their conclusion, and described the painting as 'difficult to judge in its present condition'. One can only agree with this, especially since (as the X-rays show) there is a band *c.* 10 cm wide along the lower edge of the original panel which is painted very differently from that above it.

For the time being it is impossible to find any clinching explanation for the phenomena noted, and hence to reconstruct in full how the painting came into being. One thing is certain: from the incomplete inscription (*ndt.f*) at the extreme lefthand edge it may (leaving aside the matter of whether this forms part of an authentic signature) be deduced that the panel was once wider on the left — and the same is suggested by the now inexplicable dark band that runs along a large part of the lefthand edge. The presence of the presentday bevelling does not argue against this — it continues onto the added plank at the bottom, and must thus have been done when the picture was given its present format, i.e. at the latest in 1759, when it was reproduced in its present form (see *6. Graphic reproductions*, 1; fig. 4). But if it was once bigger on the left — and perhaps also on the right, where the contour of the figure is uncomfortably intersected by the edge — then one has to assume that the panel either had a horizontal format or was considerably taller. The former possibility cannot be wholly discounted — the horizontal grain would even make one expect an oblong format — but it is not easy to imagine what the composition would then have been like. The virtually square remnant of

the original panel that survives today will in any case be part of a perhaps much larger panel, and the plank added along the bottom probably replaces a lost piece with the same or possibly larger dimensions.

The problem of the picture's genesis is also important in relation to the paint layer. The paintwork on the added plank can safely be ignored here, as it evidently does not belong to the original painting; but explaining the paint found in a band some 9–11 cm wide that runs horizontally above the join between the original part of the panel and the added plank is less simple a matter. Along the uneven upper border of this band the paint of the part above, which is applied thickly in both the background and the clothing, terminates in strokes that are partly visible in relief and with which the generally rather thinner (in the background much thinner) paint — tending to translucency — below the join does not offer a perfect match in colour and consistency. The strangest thing is that in this horizontal band the X-rays provide no trace of radioabsorbent paint, so that the discontinuity is seen even more markedly than at the surface. From this one has to suppose that in the lower part of the background and costume the paint used was of a different consistency from that in the part above. This confirms the impression already given by the paint and brushwork — i.e. that the two parts are from two different hands. It certainly seems as if a different artist was trying to achieve a reasonably satisfactory unity by matching his colours and by continuing certain colour accents upwards (most clearly so in the black shadow in a fold of the cloak). This would also explain one detail — why the doublet shows only two lines of braid (both belonging to an early phase of the work) and this motif is not, as one might expect, continued further down. One consequence of this conclusion is that the letters *'ndt.f'* can have been added only by the second hand involved — they are on the paint of an added part of the background. The inscription would then have had to be in the bottom lefthand corner of the panel when this was some centimeters wider on the left, and before the addition at the bottom of the 8.8 cm plank present today. It is hard to explain why the painter of the bust should have limited himself to using only part of the available panel. The same mysterious feature is found in the Rotterdam *Concord of the State* (no. A 135), where Rembrandt himself subsequently filled in the area that initially remained unpainted, as well as in the *Bust of a young woman* at Chapel Hill (no. C 58), a painting attributable to Isack Jouderville that (as Mr Evan H. Turner has kindly told us) presents a horizontal dividing line in the paint layer like that in the Florence work; in these cases there is however no evidence of a second hand.

If another hand was indeed responsible for painting the bottom part of the panel, the next question that arises is how far this second artist also had a share in the work done by the first. On this point, too, there is a great deal of uncertainty. It is plain enough that some elements of the costume, which today help to bring about the continuity in the paint layer, must belong to the second phase — i.e. they begin in the bottom area and then continue upwards; this is clearest in the shadow of the fold, done in black, and in the rather hard light-toned sheens of light in the cloak, but can also be seen in the thin, dark lines used to give internal detail in the doublet. The observations at the surface, together with the X-rays, make it reasonable to suppose both that the hair has been lengthened on each side of the head, and that the rather flat grey paint with which this was done and the locks of hair hanging over the forehead likewise belong to the second phase. But what about the change in the shape of the cap, and the associated changes in the background? For the moment it is impossible to tell, and in offering an answer to the question of authenticity it will be sensible to look only at those passages that beyond doubt form part of the original painting. This may, from the X-rays and other evidence, be taken to include the majority of the figure and certainly the face; Winkler's notion that the whole of the cloak is a later addition is negated by the X-rays (which show that the gorget does not continue beneath the paint of the cloak).

If one then tries to form a picture of the painting's stylistic features, one is struck first of all by the conscientious attention paid to plastic effect in the head and in the gorget and chain. In the face, even in the shadow areas, very little indeed remains to be seen of a brownish underpainting; these are partly (in the cast shadow from the nose) painted opaquely with a heavy, warm brown, and elsewhere with thinner paint of a less pronounced colour. In the lit parts of the face the light paint is mostly quite thick and applied with a somewhat sliding, dabbing brush action that results in a relatively strong relief that is related not directly to the form but rather to the intensity of the light. The linear elements that help to shape the eyes, nose and mouth are integrated with considerable subtlety into the image of hollows and convexities achieved with light and dark. Compared with this the hair is handled rather vaguely and with scant differentiation, though this is certainly due in part to subsequent interference. In the reliable-seeming parts of the accessories — the gorget, collar and chain — the attention to form and rendering of material is raised to a skilful but rather sober recording of fact that is only moderately satisfying from the aspect of three-dimensionality — the perspective of the gorget and of the chain hanging over it is uninteresting and not even

successfully suggested. Perhaps linked to this is the fact that the contour of the figure nowhere creates a really convincing effect, though one cannot tell to what extent we are here still seeing the work of the first artist.

It is, generally speaking, clear that the manner of painting thus described is closely similar to that of Rembrandt in the 1630s; it is less obvious with work from which years the painting in Florence can best be compared. It was earlier believed to have been dated 1634 (see *6. Graphic reproductions*, 3), and in the literature it is always put in or around that year. Furthermore, a fairly early dating was needed so long as one held to the belief, already current in the 18th century, that the painting was a Rembrandt self-portrait. A comparison with *tronies* by Rembrandt from the years around 1634 prompted a number of negative assessments — Bode[4] called it 'wenig vorteilhaft', and Gerson[3] 'weaker than the undoubted self-portraits of the period'. There are not however enough grounds for the idea of it being a self-portrait (already doubted by Bauch[5]), and the style differs substantially from that of Rembrandt in the earlier 1630s; this was presumably why Schwartz and Tümpel did not include the painting in their books of 1984 and 1986 respectively. Comparable works from that period — such as the Paris self-portraits of 1633 (nos. A 71 and A 72) and that in Berlin from 1634 (no. A 96) — show a far more daring and freer brushstroke in the heads, more use of translucent paint in the shadow passages, a more marked treatment of contours, and nowhere the degree of detail found here in the gorget. The very subtle shadow effect and resulting plasticity are more reminiscent of certain works from the late 1630s. The character of the modelling in the head shows some similarity with a work like the 1639 *Portrait of a man, standing (Cornelis Witsen?)* in Kassel (no. A 129) or the *Portrait of a young woman (Maria Trip?)* of the same year in Amsterdam (no. A 131). Though neither of these exhibits any of the impasto that marks the lit flesh passages in the Florence painting, there is in the relationship between light and shade and in the extensive detail of some accessories more similarity with such works than with those from other periods. There is a remarkable resemblance between the geometrical pattern used for the ornament on the doublet (insofar as this is original) and the binding of the books seen in the Berlin *Portrait of Cornelis Anslo and his wife* dated 1640 (no. A 143). Added to this there is the fact that the Amsterdam woman's portrait is also on a panel of poplarwood (with the result that the grain and ground make for a very similar radiographic image). From the physical viewpoint, too, there is thus some reason to connect the Florence painting with work from *c.* 1639/40.

This still does not answer the question of whether the painting ought to be attributed to Rembrandt himself or to an artist close to him who followed his style of the late 1630s. A preference for the latter view can be based not so much on a number of individual features in the execution of the head — in the lit passages in particular — as on the combination of a rather uncertain structure to the body and a generally somewhat unimaginative treatment. The head especially is structured rather shakily; the vertical axis runs (mostly because of the line of the nose and the position of the mouth in relation to the nose) more obliquely towards the bottom right than one is used to seeing in any head by Rembrandt, or than the almost square-on pose would warrant.

A secondary argument against a Rembrandt attribution is that though the sitter is certainly not Rembrandt the pose seems to indicate that the painting is a self-portrait; if this impression is correct a Rembrandt attribution would of course be impossible and one would have to think in terms of a pupil's self-portrait. Against this there is the fact that the head especially — minus the locks of hair added by another hand — has a striking atmospheric effect with not a little subtlety, a quality that one hesitates to put to the credit of a pupil.

Given the many unanswered questions as to the original appearance of the picture and the extent of later interventions, it is perhaps more sensible to give the work the benefit of the doubt for the time being, and not entirely to deny the possibility of it being an authentic *tronie* from around 1639, done in a manner we do not at present know from other works.

5. Documents and sources

None.

6. Graphic reproductions

1. Etching by Johann Gottfried Seutter (Augsburg 1717–1800 inscribed: *Ritratto di Rembrant — Alto Palmi 3 Largo Palmi 2 once 4 / Rembrandt pinxit/Io Gottof. Seuter del. et sculp* (fig. 4). Published in: *Raccolta di stampe rappresentanti i quadri più scelti de' signori marchesi Gerini* I, Florence 1759, plate XXIX. Reproduces the painting in accordance with its present state, in the same direction. Probably various of the prints mentioned below — especially 2 and 3 — are made after this etching. In his accompanying text (in French and Italian) Pierre-Jean Mariette points to Rembrandt's rejection of 'tout ce qui tendoit au gracieux ... L'essence de la peinture ne consiste plus selon lui, que dans l'art de produire l'illusion'. He also mentions the painting's pedigree: 'Jean-Guillaume Electeur Palatin en fit autrefois un présent aux Marquis Gerini en reconnaissance de ce qu'il avoit reçu d'autres tableaux.' (Information kindly provided by Dr B.W. Meijer.) The publication on the Gerini collection is depicted, open at the page with this print, in a fresco by Giuseppe Zocchi in the Palazzo Gerini in Florence[6].

2. Etching by Georg Friedrich Schmidt (Schönerlinde-bei-Berlin 1712–Berlin 1775) inscribed: *Le Tableau Original est à Florence dans la Collection de Ms: le Marquis Gerini.* Reproduces the picture in reverse with in the left background the inscription:

Fig. 4. Etching by J.G. Seutter, 1759



Rembrandt p. 1634/G. F. Schmidt 1771 f. Aqaforti:. Probably done after 1. above. Obviously done after this Schmidt etching is one inscribed *Joh. H. Lips fec. aqu.fort. 1777*, a reproduction as a small bust in the same direction as this prototype, used as an illustration by J. C. Lavater, *Physiognomische Fragmente zur Beförderung der Menschenkenntnis und Menschenliebe* (1775–1778), in the Dutch edition entitled *Over de physiognomie*, 2nd edn. Amsterdam 1784, Vol. I, p. 40.

3. Etching attributable to Joachim Martin Falbe (Berlin 1709–1782), a free reproduction in the same direction as the original and inscribed in the right background *Rembrandt/p: 1634*. An impression from this in the Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris has written in pen beneath this *Falbe sc./Berolinensis*; in the Amsterdam Rijksprentenkabinet attributed, probably wrongly, to Seutter (see 1 above).

4. Mezzotint by Charles Townley (London 1746–after 1800) inscribed: *Born in the Year 1606. — Died in the year 1674./ Rembrandt/Painted by Himself/Drawn and Engraved by Charles Townley Member of the Royal Academy of Painting in Florence./From the Original Portrait in the Collection of the Marquis Gerini at Florence./ Published as the Act directs 1st March 1778, and to be had of C. Townley No. 75, near the Adelphi Strand* (Charrington 169). Reproduces the original in reverse.

Various later prints, including those by Franz Wrenk (1790) and Galgano Cipriani (inscribed: *Filippo Conte di Horn/Decapitato in Brusella il 5 di giugno 1568.*), provide no useful information. The prints by J. de Frey, Debucourt (not: Delacourt) and Rosaspina mentioned by Hofstede de Groot[7] relate to the painting Smith no. 345 quoted by him, i.e. our no. C 98 in The Hague; a print he mentions as by J. J. Haid is unknown to us.

7. Copies

A fairly large number of painted copies, of which there are photographs in the R.K.D. in The Hague, shed no light on how the painting came into being.

8. Provenance

— According to Pierre-Jean Mariette (see *6. Graphic reproductions*, 1) given by the Elector Palatine Johann Wilhelm (1658–1716), son-in-law of Cosimo III de Medici, Grand Duke of Tuscany, to the Marquis Carlo Gerini (1648–1733) and his brothers Giovanni (1685–1751) and Andrea (1691–1766) of Florence[6].
— Coll. Marquis Gerini, Florence; shown by the Marquis Carlo and his brothers in the exhibition at the SS. Annunziata organized by the Accademici del Disegno in 1724[6].
— Offered for sale by the Marquis Giovanni Gerini (1770–1825) in 1817, with other paintings, to the Grand Duke Ferdinand III and bought by the latter in 1818 and placed in the Palazzo Pitti[6]; moved to the Uffizi in 1913.

9. Summary

The painting has survived far from intact. Already before 1759 at the latest it must have been given its present dimensions, i.e. less wide and high than the original must have been, and extended at the bottom by a plank almost 9 cm wide. The paint surface and especially the X-rays moreover show that along the bottom of the original panel a horizontal band *c.* 9–11 cm deep has been painted with paint of different composition from the rest, and probably (for reasons unknown) initially remained unpainted. One has to assume that a different hand was responsible for the painting of this lower section, and for additions to the painting of the upper section.

Though assessment of what can be regarded as the original painting is difficult, it can be said that the approach most closely resembles that to be seen in a number of works done by Rembrandt in 1639/40. While in its present state the painting is marked by strange weaknesses and a certain tameness, the complicated state of preservation is sufficient reason not entirely to rule out Rembrandt's authorship.

REFERENCES

1 W. Bode and C. Hofstede de Groot, *Rembrandt* III, Paris 1899, no. 170.
2 F. Winkler, 'Echt, falsch, verfälscht', *Kunstchronik* 10 (1957), pp. 141–144, esp. 144.
3 Gerson 144; Br.-Gerson 20.
4 W. Bode, *Studien zur Geschichte der holländischen Malerei*, Braunschweig 1883, p. 411.
5 Bauch 306.
6 G. Ewald, 'Appunti sulla Galleria Gerini e sugli affreschi di Anton Domenico Gabbiani', *Kunst der Barock in der Toskana*, Florence-Munich 1976, pp. 344–399, esp. 355. B. W. Meijer, *Rembrandt nel Seicento toscano*, Florence 1983, p. 36 and notes 130–132.
7 HdG 538.

B 12 River landscape with a windmill

KASSEL, STAATLICHE KUNSTSAMMLUNGEN KASSEL, SCHLOSS WILHELMSHÖHE, NO. GK 242

HDG 944; BR. 454; BAUCH 554; GERSON 344

Fig. 1. Panel 67 × 87.5 cm.



1. Summarized opinion

A painting done in two stages. Of the first version, completed in a rembrandtesque style from around 1640 and possibly by Rembrandt himself, a part can be seen only in the lower righthand corner. All the rest was overpainted in about 1650–1655, probably by Ferdinand Bol.

2. Description of subject

A river running diagonally down towards the right is spanned by a stone bridge. On the left a rider wearing a dark hat and red cloak moves towards the left along a path running on the near side of the water. An angler sits on the bank, closer to the centre of the picture, with two swans swimming towards him. On the other side of the river a boat with a high, ornate transom and its sail furled is being rowed towards the bridge by two men; a third man is seated in the stern. On the extreme right a windwill stands on the further bank, with a rowing-boat moored in front of it. Behind it and further to the left, by the bridge, a few houses can be seen lying among trees; beyond the river the terrain rises, with groups of trees alternating with clear ground. A road leads across a multi-arched viaduct towards a cluster of buildings lying on a ridge, one of which has a tower of a construction that is hard to identify. On the far right is a quite high and barren rocky plateau. The left offers a distant vista. There are dark clouds in the sky to the right.

3. Observations and technical information

Working conditions

Examined in October 1968 (J.B., B.H.) in reasonable daylight and artificial light and in the frame, with the aid of eight 24 × 30 cm X-ray films (of uneven density) covering a large part of the surface; a complete set of films was received later. Examined again in January 1983 (S.H.L., E.v.d.W.) with the aid of a microscope.

Support

DESCRIPTION: Panel, grain horizontal, 67 × 87.5 cm. Thickness uneven, *c.* 1 cm. Single plank. Rather crudely worked on the back, with scarcely any bevelling. At the top centre the plank has a few vaguely curving, long cracks running almost parallel with each other. There is a knot in the wood some way to the left of the top of the tower, and a second somewhat lower in the centre.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: Dendrochronology (Prof. Dr J. Bauch and Prof. Dr D. Eckstein, Hamburg) showed the panel to be a radial board with 170 annual rings of heartwood on the righthand side and 140 rings on the left. Mean curve 175 annual rings of heartwood + 8 rings heartwood and 5 rings sapwood counted.

Fig. 2. X-Ray



At first these could not be dated, but a written communication from Dr P. Klein dated 18 November 1980 shows that the boundary between heartwood and sapwood can be dated at 1620, giving an earliest possible felling date of 1629 and a statistical average of 1635. It appears, furthermore, that the wood of this panel came from the same tree as that for the Washington *Half-length figure of a man in 'Polish' costume* of 1637 (no. A 122) and the Rotterdam *Concord of the State* datable in the late 1630s (no. A 135).

Ground

DESCRIPTION: Light brown-yellow, clearly visible in the reflexion of the bridge and to the right of the angler, and showing through here and there in the sailing-boat and mill.
SCIENTIFIC DATA: Kühn[1] found a white ground comprising chalk, a large amount of white lead, and glue containing protein.

Paint layer

CONDITION: Fairly good, apart from a slight amount of wearing and some restoration. Craquelure: there is no cracking in the more thinly painted parts, which belong mostly to the original version. The more thickly painted, lighter areas of the landscape have small cracks and rimpling. A few thicker passages in the sky have quite deep and irregularly-shaped shrinkage cracks at the top right, and long slightly curved cracks running more or less parallel at the top centre.
DESCRIPTION: From both the visible surface and the X-rays (q.v.) it is apparent that the painting has undergone drastic alterations. Vestiges of the initial version can be seen mainly in the area to the bottom right — parts of the water, the sailing-boat, the mill (apart from its sails) and the brightly lit section of riverbank to the right of the bridge. Part of the high rocky plateau, and some of the sky above it, may perhaps also be looked on as original. The rest of the painting, including the sky, has been totally overpainted, with substantial changes made to the composition.

The parts that must be regarded as belonging mostly to the original painting, such as the sailing-boat and the mill (the sails of the latter have been overpainted in a green-brown), are painted in a greenish brown and ochrish yellow over the yellowish ground, which shows through. The brushwork is rather more sketchlike in the mill than in the boat; the structure of both is drawn with dark brown lines. The reflexion in the water is very evocative, and rendered with strokes of greyish and greenish paint over a partly visible brown ground. Further additions have been placed over this, apparently later, in grey. Later changes have also been made in grey to the bridge, the main lay-in of which is still original. The lit stretch of riverbank consists of thick clumps of ochre yellow and some greenish yellow.

The remainder of the painting is today marked by a rather undifferentiated application of paint, with scant suggestive power. This is apparent in the manner of painting of the group of trees to the right of the bridge, where the lit parts have been

Fig. 3. Detail (1 : 2.5)



indicated quite coarsely, and in the trees further back, which have been painted fairly freely in light brown, with cursory drawing, over a darker brown, without any suggestive effect. The viaduct, in brown, has very slovenly drawing that barely defines its architecture. The hillslopes behind are painted in a predominantly opaque greenish brown, while the rocky plateau above has a rather confused brushstroke in a purplish tone. A small part of this, close to the almost vertical lefthand contour of the escarpment, probably belongs to the first version; the colour here is grey, and the brushstroke more functional.

In the left foreground there seems to be a reddish tone showing through, with on top of it a layer of greenish brown in which the structure of the terrain and traces of the path are drawn in brown and black. Microscope examination reveals that here, along the lefthand edge level with the shoulders of the rider and higher up, there is first a light blue-grey underlying layer that merges upwards into a light grey, which itself then changes to a brown above the horizon. As the X-rays too suggest, a light area (the water) seems to have run through to the lefthand edge, bordered at the top by a hill. The rider and angler are flat and clumsily formed. The parapets of the bridge, catching the light, are done in long strokes with little subtlety. The rear edging of light continues into the light paint indicating the bank beyond the bridge. Above the bridge vague square and oblong shapes and a small mill can be seen, mostly in relief (see also *X-Rays*); they seem to belong to the first version of the painting. The trees on the left are painted thinly and flatly in brownish and greenish tints, using rather coarse brushwork. The vista is done in a light greenish blue over the sky, the brushstrokes of which can still be seen in relief.

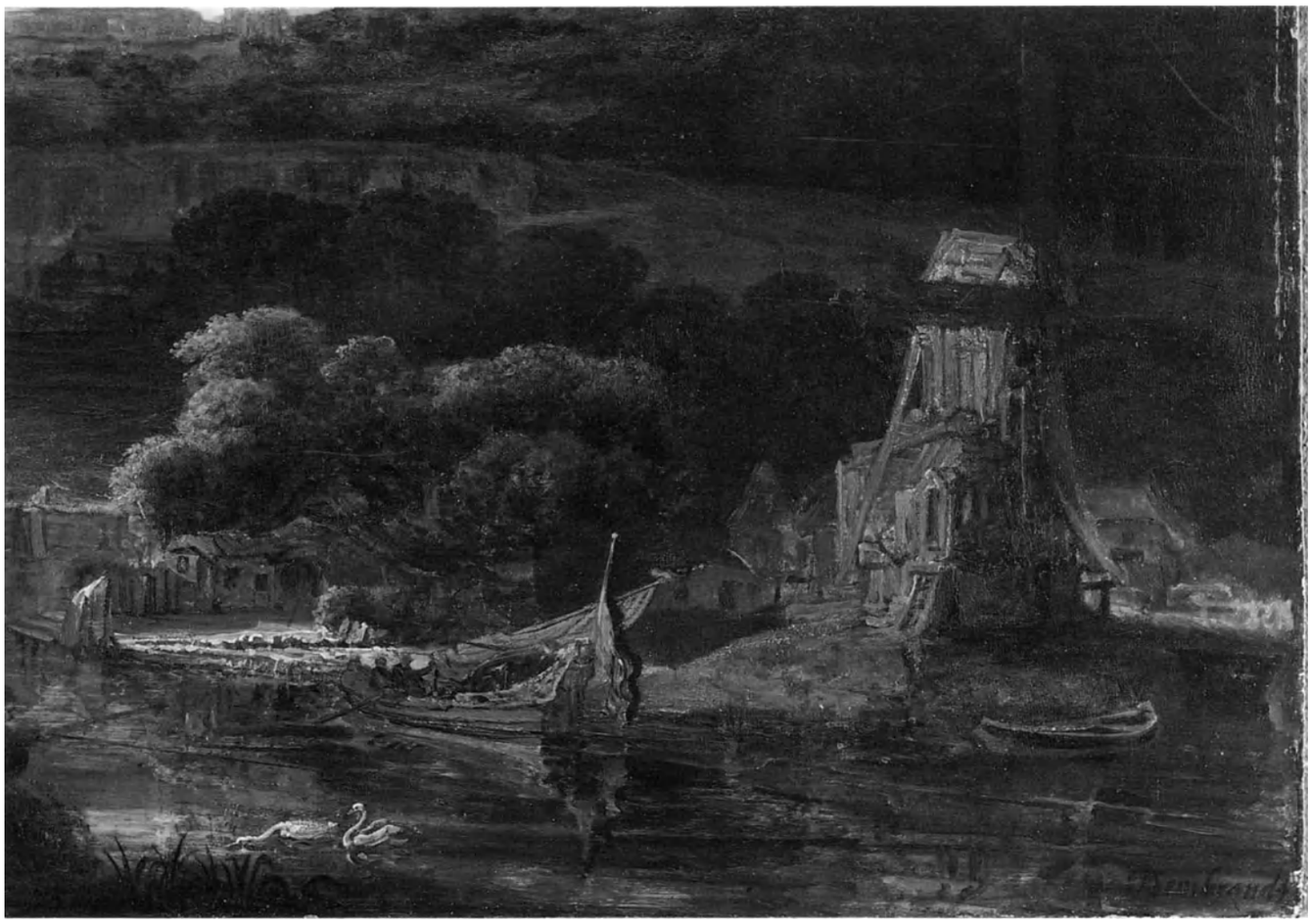
The sky is done thickly with quite smooth, opaque paint in light blue and white, and on the right in grey and white, without any distinct brushwork. An underlying layer can occasionally be detected along the edge; in the upper lefthand corner this is a dark grey-blue, and along the righthand side a light blue. These observations, combined with the nature of the craquelure, the radiographs and the result of analysis of a paint sample (see SCIENTIFIC DATA), show that the first sky has been almost entirely overpainted. A patch above the plateau, halfway to the top edge, has a different colour and presents a distinct brushstroke; it probably belongs to the earlier layer. Close above the rocks are irregularly outlined shapes, seen in relief, that might form part of a taller cliff-face painted earlier.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: Kühn[1] found two different layers of white lead in the sky, the lower of which contained some smalt (and may consequently have been bluish in colour unless these glass particles were used as a dryer). He also found, in the red of the rider, white lead, red lake, red ochre with a small amount of vegetable black and vermilion, and in the yellow of the boat white lead with some yellow ochre.

X-Rays

The radiographic image shows substantial variations from the picture visible today. At the bridge there is a similar shape whose

Fig. 4. Detail (1 : 2.5)



upper border is however formed by a light edge taking a somewhat different and more lively course, and a rectangular gap (the significance of which is not clear). Above this there are shapes appearing light that must clearly be seen as a town lying far away with (visible at the paint surface as well) buildings and towers, on the right the sails of a windmill and on the left the forms of lit buildings and cliffs (?) that seem to lead on to lower-lying terrain. In the adjoining fairly radioabsorbent passage on the left, which does not really match the gradations of light seen at the surface and might have to do with the blue-grey layer (water?) noted along the lefthand edge, there is a relatively dark reserve at the point of the rider's upper body. In this reserve, too, there is more radioabsorbency than in the dark zone below it, from which it may be deduced that the light area in the radiograph is produced by two layers, with the reserve for the shape of the rider's upper body left only in the topmost one. The left foreground, which at the paint surface has a slight translucency, appears dark in the X-ray.

To the right of the town there are strongly radioabsorbent areas and strokes that can be read as a strongly-lit, glowing terrain with a few trees, lit from the left and set on hills. The right foreground has the X-ray image of the sailing-boat and, in broad lines, that of the mill. The rowing-boat on the riverbank can be seen in lightish brushstrokes in a different position from today, more foreshortened and a little further to the left.

The mountain plateau to the right shows up dark, with an outline broadly matching that seen today. Above this is the image of the shapes seen in relief at the surface, partly with a slightly blurred lit edge in paint of low radioabsorbency. It seems probable that this must be read as an earlier, higher version of the cliff area rather than as clouds, which would hardly show such a winding edging of light.

Signature

At the extreme bottom right close to the edge, in dark grey *<Rembrandt>*. The shape of the letters seems unusual — for instance the strangely proportioned *R* and the spiky look of other letters, and encourages little trust in its authenticity. The absence of an *f* for 'fecit' is also suspicious.

Varnish

No special remarks.

4. Comments

Because of the disparate styles it presents — sketchlike in bright, translucent paint with crisp highlights in the right foreground, contrasting with a mostly rather flat and occasionally muddy treatment elsewhere — the painting has a contradictory appearance. This has, remarkably, aroused hardly any comment in the older literature. Gerson[2] did put

Fig. 5. Detail with signature (enlarged)



something of this into words when he spoke of 'many pentimenti, which show either that Rembrandt changed the composition while working on it, or that he remodelled a somewhat older project, which was more sketch-like'; Cynthia Schneider[3], whose research was done more or less at the same time as our own, drew a clear distinction between a later completion by another hand and two earlier stages both by Rembrandt himself. Gerson dated 'the powerful picture that we see today' in the early 1650s. This date of *c.* 1650 is given also by Valentiner[4], Hofstede de Groot[5], Eisler[6], Rosenberg[7], Stechow[8] and Bauch (who mentions a lower horizon visible in the X-rays)[9]. Benesch[10], on the other hand, has suggested a date in 1642/43. This variation in opinion can be seen as stemming from the dichotomy in the painting itself. One is in fact dealing with — in our view — two widely-differing paintings, the older of which is only very partly visible, and even then is not free of overpaintings connected with the second.

From a number of things it can, as we have explained above, be concluded that hidden beneath large parts of the present paint surface there is an earlier version. The X-rays show part of this version in such detail that it has to be assumed that it was entirely (or almost entirely) completed. The craquelure, especially in large expanses of the sky, shows that there the artist was working over an earlier (not fully dry) paint layer, traces of which can in fact be seen in relief; and both from a paint sample (taken from the sky) and from stratification visible along the edge it is plain that there is an underlying layer in the sky and elsewhere. The supposition by Schneider[3] that this earliest version showed an entirely flat landscape is contradicted by the radioabsorbent paint of the sky seen in the X-rays, which certainly did not have a straight-line horizon as its lower border. The first picture is very closely related to Rembrandt or his studio, as may be seen from the style of the passage visible at the lower right that forms part of it, and as is confirmed by the dendrochronology results (see *Support* above). The panel is found to come from the same oaktree, felled *c.* 1635, that provided the panels for the Washington *Half-length figure of a man in 'Polish' costume* of 1637 (no. A 122) and the Rotterdam *Concord of the State* from the late 1630s (no. A 135). This shows, too, that a first painting on the Kassel panel as early as the late 1630s must be seen as possible.

The best of the area at the bottom right of the picture does indeed fit roughly into this period (if one ignores the later flat additions in grey). The lively rendering of the sailing-boat being rowed by two men, and the lit stretch of bank, the reflexions in the water and the mill matches the sure manner of sketching that one meets in, for instance, the *Concord of the State*. If one tries to imagine the whole of the composition in its first state, the lefthand half of the sunlit surfaces of land (and water ?) with the mill and towers, is not unlike what is seen in the corresponding place in the Krakow *Landscape with the Good Samaritan* dated 1638 (no. A 125). The X-ray moreover suggests that here, just as in the Krakow painting, there was a mountain slope closing off the picture on the left, possibly identical with the underlying brown noted along the edge of the panel. It is inconceivable that the buildings on the mountain ridge were already present at that stage; not only is their scale imcompatable with that of the town belonging to the first version, but the X-rays too seem to show here a lower expanse of sky. All that can be said about the mountain mass on the right is that it seems, from the X-ray, to have had a slightly lit edge standing out against the sky; the latter would have been quite different in tone from that seen today. The hardest thing to imagine is how the substantial difference in the distance between the mill and water in the right foreground and the lit distant city was accounted for in the structure of the landscape, and how the city related to the hills or horizon closing off the vista.

It is difficult to say whether this first version came from Rembrandt's hand. The draughtsmanlike handling of paint seen in the right foreground does not recur in precisely the same way in any of his three landscapes from the late 1630s that we know of. A foreground area lit like this is not indeed to be found in these. On the other hand there is the fact that no landscape with these dimensions is known from his hand, and the format may have prompted solutions different from what we know by him. It seems reasonable to conclude that Rembrandt's authorship of the original version, datable just before 1640, cannot be discounted, but what little we see of it does not provide a basis for a more definite opinion. Unhappily, the signature must be seen as unreliable.

The second stage of painting on the panel has given the picture a quite different appearance, suggesting to most authors (with Rembrandt's authorship firmly in their mind) a date of around 1650. The spatial composition has been drastically recast — where the distant city previously stood the middle ground now stretches back on the further side of the water, joining up with the trees to the right of the bridge. On the left where once a lit area (probably water) extended out to the edge — much

as in the Krakow landscape — , a dark group of trees has been placed, rather like those on the left in Rembrandt's *Landscape with a thunderstorm* in Braunschweig (no. A 137). The way these trees have been used as dark and almost flat silhouettes is seen again here and there in the middle ground; only to the right of the bridge are they enlivened with somewhat chaotic highlights, of varying intensity. Other forms in the midground, too, have been handled remarkably broadly — the vaguely-defined viaduct, the cliff to the right and the architecture seen against the sky. A few accents, such as the cypress-like silhouettes on the hill, have a rather more marked pictorial structure of the kind that elsewhere — including the horse and rider in the foreground — is sadly missing. A dull lighting suffuses the picture space without contributing much to a division into planes or a dramatic effect of contrast; here and there something of the kind has been attempted, but it is as if the painter was frightened by his own daring and let the contrast immediately ebb away into a vague lack of definition. The same vagueness, for which it is hard to hold the painting's state of preservation alone responsible, marks the sky where the light blue between greys and white offers no spatial structure and does nothing to help the lighting of the picture. It would seem that it was this strange vagueness and the poetic associations that it evidently conjures up that won the painting its great reputation — Gerson was still talking of 'the powerful picture' — , for when looked at more closely the pictorial execution cannot be termed other than empty and disappointing; this is demonstrated most clearly where the sparkling execution of the bottom righthand corner has been spoiled with muddy overpainting (obviously done by the same hand as the rest of the picture).

In view of the way the painting reflects Rembrandt's manner of painting from around 1650, the dating of about or soon after that year so far usually given to the work will, where the overpainting and final completion are concerned, be not far off the mark. In the motifs depicted, too, reminiscences of Rembrandt are not lacking; the group of trees on the left has already been mentioned as possibly a reminiscence of Rembrandt's *Landscape with a thunderstorm*, which we date at about 1640, and the dominating position of the unusual architecture is perhaps connected with Rembrandt's (uncompleted?) *Landscape with a castle* in the Louvre (Br. 450) usually dated in the 1640s, or with the *Landscape with the Flight into Egypt* in Dublin (Br. 576) dated 1647. Certain elements in the treatment remind one of the Braunschweig painting — the edgings of light along the bridge, and the highlights in the treetops — but a comparison shows how much more limp and stereotyped these are here. Similarly, the crispness of the mountains in the Braunschweig picture has made way here for hillslopes of a peculiar, somewhat 'woolly' appearance.

There is one Rembrandt pupil in the background of whose later work similar 'woolly' hillslopes appear more than once in a very smiliar way, and that is Ferdinand Bol. Backgrounds are not comparable in every respect with landscapes in their own right, since they obviously contain less detail and have fewer high lights, but we do not have a great deal of other material to go on; his landscapes-as-such are known of almost exclusively from documents (he himself owned in 1669 'een maneschijn' (a moonlight picture) and, twice, 'een landschap van Bol' (Blankert *Bol*, p.77 nos. 19, 30 and 33). Making allowance for this, the backgrounds in, for instance, the Dordrecht *Portrait of a couple in a landscape* (sadly surviving only in fragmentary form) and *Elisha refusing the gifts of Naaman* of 1661, in the Amsterdam Historical Museum (Blankert *Bol*, nos. 167 and 14; Sumowski *Gemälde* I, nos. 150 and 103), offer striking resemblances with the Kassel landscape, in the contouring of the mountains (especially with what the X-ray of no. B 12 shows, including the light edging which also appears in the Dordrecht painting) as well as in the soft folding that models the hillslope and in the cursory clumps of trees which — mostly dark and sometimes light — are stuck onto the latter (see Introduction, Chapter II, figs. 45 and 46). The way that here and there in the dully-lit space of the Dordrecht painting a more strongly-lit element stands out without this chiaroscuro doing anything to lend a clear structure is very reminiscent of the treatment of light, already described, in the Kassel landscape. The distance that still separates the two paintings is in part one between a background intended primarily as decor and a landscape in its own right, and probably partly the outcome of the heavier application of paint needed when overpainting most of an existing painting. This distance is spanned to some extent by the only known landscape from Bol's later period, the *River landscape with cattle* in an American private collection (Blankert *Bol*, no. 183; Sumowski *Gemälde* I, no. 185; see Introduction, Chapter II, fig. 48), where highlights along lit edges of trees show a similar style of execution as no. B 12 and where moreover the somewhat romantic effect of hazy lighting with a bright reflexion in the water show a certain similarity. A further link with Bol may be found in a group of landscape drawings that Martin Royalton-Kisch, of the British Museum, has (as he kindly informed us) been able to attribute to that artist. Among these one at Hanover (Ben. Addenda 15/848A) in particular shows similarities to the Kassel picture in its composition, the motifs used and the somewhat confused lighting suggested by the wash

Fig. 6. Attributed to F. Bol, *River landscape*, pen and wash, 17.9 × 25.1 cm (Ben.Addenda 15/848A). Hanover, Niedersächsische Landesgalerie



(fig. 6). Taking all these aspects into account, the resemblances in approach, and in many respects treatment as well, between the part of the Kassel painting that was done second and Bol's later landscape style are such that an attribution of that part of the Kassel landscape to him warrants serious consideration. The date of its execution will have to be put considerably later than that of the underlying picture, though it cannot be put closer than *c.* 1650/55 — preferably before rather than after the commissions Bol received for the Amsterdam Town Hall, though where Rembrandtlike throwbacks in his work are concerned a great deal seems to have been possible.

One may assume that an iconographic programme formed the foundation for the painting in each of its two states, comparable with that for nos. A 125, A 136, A 137 and C 117. One notices that the initially visible distant city, which had the connotation of the 'city to come' of Hebrews 13:14, was replaced with a highset castle, which undoubtedly carried the same message.

5. Documents and sources

None.

6. Graphic reproductions

None.

7. Copies

1. Oak panel 75.6 × 94.4 cm, signed <*R*> in lower left corner, private collection, London. Appears to be of 17th-century origin; analysis of the paint in the Courtauld Institute Technology Department did not reveal anything inconsistent with pigments used during the 17th century.
2. Panel 66 × 85.2 cm. Munich, Bayerische Staatsgemäldesammlungen, inv.no. 12018. Known to us only from a photograph.

8. Provenance

First mentioned in Kassel in a manuscript entitled 'Inventorium B' dating from 1775, no. 384: 'Rembrandt. Eine Flache (sic!) Landschaft, mit Wasser worüber eine flache Brücke gehet' (text kindly communicated by Dr Bernhard Schnackenburg). The picture is described again, as hanging in the same place, in the printed *Verzeichnis der Hochfürstlich-Hessischen Gemählde-Sammlung in Cassel*, in the Academie no. 42: 'Rembrandt van Ryn. Eine Landschaft, mit einer Brücke auf dem Vorgrunde. Auf einer Anhöhe ein altes Bergschlosz mit Ruinen. Auf Holz, 3 [should be 2] Fusz 1 Zoll hoch, 2 Fusz 9 Zoll breit [= 65.4 × 86.2 cm]'; therefore probably acquired by the Landgrave Friedrich II (reigned 1760–1785). In the first supplement to the Hauptinventar begun in 1749, no. 920, described in the same wording and with the correct dimensions.

9. Summary

The painting visible today presents a stylistic contradiction, between the for the most part crisp depiction of form in the area in the bottom right corner (the mill and the water with a sailing-boat) and the comparatively flat and indifferent execution of the whole of the rest of the picture. As the X-rays, a paint sample analysis and the stratification observable at some points along the edges confirm, there are in fact two paintings one on top of the other. The first version, which must have been practically completed, was painted on a panel coming from the same treetrunk as panels used by Rembrandt in the years 1637–40. In line with this, this version (were it still can be seen, and to judge from the radiographs) corresponds to that of Rembrandt or his school during the same period around 1640; whether it may be attributed to Rembrandt himself, is impossible to decide. The second version, which forms the majority of the paint surface now visible, is not only disappointing in its quality but also differs clearly in style from the first. Similarities in motif and execution with landscapes in later work by Ferdinand Bol make an attribution of this reworking to him, and a hypothetical dating around 1650–1655, quite possible.

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3 C. Schneider, *Rembrandt's landscape paintings* (to be published shortly), cat. no. 7.
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Paintings Rembrandt's authorship of which cannot be accepted

C 83 Manoah's sacrifice

DRESDEN, STAATLICHE KUNSTSAMMLUNGEN DRESDEN, GEMÄLDEGALERIE ALTE MEISTER, CAT. NO. 1563

HDG 27; BR. 509; BAUCH 23; GERSON 204

Fig. 1. Canvas 242 × 283 cm



1. Summarized opinion

A reasonably well preserved, though probably considerably reduced work that can be attributed to Willem Drost and dated in the 1650s.

2. Description of subject

The subject is taken from Judges 13, especially verse 20. An angel of the Lord appeared to the barren wife of Manoah and announced to her that she would bear a son who would begin to deliver Israel from the hands of the Philistines. At Manoah's entreaty, the man of God appeared again; Manoah did not recognize him as an angel, and offered to make ready a kid for him; the angel refused and, at his instruction, Manoah sacrified it to the Lord; 'for it came to pass, when the flame went up to heaven from off the altar, that the angel of the Lord ascended in the flame of the altar. And Manoah and his wife looked on it, and fell on their faces to the ground'. Only then did Manoah realise that it was an angel of the Lord, and feared that they would die 'because we have seen God'; but his wife had trust in God. She was to become the mother of Samson.

In the foreground, lit from the left, Manoah and his wife kneel to the right of a rectangular altar-stone, on which the sacrifice lies among the burning logs. Above the altar can be seen, indistinctly, the floating figure of the angel; he has no wings, wears a light, belted gown, and gestures upwards with his left hand. The grey-bearded Manoah, seen from the front, has sunk onto one knee and raises his clasped hands; he averts his head, with eyes downcast, from the ascending angel. He wears a pink-red silken jacket, and wrapped around his waist is a dark red sash the gold-embroidered ends of which hang down before his body. Manoah's wife is to the right of him, seen in left profile, and kneels upright on both knees in prayer with her head slightly bowed, eyes closed and hands pressed together. A dark red velvet cloak lies over her gold-coloured headdress, hangs from her shoulders and down beneath her left arm, and is draped behind her like a train. Beneath this she has a bright yellow garment with a gold brocade hem, which exposes a white shirt at the throat and forearms. A pearl is worn in the ear, and a row of pearls round the neck.

The ground on which they are kneeling is lit somewhat at the front but becomes darker further back. There, parallel to the picture plane, a house is vaguely seen, with a door and a number of windows above which there is a small projecting, tiled roof.

Above this again more windows can be made out. On the roof, above the woman's head, there is some vegetation — evidently a climbing plant; to the right behind her there are a few bushes.

3. Observations and technical information

Working conditions

Examined on 15 May 1970 (B.H., E.v.d.W.) in artificial light, and in the frame on the wall. Two X-ray copyfilms, showing the woman's hands and face and a detail of the woman's clothing, were received from Dr M. Meier-Siem (Hamburg).

Support

DESCRIPTION: Canvas, lined, *c.* 242 × 283 cm (according to 1979 catalogue). The canvas comprises at least three and perhaps four sections; horizontal seams are at about 45 cm from the bottom (just above the upper edge of the altar-stone), some 99 cm above this (running through the woman's gold headdress), and perhaps 83 cm further up again (i.e. some 15 cm from the top) unless the latter is not a seam but the imprint of a stretcher. This is in fact more likely, since if it were a seam there would be an 83 cm wide strip of canvas, a width different from the complete, 99 cm one below it (which, including the foldovers at the seam, probably originally had the usual width of *c.* 105 cm, or 1½ ells). If the horizontal mark is indeed a stretcher imprint, the uppermost strip would be the same width as the middle one, at 98 cm (measured in the frame). On the supposition that the painting no longer has its original format, see below under *4. Comments.*
SCIENTIFIC DATA: As we have access only to two radiographs of details at a considerable distance from the edges of the composition, no observation as to cusping could be made. Threadcount: 14.95 horizontal threads/cm (13–15), 10,83 vertical threads/cm (10.5–11.5). The vertical threads show frequent thickenings compared to the horizontal ones; on the basis of this, but especially because of the direction of the seams in the canvas, one must conclude that the warp runs horizontal.

Ground

DESCRIPTION: A grey that is probably the ground can be seen in the extreme right foreground.
SCIENTIFIC DATA: In a cross-section prepared from a sample taken from the lower edge Kühn[1] found the usual two layers. The lower is red, consisting of iron oxide pigment (probably haematite containing heavy glasslike silicates) with an admixture of smalt and calcite. The upper layer is grey and contains chalk (calcium carbonate), white lead and splintery vegetable black.

Paint layer

CONDITION: In vital areas — the figures and more thickly painted parts of the foreground — the condition is good, elsewhere it is hard to judge. Craquelure: in general a regular craquelure of a kind normal for a 17th-century painting on canvas. The angel's right leg shows irregular shrinkage cracks in the paint layer and the same occurs in Manoah's left sleeve.
DESCRIPTION: The background is executed in very dark tints, and the form of the architectural features cannot be followed distinctly; the indication of foliage, above and to the right of the woman's figure, is vaguely distinguishable in rather lively touches of brown. The passage in the upper righthand corner, where there are strokes of red, is hard to read. The angel on the left is painted very crudely over the painting of the architecture, the horizontal tiled roof of which runs through the figure; the legs are modelled cursorily in dark grey-brown tints, and their whole execution is such that it is hard to believe that the author of the painting was responsible for this figure.

The foreground in the centre is painted with broad brushstrokes in brownish and yellowish tints, and further to the right in broad strokes of black and random strokes of red over a grey that is probably the ground. On the left the altar-stone, the wood, the blood-spattered sacrifice and the flames are rendered effectively in varied and mostly broad brushstrokes in browns and greys, red, orange and yellow. Long strokes are used to show the smoke and sparks that rise (intersected by the picture frame) to the left. In the area of the fire can be seen underlying brushstrokes that do not match the present picture.

Manoah's face is modelled convincingly in comparatively large fields of colour. A few strokes of a dark grey indicate the eyebrows and downcast eyes; the same colour and a rather lighter grey are used in the fold of the cheek and in the wrinkles and shadow parts of the face. The beard is done, in a similar but rather patchier way, with short and quite wide strokes in greys and white, with no indication of individual hairs. The dark back of his left hand stands out against the lightest part of the beard. The lit parts of the hands are painted in a fairly thick flesh colour, with a little red. In the clothing, too, the brushstroke is mostly broad and often short; in the salmon-pink sheens of light the strokes almost everywhere run across the folds at right angles. Here and there some yellow and greenish grey are used to show a shot effect. The dangling ends of the sash have a thickly-applied yellow and, especially, a dark red.

In the woman's face the taut skin is suggested by a subtle modelling with grey shadow tints; where the relatively cool flesh colour is applied most thickly on the nose and cheekbone the short, broad brushstroke is clearly apparent. Black is used in the eye and nostril, and a colour almost as dark runs along the whole profile (with its strikingly convex upper lip) and then merges into the red of the cloak draped over the head. The band above the forehead is modelled in yellow and an impasto yellowish white, and the headdress is shown vividly and very precisely using fine yellow lines over a darker base tone. The hands, in the light, are painted in a warm flesh tint with a little red and with highlights on the nails and fingertips, and modelled sensitively in grey. Very discreet reflexions of light are used in the shadows close to the thumbs, as well as along the underside of the cheek. The deep red of the cloak is painted firmly, with the brushstrokes running mostly in the direction of the folds. The yellow jacket and white shirtsleeve are modelled in much the same way. The ornamentation at the bottom of the skirt is indicated in a thickly applied and quite light yellow paint.
SCIENTIFIC DATA: Kühn[1] describes the results of examination of five paint samples. The white from the angel's sleeve and from the pearl necklace of Manoah's wife have practically the same composition — white lead containing traces of copper and silver. Where, at the lower edge of the painting, white lies over a yellow brown, there were white lead, yellow and brown ochre, smalt, yellow lake and a little bone black, disposed according to a cross-section prepared from this sample in several layers one over the other. The red of the terrain in the foreground yielded red ochre, madder lake, yellow lake, white lead, vermilion, smalt and black. The yellow from the burning wood gave yellow ochre, white lead, smalt and vermilion.

X-Rays

One of the films available shows the woman's hands and profile, and confirms the impression the paint surface gives of the manner of painting — very bold, using broad and mainly short brushstrokes. The fact that the image of the hands, especially the index finger of her right hand, differs somewhat from the final result can perhaps be explained by assuming a light underpainting. A smaller shape that shows up light by the thumbs can also be made out to some extent underneath worn paint at the surface, but cannot be interpreted. The other film, of the yellow garment showing beneath the cloak, reveals that this passage was arranged somewhat differently, with shapes projecting rather further to the left and with a diagonal fold that is no longer visible. The pattern of the brushwork shows, here as well, the characteristics already described; scattered highlights indicate the brocade.

Sumowski[2] mentions an X-ray of the top lefthand corner, but this was not available to us.

Fig. 2. Detail (1 : 2)

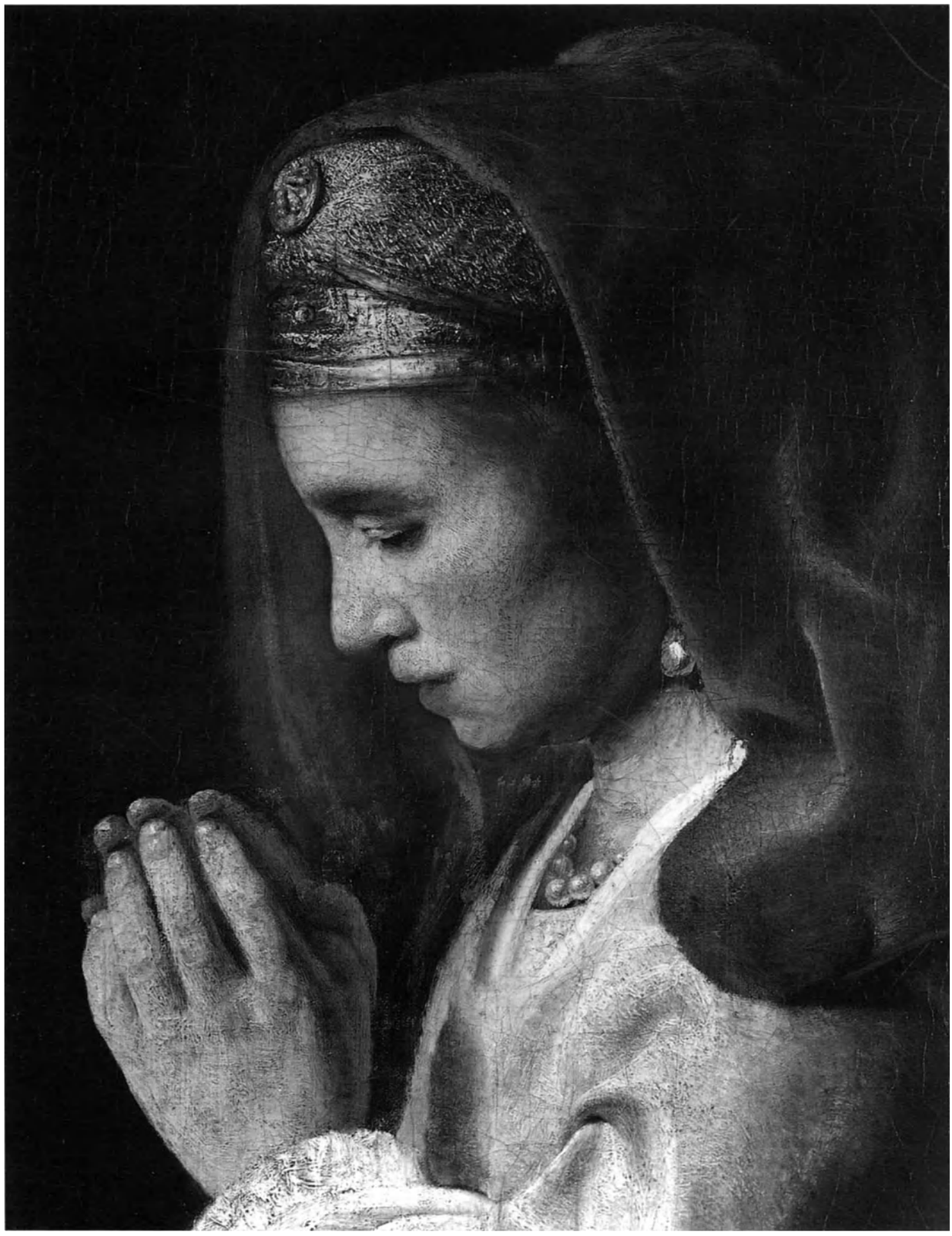
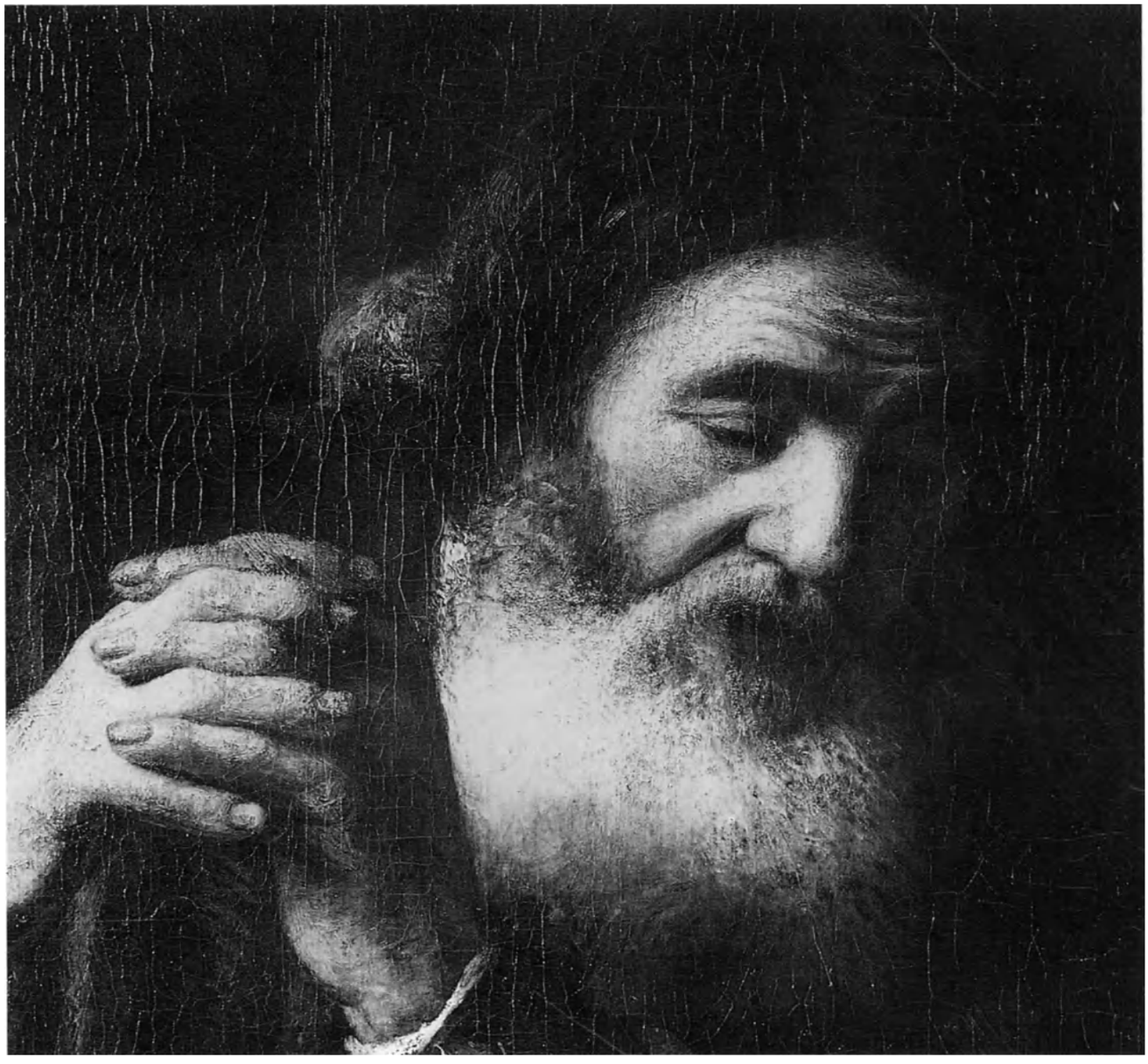


Fig. 3. Detail (1 : 2)



Signature

On the extreme right on the roof, in black <*Rembrandt f/1641*>. The inscription runs upwards to the right, and the letters and figures are so clumsy and uncharacteristic in shape that they cannot be seen as authentic.

Varnish

A layer of yellow varnish somewhat hampers observation.

4. Comments

The painting is quite idiosyncratic in its execution and approach. A typical feature of the execution is the strong concentration on the two main figures which are worked up — partly in broad shapes and sometimes in a fair degree of detail — in pronounced colours such as salmon pink, deep red, yellow and white with greys and black. Materials — both human skin and hair and the shiny silk, falling in narrow, straight folds, and the heavier velvet — are rendered with a clearly visible brushwork but are highly evocative. The area at the lower left shows, in mostly broad strokes, a cursory yet extremely convincing rendering of the sacrificial fire, and the suggestion of material in the burning wood and blood-spattered animal is vivid. Far less attention has been paid to the mostly dark surroundings, so far as the circumstances in which the picture was examined and its condition, which was not entirely clear everywhere, allow this to

be judged. A problem in itself is presented by the figure of the angel, which has not only been painted over the background after this had already been painted but is done in such an inferior manner that it is hard to imagine that the figure comes from the same hand as the rest of the painting; this will be discussed as a separate issue below.

The approach evident in the painting is marked by a static quality, both in the figures and in the whole composition. The background is formed by a few long horizontals and repeated verticals that indicate a projecting roof and staircase, the windows and a door in a house-wall running parallel to the picture plane. The figures, with their sharply described plasticity, stand out against this geometrically structured background; the woman is seen exactly in profile, the man almost square-on and (though his posture and gesture express fright and awe) as motionless as the woman. The painting is Rembrandtesque in the widest sense of the word, especially in the way darkness predominates in a space where the figures receive the full light. Yet neither the formal features nor the execution make it credible that this is a work by Rembrandt (or indeed from his circle) from the early 1640s, as the inscription would have one believe. The highly static composition argues against this, especially when one remembers how entirely differently the Manoah theme was handled, in dramatic and diagonally-arranged compositions, by Rembrandt and his followers around 1640 (cf. inter alia drawings attributed to Rembrandt in Paris and Berlin, Ben. 179 and 180; a painting by Flinck, dated 1640, at Queens University, Kingston, Canada, see Von Moltke *Flinck*, no. 52 and Sumowski *Gemälde* II, no. 617; and a painting in Budapest attributed to Flinck, Von Moltke, p.227 no.16). The execution does not point to the early 1640s, either in the mostly quite broad and short and hardly graphic brushstroke, or in the colour-scheme. A similarity has been sought in the latter with the *Night watch* of 1642[2] (no. A 146), but comparison tends rather to reveal substantial differences — not only are the warmer and cooler tints in the figures in the Dresden painting, both red and yellow, more clearly articulated, but they are more self-contained than in the *Night watch*, where the contrast effect serves mainly to give a suggestion of depth. Rather than the colour-scheme of the *Night watch* one recognizes here something of the use made of colour by Rembrandt's pupils Bol and Flinck in the 1650s in works done for the Amsterdam Town Hall. The composition, too, points to the 1650s, with its 'classical' simplicity and tautness of structure. When one adds to all this the evident lack of reliability of the signature - already present in 1757 (see *6. Graphic reproductions*) — there seems sufficient reason to doubt the attribution to Rembrandt and the date of 1641, and to think rather in terms of a pupil's work from the 1650s.

Though Martin[3] mentioned doubts about the Rembrandt attribution as early as 1936, most authors still held to it, mainly because of the inscription. A complication in this respect was posed by three drawings closely linked to the painting, one in Dresden, one in the Stiftung Oskar Reinhart in Winterthur, and one in Stockholm (Ben. 974, 976 and 975; our figs. 4, 5 and 6), the style of which seems to indicate a date considerably later than the 1641 given on the painting. Valentiner[4] had difficulty, as far back as 1925, in reconciling this style with the idea that the drawings were preliminary studies for the painting of 1641, but he still held to this in 1951[5]. Meanwhile Saxl[6] had found in the painting a contradiction between the 'simplicity of the background and the general impression of severity' on the one hand and 'the vivid colouring of the man and woman and the detailed painting of their heads and dresses' on the other; he felt that the angel must be a later addition, no earlier than the very end of the 1640s. Moreover, he saw the drawing in the Reinhart collection as a copy, accurate to within a few details, of the painting; this drawing would subsequently have been simplified with bold penstrokes which Ludwig Münz had suggested to him were made by Rembrandt. Saxl's conclusion was that the three drawings were sketches by Rembrandt, drawn around 1650 in preparation for an alteration to the painting done in 1641, involving mainly the addition of the angel. This theory was at first accepted in 1957 by Benesch — though in his comments on drawings Ben. 974-976 he thought in terms not of a correction to the painting but of a second version. The theory was also to a large extent adopted by Sumowski[2], though with modifications. In the first place this author goes further than Saxl in his criticism of the painting, pointing to the resemblance to Rembrandt's etching of *The angel leaving Tobit and his family* of 1641 (B. 43; fig. 7), of which we shall have more to say later. On this he based the suggestion that the painting, complete with the angel was in fact, on the evidence of the signature and date, produced in Rembrandt's workshop in 1641, but was done mainly by a pupil — probably Jan Victors — and only with help from Rembrandt. Of the three drawings, Sumowski saw that in Winterthur as a pupil's work corrected by Rembrandt (as Münz had thought), the Dresden drawing as being done by another pupil after the painting, and the Stockholm drawing as a corrected version by Rembrandt of the 1641 composition. Sumowski likewise dated all three drawings in the 1650s; he thought they had been produced as an exercise Rembrandt set his pupils, using the Dresden painting as the point of departure. We can but agree with Clark's conclusion[7]: 'The objections to all these theories are obvious, and it seems to me that only one answer is convincing; that the Dresden Manoah was

Fig. 4. Attributed to W. Drost, *Manoah's sacrifice*, pen and bistre, 19.7 × 17.2 cm (Ben.974). Dresden, Staatliche Kunstsammlungen Dresden Kupferstich-kabinett



Fig. 5. Attributed to W. Drost, *Manoah's sacrifice*, pen and bistre, wash and white bodycolour, 19 × 28 cm (Ben.976). Winterthur, Sammlung Oskar Reinhart



not painted in 1641, and is not by Rembrandt'. The Rembrandt attribution was also meanwhile doubted by De Vries[8]. Gerson[9] agreed with Sumowski's suggestion that Jan Victors was mostly responsible for it in 1641 — a suggestion that has little to recommend it; whatever one may say against the painting, it has none of the rather trivial emphaticness and overdone colour that characterize Victors' works. As has already been said, the character of the painting itself — quite apart from the connexion with drawings that show the style of the 1650s — indicates that it relates to a later phase of the production of Rembrandt and his school. Benesch[10] reached a similar conclusion. He thought, in 1963, that the Winterthur drawing was a pupil's work corrected by Rembrandt, from the 1650s and he ascribed the painting for the most part to the same anonymous pupil. Rembrandt would have added only a few broadly painted passages - the flames on the left and the indication of the terrain, the angel and the impasto parts of Manoah's clothing — and have appended his signature and the date 1641, the year in which, according to Benesch, the painting was intended to have been done.

So much for opinions on the painting. Research on the drawings has meanwhile advanced further (see in particular W.R. Valentiner, *Rembrandt. Des Meisters Handzeichnungen* II, 1934, pp. XXXI-XXXIII; idem in: *The Art Quarterly* 2, 1939, pp. 295-325; D. Pont in: *O.H.* 75, 1960, pp. 205-221; Sumowski *Drawings* III, pp. 1185ff). Valentiner was the first to connect part of a group of drawings that Lugt had already attributed to an unknown Rembrandt pupil with Willem Drost, the still today rather mysterious artist who must have been a pupil of Rembrandt around 1650, later according to Houbraken stayed in Rome, and after that worked in Venice. The few paintings that are known by him were discussed by Valentiner in 1939, and Sumowski made further mostly convincing attributions in 1969 and 1983 (W. Sumowski in: *Pantheon* 27, 1969, pp. 373-383; Sumowski *Gemälde* I, pp.608ff; cf. also K. Langedijk in: *Mitteilungen des Kunsthistorischen Institutes in Florenz* 22, 1978, pp. 363-365). An important starting-point for this expansion was provided by Pont, who in 1960 examined more closely a number of drawings from the group already mentioned above, and who substantially reinforced the Drost attribution when he recognized Drost's hand in the painting of *Ruth and Naomi* (probably a fragment) in Oxford (cf. fig. 8) that had previously been credited to Barent Fabritius, together with a directly associated drawing in Bremen (Ben. C 100). Sumowski later, in 1980, listed 23 drawings as being by Drost, almost twice as many as Pont, inter alia the drawing mentioned earlier of *Manoah's sacrifice* in Winterthur (Ben. 976; Sumowski *Drawings* III, no. 561).

We cannot enter here into a critical discussion of the group of drawings now attributed to Drost, but some remarks are needed for an interpretation of the Dresden painting. A group that initially included a number of drawings of secondary interest has gradually been inflated with several drawings that were up until recently regarded as undoubted Rembrandts. This is not surprising; what the various authors describe as stylistic features of the drawings attributable to Drost — the frequent use of straight, parallel hatching lines that sometimes cross over each other at the ends and sometimes merge, the rapid drawing of foliage, the fin- or clawlike shape given to hands — is derived to some extent from Rembrandt's own manner of drawing (and, it should be added, etching) in the early 1650s. Distinguishing between Rembrandt's drawings from these years and those by Drost will thus depend not so much on the presence or absence of these features as on what

Fig. 6. Attributed to W. Drost, *Manoah's sacrifice*, pen and wash, 23.3 × 20.3 cm (Ben.975). Stockholm, Nationalmuseum



Fig. 7. Rembrandt, *The angel leaving Tobit and his family*, 1641, etching (B.43)



pictorial purpose they serve; in Drost the hatching, for example, not infrequently seems to ignore the plastic structure. With respect to individual motifs one can often detect the pupil's authorship through the way he borrows these from his master's prototype; Pont did this successfully in the case of Drost's *Ruth and Naomi*. Finally, the pupil's personal style can also provide a criterion; Drost, for example, tends to arange his composition parallel to the picture plane, and to accentuate it with strong horizontals. One may assume that in respect of Drost's drawings the sifting process is — even after Sumowski's latest contribution — not yet complete. More particularly it is not easy to see why only one of the three drawings connected with the Dresden *Manoah's sacrifice*, that in Winterthur, should be by Drost, while that in Dresden continues to be attributed to another pupil and the one in Stockholm to Rembrandt himself. The three drawings range from a cursory sketch (in Dresden) to a preliminary drawing worked up in chiaroscuro (in Stockholm); in style of drawing, however, all three closely resemble both each other and a typical Drost drawing like the Berlin *Hagar and Ishmael in the desert* (Ben. A 74, Sumowski *Drawings* III, no. 551). It is reasonable to suppose that all three are by the same hand, that of Drost, and that they can be looked on as preparatory sketches for the Dresden painting which (as we shall argue below) may also be attributed to Drost[11].

Putting the three drawings in order of production remains somewhat speculative. In the Dresden sketch the figures are placed to the right of centre, while on the other side the angel — facing them — ascends above the altar with his arm raised; the figure is recognizable, from the gaps at the kneejoints and the flat soles to the feet, as a lay-figure. The composition has a vertical format with an arched top, and depth is indicated mainly by a house on the right seen in perspective, with a projecting roof and an entrance in which a figure can be seen. In the other two drawings — one with a horizontal format, the other vertical and again with an arched top – the setting is different: at some distance there is a wall with a door between two windows, above these a projecting roof, and above this again in one case possibly a few more windows. Furthermore the smoke rising from the fire on the altar in the foreground acts as a repoussoir at the upper left, on one side of the figures, and a tree and some shrubs on the right do the same on the other side; the figures have been moved a little towards the centre. In the main this solution matches that adopted in the painting, where the strong horizontals and verticals of the house-wall — in itself an un-Rembrandtlike background — recur though (so far as can be seen from the painting today) with less emphasis on the smoke on the left and vegetation on the right, which is reduced to a vaguely-seen shrubbery and something that looks like a climber on the roof-tiles. The figures underwent a number of changes. In the Dresden drawing they form a rather insignificant group that lacks coherence through both of them being the same size and both leaning to the left; their configuration seems (in reverse) to be based on that of Tobit and his son in Rembrandt's 1641 etching of *The angel leaving Tobit and his family* (B. 43; fig. 7). In the Reinhart drawing they are still the same size, but Manoah is reversed compared to the figure in the Dresden drawing; he holds his clasped hands higher, and his bent right leg can be clearly distinguished; in this he strongly resembles another Rembrandt figure — that of Tobit with the disappearing angel in a drawing in Oxford (Ben. 638a) — and this is roughly how he appears in

the painting. The kneeling figure of his wife is here given the erect stance she has in the painting, and which reminded Kenneth Clark of a Leonardesque Madonna. In the Stockholm drawing the woman's pose is much the same, but Manoah is seen from the front and shown wholly prostrate. This motif has not been taken over into the painting, but something has been kept of the difference in height between the erect kneeling woman — firm in her belief — and the cringing man, who having recognized the angel of the Lord is afraid he will die (Judges 13:22–23); the result is a group forming an asymmetrical pyramid seen in none of the drafts. The angel, finally, shows in the Dresden drawing and that in Stockholm the same features of a lay-figure hung up (in each case at a slightly different angle) and with the addition of wings and, in the lastnamed drawing, of a gown; in the Winterthur work he can be hardly if at all made out in the indication of the flame in which, according to the bible text, he ascended — at most there seems to be a hint of two legs, and the rest of the figure may perhaps have been lost through the drawing having been cut down. If one assumes that all three drawings are preparations for the painting, there is no room for Saxl's speculation about the supposed initial absence of the angel in the painting. It does remain to be explained how the angel came to be in his present form and position, painted clumsily and on top of another layer of paint.

This question is directly linked with that of whether we are today seeing the painting in its original format. With no physical evidence to go on, one feels inclined from a comparison with the three drawings to think we are not. It is hard to suppose that the gown of Manoah's wife was originally cut off by the frame on the right, or that the altar-stone would not have stood clear of the frame; all three drawings have the fire less tight up to the lefthand edge. The canvas appears to have been trimmed at the right, bottom and left, and this probably applies even more strongly to the top. If one can see in the Stockholm drawing a kind of modello for the painting — and the execution suggests that it is — , then the painting must initially have had an arched top and have been taller than it was wide; it would then have measured roughly 360 × 340 cm. In that case the angel would have been a good deal further over to the left and further up, and it seems - from the photograph! — not impossible that light traces in the extreme lefthand top corner of the present painting have something to do with his drapery in the original position. The presentday angel, quite evidently painted on top of the paint of the house in the background, would then have been done at the time the size was altered. This must at all events have been prior to the publication of Jacobus Houbraken's print in 1757 (see *6. Graphic reproductions*, 1). The fact that a white lead was used with near enough the same composition as white paint elsewhere in the painting (see *Paint layer*, SCIENTIFIC DATA) cannot be taken as an objection to this assumption, since the composition of white lead is virtually constant. The idea that the present angel is a later addition would explain the clumsy execution which cannot reasonably be ascribed to the author of the painting. The singular feature of the angel not having wings — and thus being interpreted more as the 'man of God', the name given to him in the bible text — should then be regarded not so much as an iconographic problem connected with Rembrandt and his school as a later, and theologically quite understandable, notion.

And lastly, there is the question of whether attributing the painting to Drost would accord with what little one knows of this artist. The main material for comparison is the Oxford painting of *Ruth and Naomi* already mentioned (fig. 8), because — apart from the Kassel *Noli me tangere*, dated convincingly by Sumowski (*Gemälde* I, no. 315) in the 1660s — it is the only painting with a composition of full-length figures, even though on the evidence of the related drawing in Bremen it is probably only a fragment. The similarities with this work, produced under Rembrandt's direct influence, must be described as substantial. They involve first and foremost the highly characteristic colour-scheme — various tints of yellow, salmon red with green-grey accents, and a fairly warm flesh colour with grey shadows, all contrasting with a variety of browns and black. Besides this, however, the shaping of folds in heavy materials — in the cloak of Naomi and of Manoah's wife — is very similar, as is the way brushwork is used for the purposes of modelling and rendering materials without losing its characteristic stamp. The relation between the lit, colourful figures seen against a mostly dark and somewhat empty background is the same (and in both instances this treatment has, it seems, prompted to a more or less considerable reduction in the size). In both compositions there is a pure profile figure combined with a frontal figure with the head turned aside, and the facial type of Manoah's wife is very close to that of Naomi. The resemblances between the two paintings are such that there can be no reasonable doubt that they are from one and the same hand. Moreover, one gets the impression that they are not all that far separated in time. The Dresden painting seems not only the more ambitious of the two in scale and size, but also the more mature. The relationship between colour intensity and three-dimensional effect is more persuasive than in the *Ruth and Naomi*, where the lighter yellow of Naomi's cloak somewhat mars the balance between the two figures, and the majestically kneeling wife of Manoah is an invention of the first order — based, admittedly, on Rembrandt's Tobit figure in the 1641

Fig. 8. W. Drost, *Ruth and Naomi*, canvas 89 × 71 cm. Oxford, Ashmolean Museum



etching. It remains difficult to arrive at a precise dating for the Dresden painting; one might get the impression that Drost's *Bathsheba* dated 1654 in the Louvre (no. RF 1349), tellingly described by Sumowski (in: *Pantheon* 27, 1969, p. 375) as 'wie ein dunkler Vermeer', represents a later stage in the artist's development than the *Manoah's sacrifice*; but from the fact that Drost used in the same year a broad, Rembrandt-like manner of painting in a work like the *Old woman with a knife* (private collection; Sumowski *Gemälde* I, no. 320) it does seem that he had varying styles at his command at one and the same time. For the moment one may assume that he painted this picture, which in a way can count as his masterpiece, around the mid-1650s and in any case before his stay in Italy, which must have run from about 1657.

The theme, which had already appeared repeatedly in works by Lastman and his circle, plays a part in the production of Rembrandt and his pupils in the 1630s. As has already been said, Sumowski rightly pointed out that the composition of the Dresden painting is unlike any version of the Manoah theme by Rembrandt or his followers in the years around 1640 (or, for that matter, a number of drawings attributed to Rembrandt from the 1650s, cf. Ben. 895 and 980), but it does have a connexion with Rembrandt's 1641 etching of *The angel leaving Tobias and his family* (B. 43).

Thus although the design of the painting does

clearly have its roots in the work of Rembrandt, one has to conclude that Drost has — certainly if one compares his output with that of many other Rembrandt pupils — put a personal stamp on his work. The way the two motionless figures of Manoah and his wife are placed, with a strong expression and engaging colour, in a setting marked by taut horizontals and verticals reveals a highly gifted and original artist.

5. Documents and sources

None.

6. Graphic reproductions

1. Engraving by Jacobus Houbraken (Dordrecht 1698 — Amsterdam 1780), published in: *Receuil d'Estampes d'après les plus célèbres tableaux de la Galerie Royale de Dresde* II, 1757, no. 47. Inscribed: *P. Hutin del. — J. Houbraken sculps.*; to the right of the arms of Poland and Saxony: *Tableau de Rembrant / de la Galerie Roïale de Dresde. Haut 8. pieds 7. pouces. Large 10. pieds* [246.3 × 283.2 cm]; on the left the same inscription in Italian. Reproduces the painting in reverse in its present format. More detail can be seen in the background than in the painting in its present state, but the pantiles are not rendered individually. At the point where the painting now carries the unreliable signature and date of 1641 there is (not in reverse) *'Rembrandt f/1641'*. The print can be dated between 1748, when Pierre Hutin entered the service of Augustus III of Poland (Friedrich August II of Saxony), and 1757 when it was published. At that time the painting was evidently already in its present state and carried the inscription seen on it today.

7. Copies

None.

8. Provenance

– Acquired for the Elector's collection before the middle of the 18th century; described as a Rembrandt in the inventory begun in 1747 by Pietro Guarienti (d. 1753) under no. 177 as 'opera delle sue più insigni'[12]. [Johann Anton Riedel and Christian Friedrich Wenzel], *Verzeichniss der Gemälde in der Churfürstl. Gallerie zu Dresden*, Leipzig 1771 (first French edition 1765), p. 63 no. 338: 'Manoah und seine Frau bringen ein Opfer, währen der Zeit fährt der Engel, welcher ihnen die Geburt des Simson verkündigt hatte, nach dem Himmel. Auf Leinwand 10 Fuss breit, 8 Fuss 7 Zoll hoch [= 246.3 × 283.2 cm]'.

9. Summary

The painting's execution and approach cannot be reconciled with Rembrandt's style in the early 1640s, nor with that of any of his followers in that period. The inscription 'Rembrandt f 1641' now on the painting already by itself makes an unreliable impression, besides giving a misleading idea of the date of the work. The classical construction of the composition, together with the colour-scheme, points rather to a date in the 1650s, i.e. the same period as three drawings of virtually the same composition. All three were usually looked on as Rembrandts until one of them was attributed to an unknown Rembrandt pupil and another to Willem Drost. It is however far more likely that all three of them should be seen as sketches by Drost, made in preparation for the painting which this artist must have produced during the 1650s. This interpretation is all the more plausible since the painting shows quite decisive stylistic similarities to the Oxford *Ruth and Naomi*, which is attributed to Drost on solid grounds. It must be assumed that the painting has been reduced on all sides, but especially at the upper edge where two of the three drawings show an arched top; this must have happened in any case before 1750 or thereabouts. The figure of the angel, which in its present state can hardly be from the same hand as the rest of the painting, may have been added to replace an earlier version on the lost upper part of the canvas.

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2 Sumowski 1957/58, pp. 223–237, esp. 227–231.
3 W. Martin, *De Hollandsche schilderkunst in de zeventiende eeuw II, Rembrandt en zijn tijd*, Amsterdam [1936], p. 505.
4 W.R. Valentiner, *Rembrandt. Des Meisters Handzeichnungen* I, Berlin-Leipzig [1925] (Kl.d.K. XXXI), no. 135.
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10 O. Benesch, 'Uber den Werdegang einer Komposition Rembrandts', *Bulletin du Musée Hongrois des Beaux-Arts* 22 (1963), pp. 71–83; republished as: 'On the development of a composition by Rembrandt' in: O. Benesch, *Collected writings* I, London 1970, pp. 235–243.
11 J. Bruyn, '[Review of] W. Sumowski, *Gemälde der Rembrandt-Schüler* I, in: *O.H.* 98 (1984), pp. 146–162, esp. 153–158.
12 Cat. *Gemäldegalerie. Alte Meister, Dresden* 1979, p. 269.

C 84 David's parting from Jonathan

LENINGRAD, THE HERMITAGE MUSEUM, NO. 713

HDG 38; BR. 511; BAUCH 24; GERSON 207

1. Summarized opinion

A reasonably well preserved work that must have been painted in Rembrandt's immediate circle in the early 1640s.

2. Description of subject

The scene is (most probably) based on 1 Samuel 20, in particular verses 41–43. This relates how Saul's son Jonathan and David, when the latter fled from Saul, renewed the friendship that had grown up between them after David slew Goliath. When Saul fell into a rage on the second day of David's absence, Jonathan went out with a young lad in the early morning to where David was hiding by the stone Ezel; as he had promised he gave David a sign, by shooting an arrow, that Saul was seeking to kill him. After Jonathan had sent his servant back to the city, David came out of hiding 'and fell on his face to the ground, and bowed himself three times: and they kissed one another, and wept one with another, until David exceeded.'

Jonathan stands in the foreground, lit evenly from the left and facing the viewer; before him David has his back to the viewer and both forearms and his head against Jonathan's chest. The latter has his left arm round David, whose left arm he supports with his right hand. Jonathan wears a large turban with a white plume in a gold clasp. Over his shoulders hangs a wide, light grey-green cloak with a gold-embroidered edge (or a coat draped over the shoulders — a sleeve seems to be hanging down on the left). Beneath this can be seen a soft green tunic with a wide band of gold embroidery and a fringe; round his waist he has a finely-pleated green sash with dangling ends. David's long blond hair hangs in waves over his light salmon-pink tunic, which has two horizontal bands of gold embroidery. He wears a pinkish red sash round his waist, and over the right shoulder a golden-yellow bandolier from which a richly-worked sword in a scabbard hangs by two chains. There are spurs on his boots.

To the right alongside David's feet, next to some small plants, lies a dull red cloak and, partly covered by this, a quiver of arrows and (possibly) a bow. Behind them, above scarcely-lit bushes, rises a wall built of large stone blocks and partly covered by foliage — evidently David's hiding-place — with what appears to be drapery hanging in front of it at the extreme top. The foreground on the far left is occupied by a gnarled tree-stump. Between this and a stone (the stone Ezel?) behind Jonathan there is a vista over trees towards a city that, to judge by a large polygonal central building that rises above the houses and is flanked by two large pillars (Jachin and Boaz, according to 1 Kings 7:21), must be Jerusalem (with Solomon's Temple, though this had not yet been built). The sky shows a fairly light patch on the left, but is otherwise filled with mostly dark grey clouds.

3. Observations and technical information

Working conditions

Examined on 27 August 1969 (J.B., S.H.L.) in good daylight and out of the frame, with the aid of five X-ray films covering almost the whole of the painting; prints of these were received later.

Support

DESCRIPTION: Oak panel, grain vertical 73(± 0.3) × 61.5 (± 0.1) cm. Single plank. Planed down at the back to a thickness of *c.* 0.7 cm, cradled and reinforced at various places with small glued-on pieces of wood; this has to do with old damages and repairs some of which must have taken place before the ground was applied. Ground and paint appear to run unbroken across a number of insertions — a quite large and roughly square piece (*c.* 11 × 13 cm) at the top to left of centre, two much smaller pieces adjoining this to left and right and respectively square and triangular in shape, and a small rectangular piece at the righthand edge *c.* 17 cm from the top. Furthermore, small pieces of the panel were broken off at the top left and bottom right corners after it had been painted, and were re-attached. A more or less triangular piece is missing at the top edge, to the right of centre, and the gap has been made good with filling material. On the back a hole on the left, level with David's head, has likewise been stopped. Cracks in the ground and paint layer, described below, are unconnected with the grain pattern.
SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

Ground

DESCRIPTION: Shows through light at many thinly painted places — in the sky, the landscape and the architecture on the right. Since, moreover, the grain structure is not visible in relief in these areas, it may be assumed that the ground has been applied more thickly than usual, probably in connexion with the repairs to the panel already been mentioned. This uncommon thickness may have to do with the strange cracks seen in the upper part of the panel — one running convoluted towards the right from the broken-off and re-attached piece at the top left, another winding sinuously down to the left from the centre of the missing piece at the upper edge to above the temple, and a third running in a vague curve upwards to the left from the insertion at the righthand edge.
SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

Paint layer

CONDITION: Good, apart from restorations along the joins and cracks, especially in the upper part, and a few overpaintings on the right in the sky and architecture. In the lefthand half of the foreground, and at the signature, there are vertical scratches that give an impression of the paint having been rubbed away somewhat. Craquelure: a very few extremely fine cracks here and there in the thick paint of the figures, which in David's back follow the brushstrokes.
DESCRIPTION: In general the sky and indications of the foreground, architecture, and vista are painted thinly, mostly in greys and browns. Contrasting with this is the thick or very thick paint of the clothes of the figures, done mainly in variations of a soft green and pale salmon pink with a little yellow.

The sky is brushed thinly in lighter and darker greys and, to the right, a little brown-grey. Linking to this is the wall, rendered with thin strokes of lighter and darker grey with the foliage indicated with thicker strokes of green-brown and grey-green. The view of the city is done with areas of mostly translucent brownish (and occasionally pink and green) paint with thicker contours that become dark brown lower down and a lighter brown and grey higher up; the small trees seen to the right below the temple are shown rather shapelessly in a pale green. The trees in the middle ground are indicated vaguely in a thick and somewhat uneven dark green-brown and browns, and a rather brighter green-brown towards the right. The unclearly defined stone near to Jonathan on the left is painted cursorily in a quite thin grey with some brown in the shadow. The tree-stump on the left is done sketchily in mostly translucent browns with some grey and ochre yellow and a touch of carmine red along the righthand edge. The foreground is laid in in thin browns in which one can see apparently underlying vertical brushstrokes. On top of these there are rather formless strokes of green-grey, with some scratchmarks; one cannot be certain whether this paint is original or a later addition. Along the feet of the figures there is an evenly applied and opaque light grey-brown paint. On the right, the cloak lying on the ground is done in a slightly translucent, matt dark red and browns, while the quiver is in browns with a few yellow highlights; neither in this nor in the adjacent plants (painted with some brown, olive green and yellowish edgings) is the suggestion of form more than superficial.

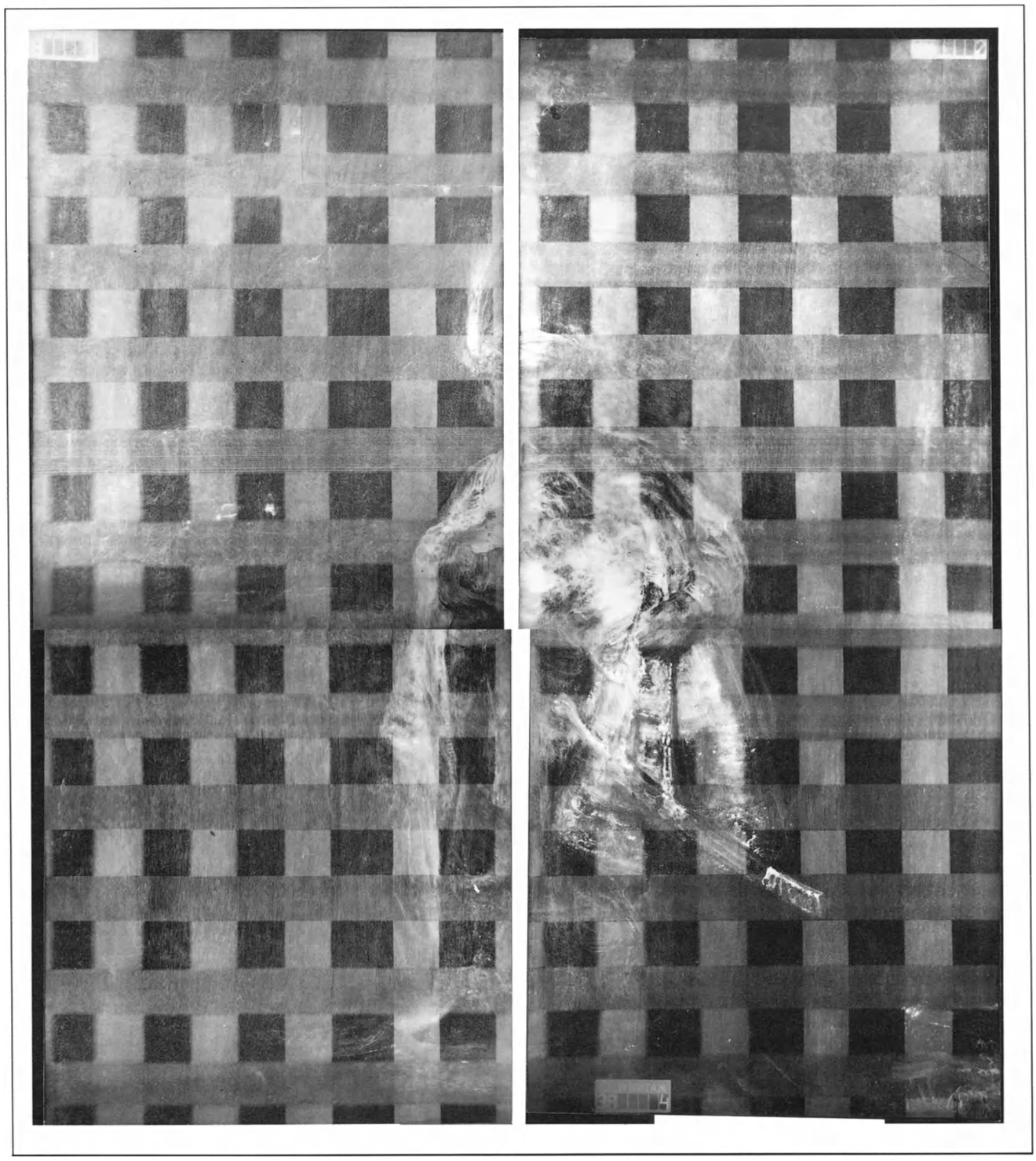
Jonathan's cloak is, apart from a brown patch of shadow on his left shoulder, done mainly in thick paint in a white broken

Fig. 1. Panel 73 × 61.5 cm



with green or, at the edge, with yellow; small strokes of brown suggest a pattern in the edging. Lower down the paint becomes somewhat thinner and more greyish green, and strokes and spots of yellow serve to show sheens of light. The tunic is executed with brushstrokes of a soft green, rather darker green and spots of white that sometimes correspond with folds but mostly do not; in the broad band at the bottom dots of yellow and yellow-white are placed over hazy browns. The sash, painted in a thick dark green with almost black shadows and white points of light, casts a flat green-brown shadow on the

Fig. 2. X-Ray



tunic. Jonathan's face is modelled with rather casually placed strokes of light and dark browns, with some pinkish flesh colour (as a reflexion of light) over a contour shown in black on the right along the chin and some red in the lips. A line of brown marks not only the cast shadow of the turban but also the hair seen on the left behind his ear. The turban is shown with strokes of white mixed with a soft green that are firmly set down but give a rather sketchy impression of form, together with some strokes of green and a little yellow; the jewelled clasp for the plume and a small chain hanging from it are shown mainly with

Fig. 3. Detail (1 : 2)



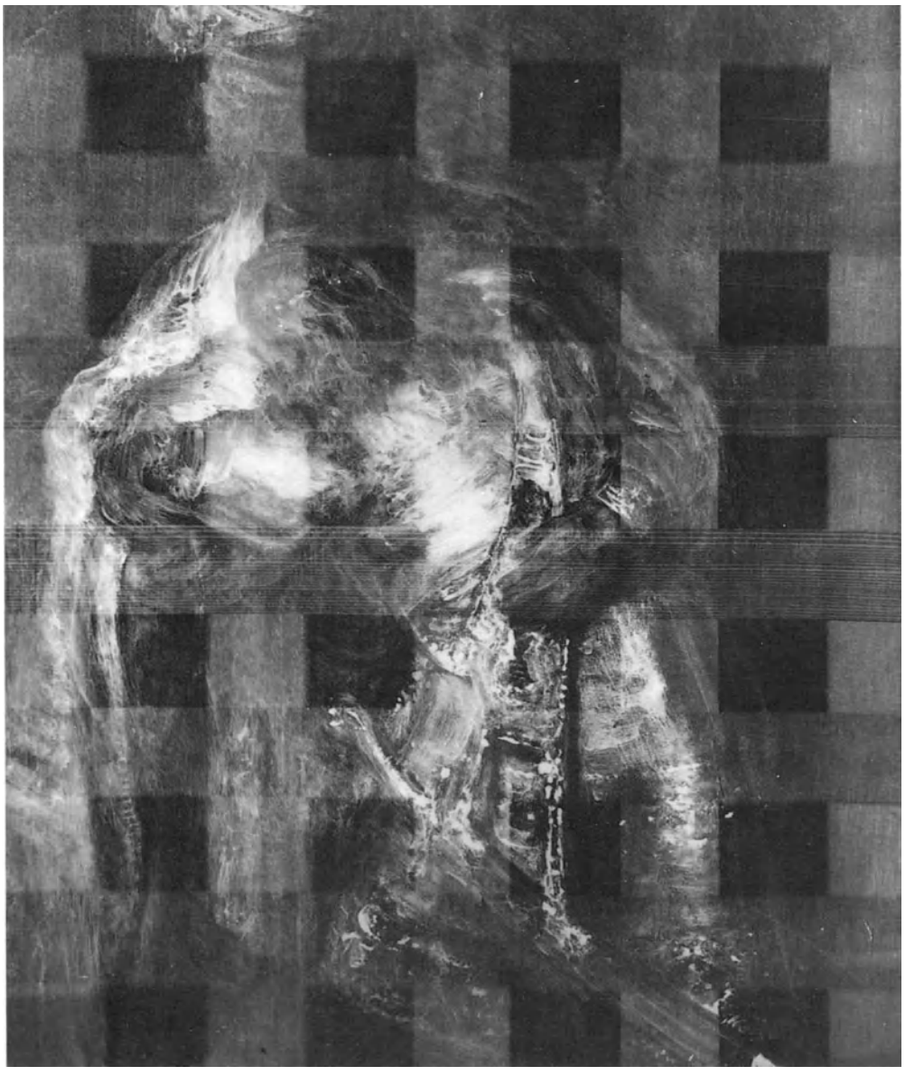
red rather cursorily, on the left with a green-grey stocking
wed with brown and a boot laid in in brown with dark
folds and shadows, and similarly on the right in browns;
urs have a few strokes of carmine red and ochre yellow,
ellow highlights.
TIFIC DATA: None.

gh the cradling appears very distinctly and obtrusively in
diograph, the passages done in thick, light paint show up
clearly, mostly matching what one expects from the
strokes seen at the surface. Jonathan's face shows
ely little radioabsorbency. A light patch along his right
which coincides with opaque light paint at the surface,
the impression of being connected with a contour
tion. Otherwise, there are no changes of form to be seen.

ure

y left of centre by the bottom edge in brown <*Rembrandt :*
>. The very firmly and carefully placed letters and digits,
from perhaps being too rounded (e.g. in the *e, a* and *n*,
ot some suspicion through their prominent placing,

Fig. 4. X-Ray



coupled with the use of a strongly contrasting paint such as one would not expect of Rembrandt.

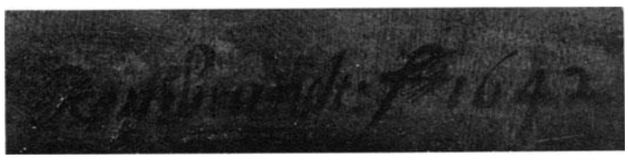
Varnish

A somewhat yellowed varnish hinders observation, though not to any serious extent.

4. Comments

Discussion about this painting in the literature, a survey of which is given by Tümpel[2] and Kuznetsov[1], has always borne on the subject-matter. After the picture had been looked on in the 18th and 19th centuries as *The return of the prodigal son* and then as *The reconciliation of Jacob and Esau* and *The reconciliation of David and Absalom*, it can now be assumed with virtual certainty that the scene is *David's parting from Jonathan*, in line with the title used for the painting in 1713 and 1716 (see *8. Provenance*). In recent times this interpretation was first given for a related drawing by A. Stix (in: *Einige Zeichnungen Rembrandts mit biblischen Vorwürfen. Seminarstudien herausgegeben von Franz Wickhoff*, Innsbruck 1906) and for the painting by Von Baudissin[3]. Loewinson-Lessing[4] and Tümpel[2] shared this opinion. The quiver and bow (*?*) on the ground are in this view of things, together with the rich apparel worn by David, those given him by Jonathan after his victory over Goliath, when they made their first covenant (1 Samuel 18, 1–4). This interpretation seems wholly convincing, even though Schwartz[5] has offered yet another reading according to which it shows the closing scene of Vondel's play *Gebroeders* (brothers), first performed in 1641 and dealing with seven grandsons of Saul delivered by David to the Gibeonites in atonement for what Saul had done to them (2 Samuel 21). This final scene has a dialogue (not a reconciliation, as Schwartz says) between David and the grateful

Fig. 5. Detail with signature (reduced)



Mephibosheth, son of Jonathan, who with his own small son was spared by David because of the latter's friendship with Jonathan. There is insufficient reason to think that the painting depicts this scene. For one thing there are essential motifs lacking — such as Mephibosheth's little son Micha — and, speaking generally, a single scene from a play is too narrow a base to give rise to a new iconography, and for another the painting fits into a whole series of interrelated pictures, paintings and drawings that we shall discuss below and that plainly depict David's parting from Jonathan.

The friendship between David and Jonathan has long been one of the great themes of literature — one calls to mind Abélard's lamentation of David over the dead Jonathan. An illustration of David embracing Jonathan served around 1300, in a manuscript of the treatise *La Somme le Roy* (London, British Museum, Ms. Add. 54180) to exemplify 'Amistie' (cf. E. Millar, *The Parisian miniaturist Honoré*, London 1959, pl. 7). The subject still had all this meaning around 1600; Tümpel mentions a series of prints by Philip Galle of the life of David, published in Antwerp in 1575 as an illustration of Bened. Aria Montanus, *David. Hoc est: virtutis exercitatissimae probatum Deo spectaculum...*, no. 13 of which , with the motto 'Amicitiae verae usus' (the value of true friendship), shows Jonathan shooting the arrow, with in the background the weeping figures of David and Jonathan. There can be hardly any doubt that no. C 84, like works by Lastman, Venant and a number of Rembrandt pupils to be mentioned in a moment, deals with the same subject, with the same meaning.

Unlike the iconographic interpretation, the attribution of the painting has never given rise to discussion; Rembrandt's authorship has never been doubted. This is quite understandable. The composition, with the self-contained group of two figures in front of the holy city lying beneath the still-dark sky of dawning day, has an unmistakeable grandeur; the manner of painting, marked by a fairly distinct brushstroke in the thick parts of the paint layer, and the colour-scheme with its striking contrast between light, broken tints in the figures and the surrounding greys and browns, lend the painting a pronounced individual character. Looked at more closely, the execution however appears hardly in keeping with the character of Rembrandt's work, and more superficial than can be reconciled with the firmness and intensity of his feeling for form. The brushwork, especially in the clothing, only very partially helps the plasticity of form; relatively heavy accents and sheens of light do, admittedly, contribute to the liveliness of the surface, but have very little function where the modelling is concerned. The figures, in particular that of David, also suffer from a certain lack of three-dimensionality; David's upper body seems to merge into that of Jonathan, with a not wholly convincing foreshortening. The numerous highlights in the clothing and David's sword, and the overemphatic — and scarcely explained — reflected light along his pink tunic on the right, result in a charming whimsy rather than an effective suggestion of shape or material. Jonathan's hands are limp and unarticulated. In general, the handling of paint is marked by a rather rudimentary indication of form on the one hand and a decorative effect from the colour and brushstroke on the other, and lacks the formal clarity that Rembrandt usually achieves by a variation of light and colour and by strong shadow accents. The most unusual colour-scheme contributes to this; the combination of thick pale green and pale pink paint with numerous small colour accents helps create the decorative effect, and must be termed almost inconceivable for Rembrandt. This unusual character is also reflected in the peculiar pattern of radioabsorbency seen in the X-ray. A comparison with Rembrandt's work from around 1642, the date given in the inscription — for instance the Detroit *Visitation* of 1640 (no. A 138) — also reveals how much weaker the spatial construction of the whole appears in the Leningrad painting; to the left of the figures especially the scarcely recognizable stone and vaguely shown trees form an unhappy transition between the foreground and the view of Jerusalem. The very prominently placed signature does not inspire enough confidence to be able to serve as evidence of Rembrandt's authorship.

The mere fact that the attribution of the painting to Rembrandt himself has never so far been doubted does point to a close connexion with his work. The handling of paint (despite the differences described above) contributes to the definition of form in both the figures and the architecture in a way that is clearly similar to what is seen in Rembrandt's work from the early 1640s. The strongest resemblance in this respect is with an otherwise scarcely comparable work like the *Night watch* (no. A 146), completed in 1642, especially with the figure of Willem van Ruytenburch; the treatment of David's clothing is however more weakly structured, and the use of colour cannot really be called the same — the soft, pastel-like tints of almost equal tonal value that are placed side-by-side in the Leningrad painting do not occur in any autograph Rembrandt work. The general aspect of the figures, with their thickset proportions and garments hanging in heavy folds, is reminiscent of the etching of *The triumph of Mordechai* (B. 40), which is usually dated *c.* 1641; the dome seen in the distance here also somewhat resembles the

Fig. 6. F. Venant, *David's parting from Jonathan*, (1630?), panel 30 × 47 cm. Paris, Fondation Custodia (Coll. F. Lugt)



temple in the painting. The date of 1642 inscribed on the painting does, on the basis of these similarities with dated Rembrandts, seem not unacceptable, so the inscription could well show the true date of the work, and as we have assumed in other cases as well could have been appended by a pupil in the workshop.

Unlike other versions of the subject, in drawings and paintings, done by Rembrandt's predecessors Lastman and Venant and by Rembrandt himself and his followers, the Leningrad painting has the figure of Jonathan seen from the front while David, in front of him, is seen virtually from behind. The rendering of the embrace in this way as a single compact group is certainly one of the positive features of the painting. The reference by Van Gelder[6] and Kuznetsov[1] to Rembrandt's drawing of the *Return of the prodigal son* in Haarlem (Ben. 519) is in these circumstances understandable, even though the connexion is not a direct one and the drawing can hardly be seen as a compositional sketch for the painting, as Schwartz[5] has done. One can tell that the subject did play a certain role in Rembrandt's studio from about 1640 on, from a number of drawings only some of which can be regarded as autograph; there is in particular one in the Louvre, coll. L. Bonnat (Ben. 682), that has been copied several times. That Rembrandt himself handled the subject in later years in a painting is apparent from an IOU given by him to the merchant Lodewijck van Ludick and dated 19 March 1659 or shortly thereafter (Strauss *Doc.*, 1659/15). Rembrandt promises 'te sullen affschilderen en leveren een stuckje schilderije uijtbeeldende de Historie van Jonathan en Davidt, dat hij alreede onderhanden heeft, en dat naerby het eerste jaer naer dato' (to finish and deliver [to Van Ludick] a small painting representing the story of Jonathan and David that he is already working on, and this about a year from this date). It is however difficult to see how the painting referred to here could be identical with that in Leningrad, as Van Gelder[6] has suggested and Schwartz[5], too, supposed; there is no trace of Rembrandt's manner of painting from *c.* 1660 to be found in it and there are no clear indications of a later reworking — certainly not (as Schwartz believed) in the repairs to the panel, which must to a great extent have been done before the ground was applied.

Among the pupils who dealt with the subject one has to mention first of all Gerrit Willemsz. Horst. A painting (fragment?) that was at that time in the Dutch art trade was convincingly attributed to him by W.R. Valentiner (*Rembrandt. Des Meisters Handzeichnungen* II, Stuttgart-Berlin [1934], pp. X–XV, fig. 5); it would seem to be an early work, from before 1640. Another version of the subject seems probably also to be by Horst, though datable rather later at around 1645, and is on canvas of almost the same dimensions as no. C 84 (74 × 60 cm; coll. Mme L.H.R., sale Paris, Hôtel Drouot, 13 March 1924, no. 16 as Barent Fabritius and signed with *R.H.* monogram). Horst is known to have bought, in May 1646, 'een stuck schildery van Davit en Jonatans by meester Lasman geschildert met een ebbe lyst' (a painting of David and Jonathan by Master Lasman with an ebony frame) (A. Bredius in: *O.H.* 50, 1933, p. 7), and this mention could very well relate to the Lastman painting of 1620 now in Moscow (illustrated by, inter alia, Tümpel op. cit.[2], fig. 24), on which the painting attributable to Horst seems to be a variation.

Directly connected with the Leningrad painting are

Fig. 7. Attributed to F. Bol, *David's parting from Jonathan*, pen and wash, 17.5 × 13.5 cm. Paris, Louvre, Département des arts graphiques



Fig. 8. Attributed to F. Bol, *David's parting from Jonathan*, pen and wash, 16 × 10.5 cm. Sale Amsterdam, 25 October 1933, no.36



three drawings that Valentiner (loc. cit.) also ascribed to Horst but that Sumowski (*Drawings* I, nos. 230–232) fairly convincingly attributed to Ferdinand Bol (our figs. 7-9). Like others before him, Sumowski saw these three drawings as derivatives of the Leningrad painting. He consequently listed the Amsterdam drawing (which is closest to the painting) as the earliest, and that in the Louvre (the furthest, with David kneeling) as the last. If however one takes into consideration, besides the Leningrad painting, the one by Lastman's younger brother-in-law François Venant (Paris, Fondation Custodia; presumably dated 1630; fig. 6), it is noticeable that various features in the Paris drawing (fig. 7) seem to come from Venant's work — Jonathan's rather unsteady posture, his sash hanging loose over the stomach, the V-shaped neck to his costume (which gives the impression that he has a pointed beard), and the somewhat feeble gesture of Jonathan's left hand which the author of the drawing seems to have taken from his right hand in the Venant painting. A feature that differs — though it is probably taken from a drawing like that attributed to Rembrandt in the Louvre — is the motif of David kissing Jonathan's right hand. A second drawing (fig. 8), the present whereabouts of which is unknown, also shows the traces of Venant's prototype — Jonathan again stands unsteadily, and gestures with his right hand, while David, now standing, has his hands clasped. In the Amsterdam drawing, finally (fig. 9), it is not Jonathan but David who stands with the knees slightly bent, kissing the left hand of Jonathan who has his right arm round David's shoulder; of these three features, we can detect the first and the last in the Leningrad painting. It is clear where the simplest and most obvious solution to the problem of attributing the painting lies; the three drawings attributed to Bol can be read as decreasingly dependent on Venant's prototype and more and more a preparation for the Leningrad work, so that the latter could also come from Bol's hand. Unless one is willing to see in the young Bol a constantly changing and scarcely recognizable artistic personality, it is however difficult to make the painting fit into his early work. Although one can find similarities in certain features — the lack of articulation in the forms and the stereotyped use of sheens of light along contours do occur in, for instance, the 1643 *David's dying charge to Solomon* and especially in the even earlier *Isaac and Esau* (see no. A 119, copies 1 and 2, and figs. 6 and 8) — the heavy application of paint in the figures and background architecture and the associated simplification of form (even in the subtle treatment of Jonathan's face) give the impression of going too far beyond the bounds of Bol's capabilities. While Bol's authorship of the three drawings is a persuasive possiblity, the same cannot be said of the Leningrad painting. The relationship between the drawings and the painting, and where the latter stands among the production of Rembrandt's circle, are thus still something of a

Fig. 9. Attributed to F. Bol, *David's parting from Jonathan*, pen and wash, 17 × 11.1 cm. Amsterdam, Rijksprentenkabinet



puzzle. What can be said is that the theme, and the compositional problems it presented, involved various Rembrandt followers and a few probably partly autograph Rembrandt drawings; the formula that Lastman and Venant had introduced for the subject formed the starting-point for — we have to assume — Horst, Bol and the author of no. C 84.

The subject was still playing a certain role in Rembrandt's workshop in later years, possibly in connexion with the painting mentioned earlier that was intended for Lodewijck van Ludick; cf., for example, a wash drawing in Melbourne by or after Aert de Gelder (Sumowski *Drawings* V, no. 1084), where Jonathan is seated and David kneels beside him, and where Solomon's Temple with the two pillars is again seen in the background.

5. Documents and sources

The inventory of the estate of Harmen Becker, drawn up on 19 October–23 November 1678, included 'een David en Jonathan van Rembrant van Rijn' (A. Bredius in: *O.H.* 28, 1910, p.199). One cannot tell whether this is the same as no. C 84, or as the work destined for Lodewijck van Ludick in 1659 (see *4. Comments*). In this connexion it is perhaps relevant to report that on 4 June 1664 Van Ludick sold a claim on Rembrandt to Harmen Becker (Strauss *Doc.*, 1664/3).

6. Graphic reproductions

None.

7. Copies

None.

8. Provenance

- Coll. Laurens van der Hem, sale Amsterdam 19 April 1713 (Lugt 238), no. 13: 'De Ontmoeting van David en Jonathan, van Rembrant' (105 guilders) (Hoet I, p. 148).
- Coll. Jan van Beuningen, sale Amsterdam 13 May 1716 (Lugt 257), no. 40: 'David en Jonathan, h. 2 en een half v. br. 2 en een half v. [= 70.8 × 70.8 cm] door dezelve [i.e. Rembrandt]' (80 guilders) (Hoet I, p. 202). Bought at this sale by Osip Solovyov, Russian Trade Commissar in Amsterdam, and sent by him to Russia on 30 June 1716 with 120 other paintings 'bought at public and private sales', with a letter in which Rembrandt's *'David and Jonathan'* is mentioned[7].
- Coll. Czar Peter the Great in the Monplaisir pavilion at the Petrodvoretz Palace. Moved to The Hermitage Museum in 1882.

9. Summary

The authenticity of the painting — the subject of which is almost certainly *David's parting from Jonathan* — has up to now never been doubted in the literature. Although the approach to the subject is very like that of Rembrandt, the execution — in particular, the decorative rather than functional brushwork and the use of colour — shows clear departures from his style. A link with drawings that can with tolerable certainty be attributed to Ferdinand Bol suggest that this Rembrandt pupil could also have produced the painting; this idea cannot however be adequately substantiated by a comparison with other paintings that can be regarded as Bol's early work.

REFERENCES

1 Y. Kuznetsov in: *Rembrandt Harmensz van Rijn. Paintings from Soviet Museums*, Leningrad [*c.* 1971], no. 13.
2 C. Tümpel, 'Studien zur Ikonographie der Historien Rembrandts. Deutung und Interpretation der Bildinhalte', *N.K.J.* 20 (1969), pp. 107–198, esp. 140–146. Tümpel 1986, cat. no. 19.
3 K. von Baudissin, 'Anmerkungen zur Rembrandt-Erklärung', *Repertorium für Kunstwissenschaft* 46 (1925), pp. 190–194, esp. 192.
4 V. Loewinson-Lessing in a lecture given in 1956. Cf. J. Białostocki, 'Recent Rembrandt research. Russia — II', *Burl. Mag.* 99 (1957), pp. 421–425, esp.422; E. Fechner, *Rembrandt. Proisvedenija zivopisi v musejach SSSR* (Catalogue of Rembrandt paintings in Soviet museums), Leningrad-Moscow 1964, p. 88; Kuznetsov, op. cit. (note 1).
5 Schwartz 1984, p.224; cf. G. Schwartz, 'Rembrandt's *David and Mephiboseth*: a forgotten subject from Vondel's *Tribute to Lotte Brand Philip*, New York 1985, pp. 166–174.
6 'Die Rembrandt-Forschung im Lichte der Ausstellungen des Jahres 1956', *Kunstchronik* 10 (1957), pp. 117–155, esp. 146.
7 V. Loewinson-Lessing in: *Rembrandt Harmensz van Rijn. Paintings from Soviet Museums*, Leningrad [*c.* 1971], p. 7.

C 85 The departure of the Shunammite woman

LONDON, VICTORIA & ALBERT MUSEUM, CAT. NO. 78

HDG 5; BR. 508; BAUCH 22; GERSON 202

Fig. 1. Panel 39 × 53.2 cm



1. Summarized opinion

A work probably executed in Rembrandt's workshop in 1640, perhaps attributable to Ferdinand Bol. At some time, probably after 1749, a strip of the panel has been replaced, and the background to a large extent overpainted.

2. Description of subject

The subject may be regarded as taken from 2 Kings 4:22–24. After the death of her son, whose birth had been foretold to her by Elisha, the mother asks her husband, a wealthy man of Shunem, to make an ass and one of the young men available to her, so that she might go to the prophet. He does so, though unaware of the death of the boy and his wife's intention of asking the man of God for his help.

In dark surroundings (determined at least in part by later additions and overpainting) the light falls from the left, brightly illuminating the Shunammite woman. She sits side-saddle on the ass, her left foot in a stirrup and her left hand on the saddle, which is covered with a red cloth decorated with blue-green, ochre-coloured and light yellow motifs and hanging down low to the side; in the shadow a round, shiny metal water-bottle hangs from the saddle. The woman's light clothing is in a yellowish white and green, and a white cloth is wound round her head; a long, hanging end is thrown over her arm on the right, and another covers her right hand, raised to her face, evidently to wipe away her tears. She turns towards her husband — an elderly man with a long beard standing in the shadows on the left, clad in a cloak and half-length tunic from which wide cuffs project. His legs are wrapped in puttees, and he wears a turban decorated with a shiny chain. His left hand rests on a stick, while the right is stretched forward in an emphatic gesture. The ass, with head bowed, is held in check by the servant lad, standing on the right and pulling on the halter. Half of the boy's face catches the light, making his headband glisten. He is dressed in a dark green tunic with slashes through which a yellow material can be seen; the bottom is fringed. He wears half-length boots, and a quiver of arrows hangs at his left hip. Immediately to the right of the boy, further back in the dark, there are the figures of women, one of whom is busy drawing water at a well. Further back still, at some distance, rise monumental buildings, the one to the front decorated with blind arches and niches. To the right and top these buildings are hidden from sight by a dark gateway closer to the front; the lefthand part of this, difficult to distinguish, is behind and just to the left of the Shunammite woman. In the dark area on the left, behind the undergrowth in the foreground, one can make out a few cows in the distance, with a herdsman with a staff.

3. Observations and technical information

Working conditions

Examined in May 1968 (B.H., E.v.d.W.) in good light and out of

Fig. 2. X-Ray



the frame, with the aid of six radiographs together covering the whole picture; prints of these and an infrared photograph of the whole were received later.

Support

DESCRIPTION: Oak panel, grain horizontal, 39 × 53.2 cm including a narrow plank 3.5 cm wide that has been added at the top and does not belong to the original panel. The latter comprises a single plank about 0.5 cm thick; the X-rays show the grain to be strongly figured in the centre. A horizontal crack runs from the righthand edge as far as the woman's left arm. The join between the original part of the panel and the plank is strengthened at the back with a strip of (old) canvas. The X-ray provides evidence (see *X-Rays* below) that the added plank once formed part of another, painted panel.

The panel is, in its present format, bevelled along all four sides, though since paper is stuck over it it is difficult to see what this bevelling looks like. The fact that it continues over the added plank would, by itself, be reason to suppose that the latter forms part of the original panel; yet this is contradicted by the abrupt breaking-off of paintstrokes on the original panel at the join, apparent in the radiographs. The absence of any bevelling on the original panel along the join also points to a strip having been lost here. See more under *4. Comments.*
SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

Ground

DESCRIPTION: A light yellowish brown can be seen in the head of the ass, between the ears.
SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

Paint layer

CONDITION: Good, apart from overpainted areas in the background. Craquelure: in the figures there is a varying and fairly fine craquelure. The boy's clothing, by his quiver, shows marked vertical cracks, while elsewhere in the dark paint of the background on the left there are horizontal and very long cracks (up to 4–6 cm); a mainly vertical craquelure is seen in the dark paint on the added plank and on the adjacent part of the gateway.
DESCRIPTION: In the dark parts of the background one can see a relief that is unconnected with the components of the picture visible there today, such as the dark area — which can be read in the IR photograph as a gateway — behind the woman. This gateway, and the view through it, are painted without any great deal of subtlety in black paint that continues onto the added plank; from this it may be concluded that it is a later addition. The figures of the man, ass and boy, and part of the foreground, are done much more thinly; in the visible parts of the animal the paintwork even takes on the appearance of a free brush drawing in partly translucent paint, over an occasionally visible underpainting. In the lit areas of the woman and the saddlecloth the paint is, however, applied with impasto. These passages are

worked up meticulously, using numerous bright colours — white, pink, light yellow-green and blue-green in the woman's figure, and bright brown-red, light red, ochrish yellow, light yellow and blue-green in the cloth. The boy's figure has quite thorough and rather linear detail, though this is done in subdued colours; only the lit side of his face is painted thickly, with a ruddy tint. The man's figure is handled in much the same way, with somewhat translucent paint in the head. The path on which the figures are standing is indicated no more than sketchily, and bordered on the left with plants done in fairly thick paint and on the right with vegetation drawn with relaxed brushstrokes. Between the man's foot and the ass's hoof there is probably a pentimento that has caused a different pattern of craquelure. The women in the right background are also done cursorily, as are the buildings behind (the front one of these is mostly a reddish brown, while the one to the rear is greenish brown). At the lower left the cows and the herdsman with his staff are indicated with a few lines of thin paint; a thin edging of light is placed along the man's lefthand contour with very fine brushstrokes.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

X-Rays

As might be expected from the paint surface, the lit parts of the woman's figure show up very light. In the upper middle background the X-ray shows a rather patchy collection of strokes and touches of radioabsorbent paint that roughly follow the outlines of the figures of the man and woman and of the buildings on the right; the woman's projecting foot did not have a reserve left for it, and along the righthand contour there may also not have been one for part of her back. To the left of the man's figure there is the image of more distinct brushstrokes, running upwards in various directions and, lower down, taking a more or less horizontal and slightly sinuous course; on the left these strokes break off abruptly at the edge of the panel. In this area the radioabsorbency increases sharply towards the bottom, down to a roughly horizontal borderline level with the man's thighs. On the left, against the edge of the panel, this borderline is interrupted by a hard-to-interpret form left as a reserve in the light area. Along the contour of this form there are somewhat pointed, curved strokes of radioabsorbent paint, and similar strokes can also be seen further down. To the right the light area is bordered by the outline of the man's figure, which initially evidently followed a slightly different path from that seen today. At the shoulder the reserve originally ran further to the left, and was later moved to the right using radioabsorbent paint. The projecting fingers of his gesturing hand originally had no reserves left for them; immediately above the occasionally visible rounded projection of the sleeve there is a convoluted stroke of radioabsorbent paint along its contour.

In the rearmost building at the upper right there is the weak image of vertical paintstrokes that partly continue where this building is now covered over with the darker paint of the gateway; these vertical strokes come to an end at the join between the original panel and added plank. In the righthand part of the picture the lit part of the boy's face is the only element that otherwise shows up distinctly. The contours of the ass are seen more vaguely at the lower centre, matching the existing form.

The plank added at the top gives as a whole a lighter image than the adjacent part of the original panel. There is furthermore a group of short, curved strokes of radioabsorbent paint visible to the left of centre and to the right. The former is, one may assume, caused by a thicker priming, while the latter is probably to do with elements (foliage?) of a picture that was painted on the panel of which the added plank once formed a part.

Signature

At the lower right near the bottom edge <*Rembrandt f/1640*>; the carefully lettered script lacks spontaneity and cannot be regarded as authentic.

Varnish

No special remarks.

4. Comments

With regard to both attribution and subject matter the painting, earlier known as *The dismissal of Hagar*, poses problems. But before considering these aspects, it is worth considering the condition in which we find it today.

In its present state the painting comprises an original panel measuring 35.5 × 53.2 cm, and a plank 3.5 cm wide added along the top; as may be deduced from the X-ray image, the latter earlier formed part of another, painted panel. It is covered with fairly heavily crackled black paint, of the same consistency as that used for painting the gateway on the right, the righthand part of which stands out in silhouette while the lefthand part is recognizable almost only in the infrared photograph, as the continuation of an arch. It is not immediately apparent if this is a later overpainting connected with the subsequent addition to the panel, nor what, further to the left, is the extent of the overpainting of an earlier paint layer. The addition of the narrow plank has already been mentioned by Gerson[1], who offered no firm opinion as to whether this formed part of the original panel or was attached later. Bauch[2] opted for the latter, and illustrated the painting without it. This view does in fact appear correct (though one must doubt whether the original top edge of the panel coincided with the present join — see below). Not only does, as the X-ray shows, the flat black on the right with which the gateway is rendered (most unsatisfactorily) cover over part of the buildings that to judge by the interrupted paintstrokes must have continued further up than the present join; there must also have been, on the left, an area with sky and a vista lightening towards the bottom, against which the man's figure stood out relatively dark. It is hard to imagine the painter of the original allowing all of this to disappear beneath the unsubtle dark paint of the present background, especially as the lowlying land on the left, where one suddenly finds a cow and herdsman, now has no evident relationship to the foreground. All of this suggests that the overpainting was done in connexion with the addition of the plank to the top edge at some later date. One gets the impression that something, though not much, of the original composition has been lost at the top. If a painting of *Abraham bidding farewell to Hagar* sold in 1749 is identical with no. C 85, then the height quoted there (measured sight-size, in the frame) for the evidently not yet enlarged panel would have been only a little over 1 cm greater than it is today (see *8. Provenance*). The added plank now

Fig. 3. Detail (1 : 1)



seen would thus have replaced a slightly narrower original strip.

In view of the foregoing, it is obviously only partly possible to form a mental image of the picture's original appearance, and a judgment of it must not be based on the paltry dark background that must be held at least in part responsible for a somewhat unbalanced lighting. One can only assume that the original composition, though on a more modest scale and in an oblong format, bore some resemblance to that of Rembrandt's *Visitation* dated 1640, now in Detroit (no. A 138). There too the main event takes place in a concentrated pool of light and colour, to one side of a lowlying terrain with a wide vista. There is a further similarity with that painting that relates especially to the motifs depicted — the ass with its head turned to one side has here been given a central position, and the profiles of the female protagonists recur, in a way, in that of the woman on the ass; besides this there is the use of decorated fabrics (in the finely-pleated headscarf, the heavy skirt and the saddlecloth) like that seen in the Detroit work (in Elisabeth's headdress and the clothing of the Moorish servant). In the execution the way paint is applied — heavily in the lit passages and fairly draughtsmanlike in the dark thinner areas — is similar, and the use of colour could also be described as such. Nevertheless one has to assume

that these resemblances point not to Rembrandt's authorship but rather to his approach and way of working having been adopted by a pupil.

The reasons for believing this lie, as always, in the degree of effectiveness with which certain features have been executed. A comparison with the Detroit *Visitation* shows, first of all, that the balance between the various parts in rendering of detail and definition of form leaves something to be desired. The ass, which in the Rembrandt has a marginal position and is correspondingly fairly cursorily done, is here placed at the centre of the composition and yet painted with much the same degree of sketchiness as is the young lad. The woman suddenly receives the full light, and in keeping with this is shown with considerable detail; against this, the bearded man is seen in very subdued light and vaguely defined (though with a row of almost pedantically done catchlights on the chain running across his turban). In all three of these figures the execution is, on close scrutiny, found to differ substantially from what one would expect of Rembrandt. In the thick paint used for the woman in the light the rendering of form in the flesh parts and the draperies is singularly lacking in articulation, so that these passages take on a somewhat syrupy appearance. The sketchiness of the ass and, for instance, the fringe of its saddlecloth, and especially of the boy's tunic, is marked by drawing that tends to the angular and renders the form woodenly and insensitively. Finally, the old man seen in half-shadow suffers in part from the same ill; highlights are scattered in rather indeterminate fashion over his tabard-like tunic, and his head and hands are poorly characterised in a way that contrasts sharply with similar passages in the figure of Zacharias in Rembrandt's *Visitation*. A similar measure of vagueness is seen in the rendering of the terrain and the unclearly constructed buildings in the background. Even the edges of light on the leaves in the left foreground lack the articulation that Rembrandt would have given them. One can but conclude that his authorship may be ruled out. The closeness to his style does however point to the painting having been done in his immediate circle, and by someone who besides knowing the 1640 *Vistation* was also thoroughly familiar with Rembrandt's 1638 etching of *Abraham casting out Hagar and Ishmael* (B. 30) and took from it the costume of Ishmael, the gesture of Abraham's hand and Hagar's drying of her tears. If the over-carefully done signature is contemporaneous (which seems not impossible, given the similarity with the *Visitation* dated 1640) it would seem to have been appended in the workshop by the assistant responsible for the painting.

The prime candidate for the assistant who executed the painting in or soon after 1640 is the early Ferdinand Bol. One can conclude this first of all from a comparison with works by him that show a similar composition. These include the *Dismissal of Hagar* in Leningrad (Blankert *Bol*, no. 3; Sumowski *Gemälde* I, no. 92) and a number of sketch drawings that Sumowski has convincingly attributed to him. Following a layout already used a great deal by Lastman and his school, these works show a composition closed off on one side by a mass of trees or buildings and on the other by a lowlying valley, while the figures are quite large in the centre of the oblong frame. An example of this is the drawing of *The angel appearing to Manoah and his wife* in Budapest, where there are cows and human figures in the distance on the left (Sumowski *Drawings* I, no. 136); a drawing of the *Dismissal of Hagar* in a private collection at Moorestown, N.J., which Sumowski puts in the mid-1640s (ibid., no. 214) shows a similar arrangement in reverse, with this time a single cow in the right distance. The latter composition was developed further in the somewhat later painting in Leningrad already mentioned, which moreover shows a palatial building not unlike the one in no. C 85. But there are links with Bol's work not only in composition but in approach and execution as well: the fall of light, striking some shapes (such as the woman's) from the front and depriving them of modelling, making others (the old man) appear vaguely modelled in the penumbra, and showing others again half in light and half in shadow (the head of the boy), is found in just the same way in Bol's etching, dated 1643(?), of the *Holy family* (Hollst. III, p.18 no. 4) and the working drawing done for this, now in the British Museum (Sumowski *Drawings* I, no. 95; our no. C 87 fig. 7); a face similarly divided sharply into a light and a dark half is also found in a drawing of *Christ and the woman taken in adultery* (ibid., no. 218). These similarities suggest a date towards the end of Bol's rembrandtesque period — 1643 at the latest. We still have only scant insight into his stylistic development over those years, and it is not easy to point to exact analogies for the pictorial execution of the painting. There is however a clear resemblance between the rather vaguely modelled treatment of the old man and what is probably Bol's earliest signed work, the *Liberation of S. Peter from prison* in the coll. Pieter K. Baaij at Schoten (Sumowski *Gemälde* I, no. 78). This painting, which Sumowski dates at around 1640 (wrongly doubted by Blankert, see Blankert *Bol*, no. D 4) shows variations on much earlier Rembrandt motifs — one can compare Peter and the guard sleeping on the right with, respectively, Delilah and Samson in Rembrandt's painting of *c.* 1629/30 in Berlin (no. A 24) ! — and a fairly free but not entirely effective handling of paint, where the suggestion of form remains somewhat rudimentary. In that respect the painting in the Victoria and Albert Museum is

Fig. 4. Detail (1 : 1)



Fig. 5. After M. de Vos, *The departure of the Shunammite woman* (engraving by H. Collaert)



Fig. 6. After M. de Vos, *Elisha sending out his servant Gehazi* (engraving by H. Collaert)



readily comparable, even in motifs of a quite different kind than those appearing in the signed work such as the plants in the left foreground, done with a certain panache but unclear in their structure. This aspect of what seems to be typical of Bol's earliest paintings is seen in what is (probably) his earliest dated work, the *Sacrifice of Gideon* in the Catharijneconvent at Utrecht (Blankert *Bol*, no. 11), which carries the date 1641; here the absence of a three-dimensional effect from the light on the angel is similar, and all three of these paintings reveal, in the poorly articulated heads, the same excessively dark spots of paint used to indicate the eyes. Among the unsigned works attributed to the young Bol (where the similarities cannot of course provide so strong an argument) parallels are found especially in the *Isaac refusing Esau his blessing*, datable towards 1640 (see no. A 119 fig. 6); there is the rather slovenly handling of the costumes, the pedantic catchlights on the bed and elsewhere, the overlit and hence plastically ineffective cushions and the occasionally strong underdrawing (visible in the IR photograph) that seems to foreshadow the stylized construction of the ass and the young boy. If the probably still earlier copy of Rembrandt's 1637 *Angel leaving Tobit and his family* (no. A 121, copy 2 and fig. 10) is indeed by Bol, the resemblances there are to this — e.g. in the self-contained edgings of light to the plants, the flat lit fingers and the over-strongly contrasting eyes — could be termed significant. Among the somewhat later paintings attributed more or less hypothetically to Bol, the *Holy family* in the Louvre (no. C 87) seems to offer little similarity and to show a rather later style, whereas the Leningrad *David's parting from Jonathan* (no. C 84) does have a certain resemblance in the lighting and syrupy handling of paint in the ornamented draperies with their somewhat incoherent highlights and paucity of three-dimensional effect. For the moment Bol seems, of the Rembrandt pupils we know of, the most plausible author for no. C 85, and a date of 1640 may be looked on as likely.

Seen in this light a suggestion made by Schwartz[3] gains in probability; he believes the painting to be identical with one described in the inventory of the estate of Nicolaes van Bambeeck (the Younger), drawn up on 25 November 1671, as 'een Abraham en Hagar, van een discipel van Rembrandt' (see *5. Documents and sources*). This combination is made all the more likely by the fact that the portraits of Van Bambeeck's parents, Nicolaes van Bambeeck (the Elder) and Agatha Bas (nos. A 144 and A 145) are precisely from 1640; we have already felt justified in commenting that the commissioning of portraits went together with buying a history painting of the same year (see Volume II, pp. 96–97). The Van Bambeeck couple would thus have been making in 1640 a purchase that was modest compared to their impressively-sized portraits.

If these assumptions hold true, three things would follow. First, that in 1640 Bol was not yet working on his own account; secondly, that thirty years after its production — but not in the 18th century (see *8. Provenance*) — it was still known that the painting was not an autograph Rembrandt; and thirdly, that thirty years later the painting was regarded as showing *The dismissal of Hagar*. This interpretation was also given in the 18th century and subsequently (see *8. Provenance*). The borrowings from Rembrandt's etching of that subject, already mentioned, may have contributed to this. Hofstede de Groot[4] was the first to be, rightly, puzzled at the wholly unusual fact of Hagar riding on an ass, but thought it could be explained by Rembrandt having first intended the painting as a *Flight into Egypt*. Restorff[5] took this notion further, and pointed to Rubens' *Flight into Egypt* in Kassel as the source for the composition, and in particular for the lighting. This hardly satisfying explanation was, surprisingly, embraced by Richard Hamann[6], who in 1936 still

accepted the current interpretation in his very thorough treatment of the Hagar theme in Rembrandt. Only in the 1960s did Tümpel[7] conclude that such a departure from the biblical text and iconographic tradition was inconceivable; he put forward a convincing alternative — the story of the Shunammite woman (already summarised under *2. Description of subject*). He based this on a similarity between the painting and the fourth and fifth prints (depicting the departure of the Shunammite woman and her kneeling before Elisha, and the prophet's sending out of his servant Gehazi, respectively) from a series of six engravings by Hans Collaert after designs by Maerten de Vos (Hollst. IV, p. 211 nos. 5–8 (!); our figs. 5 and 6). And indeed the resemblances, apart from the fact that De Vos (in line with the Vulgate) shows an adult servant instead of a boy (as recounted in the Lutheran and various Dutch translations), are striking both in the situation depicted and in various poses and gestures; only the woman's weeping (which in fact does not fit into the circumstances of her husband not yet knowing of their son's death) seems, as Tümpel comments, to be taken from the third print in the series, where the woman grieves over her dead child. An unexplained element remains the quiver at the boy's hip.

The story of the Shunammite woman is not unknown as a subject in Rembrandt's circle, but it is always the woman's meeting with Elisha that is depicted — for instance in a painting by Pieter Lastman, Leningrad (K. Freise, *Pieter Lastman*, Leipzig 1911, no. 36 fig. 31) and in paintings by Claes Moeyaert in Moscow and two private collections (A. Tümpel in: *O.H.* 88, 1974, p. 256, nos. 84–86) and by Gerbrandt van den Eeckhout in Warsaw and Budapest (Sumowski *Gemälde* II, nos. 407 and 440). Bol, too, dealt with this episode in an early drawing in Amsterdam (Sumowski *Drawings* I, no. 159), which matches the background scene in the fourth print from the De Vos/Collaert series. It certainly seems that it was not only Rembrandt who gave an elaboration (carefully analysed by Tümpel) of iconographic motifs from the 16th-century illustrative repertoire, but older and younger contemporaries as well. This is confirmed by the use of the theme of the departure of the Shunammite woman, which appears to have had no follow-up and, indeed, to have ceased to be recognized as such after only a short while. The same happened to a number of comparable iconographic innovations by Rembrandt himself (see nos. A 13, A 109 and A 123).

5. Documents and sources

Probably, as commented by Schwartz[3], described in the estate of Nicolaes van Bambeeck the Yonger on 25 November 1671 as: 'een Abraham en Hagar, van een discipel van Rembrandt' (A. Bredius, *Künstler-Inventare* III, The Hague 1917, p. 1022).

6. Graphic reproductions

None.

7. Copies

None.

8. Provenance

*– Probably coll. Nicolaes van Bambeeck Jnr (d. Amsterdam 1671), as: 'een Abraham en Hagar, van een discipel van Rembrandt' (see *5. Documents and sources*).
*– Possibly coll. Adriaen Bout, in whose estate there was mention in The Hague in 1734 of a 'Abraham en Hagar door Rembrandt' (A. Bredius, *Künstler-Inventare* III, The Hague 1917, p. 1390).
*– Possibly sale Amsterdam 15–16 April 1739 (Lugt 503), no. 85: 'De uitdryving van Hagar en Ismaël, extra konstig, door Rembrand van Rhyn' (The driving out of Hagar and Ishmael, extra skillful...) (42 guilders).
– Probably coll. Willem Fabricius van Almkerk, sale Haarlem 19 August 1749 (Lugt 709), no. 12: 'Abraham Hagar uitgeleide doende, konstig en kragtig, door Rembrand van Rhyn, hoog 1 voet 3 duim, breed 1 voet 9½ duim [= 36.4 × 53.3 cm, Haarlem foot of 11 inches] (Abraham dismissing Hagar, skillful and powerful, ..) (320 guilders to Van Dyk).
*– Possibly Blackwood sale 1751, 2nd day, no. 51 (to Ellys) and possibly Rongent sale 1758, 2nd day, no. 58 (to Brandenburgh). These descriptions may however refer to another 'Abraham and Hagar' of larger dimensions[8].
*– Coll. Bourchier Cleeve (1715–1760), Foots Cray Place (J.R. and J.D. Dodsley, *London and its environs described*, 1761, vol. II, p. 314: 'Abraham and Hagar'; by descent to his daughter Elisabeth, who married Sir George Younge, Bt. (1731–1812)[9].
*– Coll. Sir George Younge, sale London (White) 24–25 March 1806 (Lugt 7046), 1st day, no. 32 (£43. 1s. to John Parke).
*– Coll. John Parke, sale London (Coxe) 8–9 May 1812 (Lugt 8170), 2nd day, no. 29: 'Rembrandt. Abraham putting away Hagar; from Mr Bouchier Cleve's Collection' (£190)[9].
*– Woodburn sale, London 1818 (bought in)[10].
– Sale London (Christie's) 16 June 1821, no. 58: 'Rembrandt. Abraham sending away Hagar, mounted on an Ass, which is led by a Cord by Ishmael (...) formerly in the possession of Bouchier Cleave, Esq. and subsequently in the collection of Sir Geo. Younge, Bt.' (£110. 5s. to Norton (?)).
– Coll. J. Crespigny, 1838[9]; coll. P.C. Crespigny, sale London (Christie's) 23 April 1869, no. 31 (£31. 10s.).
– Coll. Constantine Alexander Ionides, London, later Brighton (1885), in whose bequest it passed to the museum in 1901.

9. Summary

An assessment of the painting has to be based on the figures and their immediate surroundings, since the addition of a plank along the top (replacing a probably slightly narrow strip of the panel) must have been the reason for extensive overpainting of the background. The well preserved passages show, in motif and treatment, some similarity to Rembrandt's 1640 *Visitation* in Detroit (no. A 138). The differences in coherence between the picture's components, and the not entirely convincing effect of the means used, indicate however that this must have been the work of a workshop assistant. Resemblances to work by or attributable to Ferdinand Bol — mainly to drawings where the

composition is concerned, and to paintings and etchings in respect of approach and execution — make his authorship likely.

The date of 1640 seen in the — perhaps original — inscription may be correct. It can be assumed that the painting was bought then by Nicolaes van Bambeeck and his wife, who had Rembrandt paint their portraits in that year. Their son, when he died in 1671, owned 'an Abraham and Hagar, by a disciple of Rembrandt'; the subject was interpreted as this in the 18th century as well, and indeed right up to the 1960s. The episode from the story of the Shunammite woman that was then seen in the painting is taken from a series of late-16th-century prints after Maerten de Vos, and the depiction of this subject remained so rare that it quite soon ceased to be recognized for what it was.

REFERENCES

1 Gerson 202; Br.-Gerson 508.
2 Bauch 22.
3 Schwartz 1984, p. 218.
4 C. Hofstede de Groot, 'Die Rembrandt-Ausstellungen zu Amsterdam (September–Oktober 1898) und zu London (Januar–März 1899)', *Repertorium für Kunstwissenschaft* 22 (1899), pp. 159–164, esp. 163.
5 N. Restorff, 'Rembrandtiana', *Repertorium für Kunstwissenschaft* 30 (1907), pp. 375–378, esp. 378.
6 R. Hamann, 'Hagars Abschied bei Rembrandt und im Rembrandt-Kreise', *Marburger Jahrbuch für Kunstwissenschaft* 8/9 (1936), pp. 471–578a, esp. 515–517.
7 C. Tümpel, 'Studien zur Ikonographie der Historien Rembrandts', *N.K.J.* 20 (1969), pp. 107–198, esp. 118–125; cf. idem, 'Ikonographische Beiträge zu Rembrandt' (lecture at the 10th Deutscher Kunsthistorikertag, Münster 2–6 August 1966), *Kunstchronik* 19 (1966), pp. 300–302. Tümpel 1986, cat.no. 18.
8 Cat. exhibition *Rembrandt in eighteenth-century England*, [New Haven] Yale Center for British Art 1983, p. 111 no.88, p. 112 no. 93.
9 Information kindly supplied by the museum.
10 HdG 5.

C 86 Tobias healing his blind father

STUTTGART, STAATSGALERIE, INV. NO. 2521

HDG 69; BR. 502; BAUCH 16; GERSON 75

1. Summarized opinion

A moderately well preserved though incomplete painting from Rembrandt's circle, probably connected with a lost work from his hand.

2. Description of subject

The scene is based on the (apochryphical) Book of Tobit 11:12–14. In a humble room with a dilapidated straw roof old Tobit sits on the left by a window, leaning back behind a small table on which lie Tobias's cloak, belt and sword. Opposite him, with her back to the light, his wife Anna sits holding his hands; she wears a fur cape. Bent over him from behind his turbanned son Tobias carries out an operation on his father's right eye with a pointed instrument. The archangel Raphael looks on, leaning over Tobias's right shoulder with wings outspread and his right arm bent. To the right behind this group of figures there is a small fire in a high fireplace. To the right of this a barrel lies beneath a partly-visible wooden staircase that curves upwards. A dog is partly visible in the right foreground. The left foreground shows a folding chair and, in front of a spinning-wheel, an overturned basket. In the darkness behind the chair the figures of three spectators can be made out.

3. Observations and technical information

Working conditions

Examined on 12 June 1968 (J.B., S.H.L.) in satisfactory artificial light and in the frame. Two X-ray films, together covering the whole of the painting, were received later from the museum.

Support

DESCRIPTION: Oak panel, 47.2 × 38.8 cm. Grain horizontal (explained by the fact that the panel was originally larger and had a horizontal format). Back planed and cradled.
SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

Ground

DESCRIPTION: A light brown shows through in many places at the upper right and in Anna's fur cape.
SCIENTIFIC DATA: Kühn[1] found a layer of chalk and glue.

Paint layer

CONDITION: In the dark and thinly-painted areas there is generally wear, especially in the three figures in the left foreground, where there are numerous overpaintings. Craquelure: the entire paint surface shows long horizontal cracks possibly due to stresses in the panel set up by the cradle; in the more thickly-painted passages, e.g. the white and grey of the lit wall on the left, there are fine, regular cracks.
DESCRIPTION: The darker and more deeply shadowed parts of the interior are painted thinly in grey-brown and dark brown, often with distinct brushstrokes. Small strokes of ochre yellow show the straws in the roof thatching. Despite the quite considerable degree of detail, the structure of the room remains unclear. The lit wall is done in a somewhat thicker grey and white, with one or two patches of pink to the left of Anna's head. A dark lilac-red is used in the upholstery of the folding chair on the left, in Tobias's cloak lying in folds on the table, and (rather lighter) in the shawl around Anna's head. Small strokes in browns and greys with a little yellow on the sheen are used for the fur cape over Anna's shoulders. Old Tobit's clothing is executed in greys and browns with a yellowish white to show the lacing of his tunic; the lit side of his face has a pink flesh colour with a small pink highlight on the ridge of the nose; there is considerable detail in the right eye, using white (for the white of the eye), flesh colour (in the iris) and pinkish red (in the corner). The angel is painted mainly in white and greys, with a sensitive modelling in rather flat greys of the head and tiny dabs of blue-green in the wing in the light on the left. A green-blue is used in Tobias's poorly articulated jacket, while his turban is in a granular white with stippled highlights to indicate small chains; his face, fore-shortened, is seen schematic. A few light highlights mark out the objects on the table and the flames of the fire. The three figures in the shadow on the left share in the wearing that has affected most dark areas, but appear to have been executed mainly in browns and grey.
SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

X-Rays

The radiographic image closely matches what might be expected from the paint surface; no traces of a light underpainting can be seen. The shadow side of the windowframe did not have a reserve left for it in the surrounding radioabsorbent paint.

Signature

On the left, on the crossbar of the chairback, in small letters and figures; the name is written in fairly thick and well preserved black paint <*Rembrandt f / 16..*>. Only a faint trace of the final digit of the date can be seen. The name cannot be looked on as authentic, since it stands well preserved over a worn patch and the craquelure does not go through the letters. It is not impossible that the date is original. The reading usual in the literature, 1636, finds no support in what can be seen of it today and already in 1883 Bode was uncertain whether it should be read as 1636 or 1634[2].

Varnish

No special remarks.

4. Comments

In its present state the painting is certainly not complete. In a panel with a vertical format it would already be most unusual for the grain to run horizontally, and a copy in Braunschweig (see *7. Copies*, 1, fig. 4) does in fact show that the original composition was about half as wide again as the present work. In the copy, the staircase on the right can be seen across its full width, alongside furniture and a pump on which a cat attracts the attention of the dog (which is partly included on the panel in Stuttgart). The reduction on the righthand side must have taken place before 1755, as may be seen from a print made in that year (see *6. Graphic reproductions*, 1, fig. 6), and indeed even prior to 1742 to judge from the catalogue of the Prince de Carignan sale (see *8. Provenance*) where the painting was sold with another painting of equal size; the reduction may have been made in order to match the format to that of a painting used as a companion-piece. The 1755 print gives the impression of the painting having then been a few centimetres bigger at the top, left and bottom, though this is not confirmed by the dimensions given. On the left there would then have been, in addition to the three figures seen today, two others one of whom, with a beard and a tall, wide-brimmed fur(?) hat, stands taller than the other and is seen at the extreme edge in right profile.

The present fragment has, in the composition of the ground (in which Kühn apparently missed the

Fig. 1. Panel 47.2 × 38.8 cm



Fig. 2. X-Ray

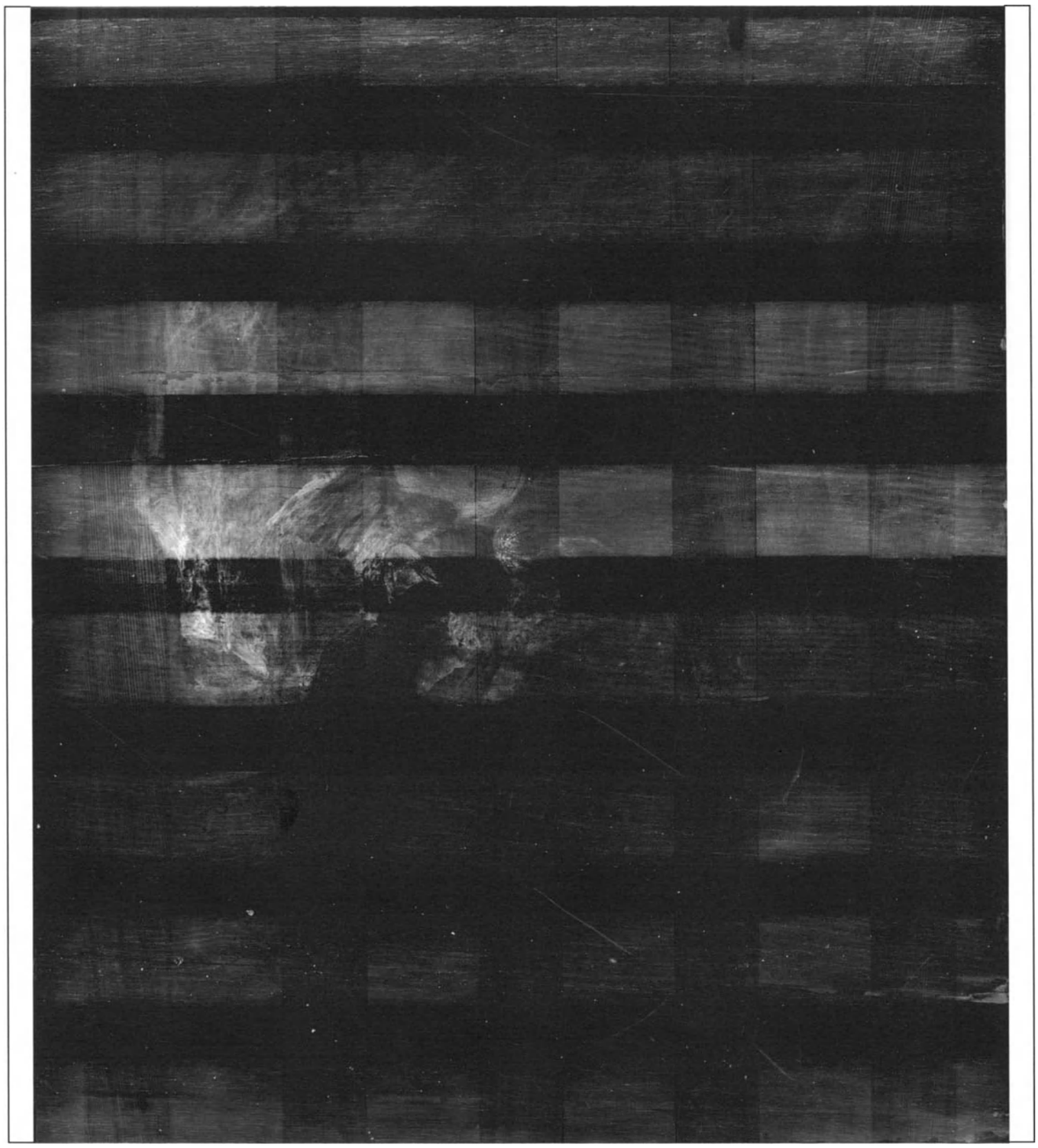


Fig. 3. Detail (1 : 1)



light brown 'primuersel') and in its manner of painting, all the marks of a 17th-century painting. It is however difficult (though because of the wearing in the dark areas these cannot be fully assessed) to accept it as being a Rembrandt original. The execution is everywhere careful but nowhere renders the form effectively, and in most of the figures it is downright clumsy. The modelling of the angel is relatively successful, but his pose is not clear — it would be logical if he were leaning forward

Fig. 4. Copy 1, canvas 48.5 × 65 cm. Braunschweig, Herzog Anton Ulrich-Museum



Fig. 5. After Rembrandt, pen drawing, 13.8 × 17.2 cm (Ben.C 24). Besançon (France), Musée des Beaux-Arts et d'Archéologie



onto something, which does not really seem the case in the situation depicted. Bode[2] was already doubtful about the picture's authenticity because of the weak execution. No doubts were expressed since, until Tümpel[3] suggested it might be a copy. While the fragment does not convince as being from Rembrandt's hand, the conception does however not seem to be his either. The composition in its complete form strikes one as being rather empty in the righthand half and out of balance as a whole. This makes it difficult to believe that the Stuttgart and Braunschweig versions were copied from a lost Rembrandt original.

This is not to deny that the composition has features that point to a connection with Rembrandt's work. The closely-knit group of the four main figures recurs most notebly in a drawing at Besançon that was regarded by Benesch as a copy after a lost Rembrandt drawing (Ben. C 24; fig. 5); the figure of Tobit is seen in reverse in an otherwise virtually identical configuration. It is noteworthy that here the angel is indeed, as seems to be implied by his pose in the painting, leaning on what might be the lower half of a door or a windowseat. This motif also appears in a drawing, attributed to Rembrandt, in the Amsterdam Historical Museum (Ben. 548) which depicts a similar situation in reverse though the grouping of the other figures is quite different. A number of other drawings that, whether or not by Rembrandt, reflect his drawing style of later years, often contain the same elements though in a different configuration (Louvre, Ben. 545; Copenhagen, Ben. 546; coll. Goujon, Paris, Ben. 547). It seems that this theme was repeatedly explored in Rembrandt's workshop or circle in the late 1630s and early 1640s. The Stuttgart painting, too, might be seen as a variation of this kind, possibly based on — though certainly not copied from — a lost prototype.

For the significance that was attached in the first half of the 17th century to the story of Tobit, see the comments on no. A 3. From the medical viewpoint it has many times been pointed out that what is depicted here is an operation for cataract, which according to Roosval would result from following the text of the Luther translation of the Bible or one derived from it[4].

5. Documents and sources

None.

6. Graphic reproductions

1. Etching by Antoine de Marcenay (Arnay-le-Duc 1724 — Paris 1811), inscribed: *Rembrandt.pin.t — A. de Marcenay scul. 1755. / Tobie Recouvrant la Vüe. / Dédié a Monsieur le Marquis De Voyer d'argenson / Maréchal de Camp des Armées du Roy — Lieutenant General de lalsace & c.a / Gravé d'après l'original de Son Cabinet, haut de 17 pouces — sur 14 de large* [= 45.9 × 37.8 cm], etc. (fig. 6). Reproduces the painting in reverse. Although the dimensions quoted are a little smaller than those of the panel in its present state, the etching shows a somewhat wider framing on all four sides, especially on the window side where two more figures can be seen.

An etching by John Inigo Greenwood (Boston 1729 — London 1792; active in Amsterdam) reported by A. von Wurzbach (*Niederländisches Künstler-Lexikon* I, Vienna-Leipzig 1906, p. 615) and by Hofstede de Groot[5] is, to judge by the inscription *Rembrandt del.*, not made after the painting but after a drawing of the same subject. Probably the prototype was a drawing that was in the Hirschl and Adler Galleries in New York in 1969 (as Philips Koninck) and that seems to have been reproduced partially, with the figures seen down to the knees.

7. Copies

1. Canvas 48.5 × 65 cm. Braunschweig, Herzog Anton Ulrich-Museum, cat.no. 262 (formerly as Eeckhout; fig. 4). Shows the composition of the Stuttgart painting trimmed down further still at the top, left and bottom, but considerably wider on the right. It is evident that this widening of the composition does in fact reflect an original state, from the presence of a cat on a pump seen on the extreme right next to a fully-visible staircase; this explains the position and pose of the dog in the foreground. As a document, this copy thus has a certain value; it is however in poor condition, and the quality is mediocre.

Fig. 6. Etching by A. de Marcenay, 1755 (reproduced in reverse)



8. Provenance

According to Hofstede de Groot[5] perhaps identical with 'Tobias van zyn Blindheyd geneezen, van denzelven [i.e. Rembran van Rhyn], h. 1 v. 1 d. br. 1 v. 9 d. [= 31.5 × 51.4 cm]' (36 guilders), Baron Schönborn sale, Amsterdam 16 April 1738 (Lugt 482), no. 71 (cf. Hoet I, p. 511, no. 70 and Terwesten, p. 22, no. 69); in view of the dimensions quoted, which are considerably smaller than those of no. C 86, this identification seems doubtful. A second identification thought possible by Hofstede de Groot, with a painting in the Count de Fraula sale, Brussels 21 July 1738, no. 136, is certainly incorrect; the painting described there must, because of the dimensions, be identified with the *Old man in an interior with spiral staircase* in the Louvre (no. C 52).
- Coll. Victor-Amédée de Savoie, Prince de Carignan, Paris. Together with 76 other pictures sold by him to Pierre Nolasque Convay on 24 December 1729: 'Un tableau de Rimbrand représentant Tobie qui recouvre la Veüe' (Paris, Archives Nationales, étude CXVIII, liasse 362, fol. 2ro; text kindly communicated by Mrs. Lizzie Boubli of the Musée du Louvre; see also M. Rambaud, *Documents du Minutier Central concernant l'histoire de l'art (1700–1750)* I, Paris 1964, pp. xxxix note 1 and 565–566, where the painting described is wrongly identified with no. A 121). The painting seems to have been returned to the Carignan collection or never to have left it, as it was sold after the prince's death in 1741, together with another picture of the same size attributed to Rembrandt, 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; obviously height and width were interchanged, as is evident from the print by De Marcenay], représentant l'un Tobie à qui on guérit la vue, et l'autre Joseph qui explique les songes dans la Prison, tous deux par Reimbran' (1101 livres). Hofstede de Groot[5] identified the latter painting with the Amsterdam grisaille *Joseph relating his dream* (no. A 66); because of the differences in dimensions, support and subject, this must be incorrect.
- Coll. Marc-René, Marquis de Voyer d'Argenson (1722–1782), according to the inscription on the etching dated 1755 by Antoine de Marcenay (see *6. Graphic reproductions*, 1).
- Coll. Jan Gildemeester Jansz., sale Amsterdam 11–13 June 1800 (Lugt 6102), no. 181 'Dezelfde [Rembrand] No. 181. hoog 18, breed 15 duim [= 46.3 × 38.6 cm]. Paneel. De oude Tobias van zyne blindheid genezen. Men ziet in dit kunstig tafereel, in een eenvouwdig en armelyk vertrek, den gemelden grysaard, die, op een stoel gezeten zynde, in dit tydstip van zyn nog korts te rug gekomen zoon, de herstelling van zyn gezicht, door middel van de door hem medegebragte gal der visch ontfangt; nevens hem staat de Engel, de beschermer en geleidsman van den jongen Tobias, welke hem schynt te vertroosten, en voor hem zyne vrouw, welke hem by de hand vast houd. De schoone ordonnantie, het licht en bruin, benevens de uitdrukking der hartstochten, geeven aan dit stuk een uitmuntende uitwerking' (The same . . . Panel. Old Tobit cured of his blindness. One sees in this artfully-done picture, in a simple and poor dwelling, the aforementioned old man who, seated on a chair, is at this moment being given back his sight by his recently-returned son, using the fish's gall he has brought with him; alongside him stands the Angel, the protector and companion of the young Tobias, who seems to be comforting him, and in front of him is his wife, holding his hand. The fine arrangement, the light and shade, together with the expression of passions, give this work an outstanding effect). (1005 guilders to Westerwout).
- Coll. George Hibbert, sale London (Christie's) 13 June 1829, no. 34 (108 guineas).
- Bought by Prince Auguste d'Arenberg between 1829 and 1833 from the dealer Nieuwenhuis (cat. by W. Bürger, 1859, p. 14 and no. 52).
- Purchased by the museum in 1958.

9. Summary

As the grain of the panel makes one suspect, and as an old copy in Braunschweig proves, the painting is a fragment of a wider composition. The conception and weak execution make attribution to Rembrandt unacceptable. One can, however, on the grounds of a number of drawings related to the work of Rembrandt or from his hand, assume no. C 86 was connected with a design by him. The Rembrandt signature now on the painting is surely unauthentic, but the vestiges of the date, earlier read as 1636, may well be original.

REFERENCES

1 Kühn, p. 200.
2 W. Bode, *Studien zur Geschichte der holländische Malerei*, Braunschweig 1883, p. 445.
3 Tümpel 1986, no. 13.
4 R. Greeff, 'Rembrandts Darstellungen der "Heilung des blinden Tobias" ', *Sitzungsberichte. Kunstgeschichtliche Gesellschaft Berlin* (1907), 1st impr. pp. 1–2; idem, *Rembrandts Darstellungen der Tobiasheilung. Nebst Beiträgen zur Geschichte des Starstichs. Eine kulturhist. Studie*, Stuttgart 1907; J. Guiart, 'Tobie rendant la vue à son père', *Aesculape* 27 (1937), pp. 73–78, 156–157; J. Roosval, 'En starroperation målad av Rembrandt omkring 1636', *Konsthistorisk Tidskrift* 11 (1942), pp. 39–42, and 12 (1943), pp. 46–50.
5 HdG 69.

C 87 The Holy Family with S. Anne

PARIS, MUSÉE DU LOUVRE, INV. NO. 1742

HDG 93; BR. 563; BAUCH 71; GERSON 205

1. Summarized opinion

An apparently generally well preserved work, originally half-round at the top, that despite an obvious resemblance to the work of Rembrandt cannot be attributed to him. An attribution to Ferdinand Bol is worth considering, though more because of the picture's connexion with drawings and an etching by him than of any similarity to paintings known to be from his hand.

2. Description of subject

This description includes details that are hardly if at all visible in the painting but that can be seen in the infrared photograph and in 18th-century prints after the painting.

In a room that is for the most part in semi-darkness, with sunlight falling through a window on the left, Mary is seated in a nursing-basket. She suckles the naked infant Christ, whom she craddles on her lap on a white cloth over a blanket. Alongside Mary on the left sits an old woman in dark clothing, undoubtedly her mother Anne; she leans forward towards the child, and pulls a fold of the blanket away from his head. Her other hand holds a thick book in her lap, with the index finger hooked around her spectacles. The sunlight falls on the infant and his immediate surroundings and, further to the right, in a patch on the broad planks of the floor. Reflected light illuminates the faces of the two women, a wicker cradle on the extreme left with a pillow, a sheet and a red blanket that is draped over the foot end and the floor, the lower parts of Mary's robe, the white cloth and the red blanket on which the child is lying, the nursing-basket and, further to the right, the objects in the middle ground. To the left, behind the women, Joseph stands by the open window with the sunlight falling on his white shirt. Turned mostly away from the viewer, he is busy spoke-shaving a piece of wood that, leaning forward, he holds jammed between his chest and the workbench a small part of which can be seen on the left and a larger part to the right of Mary. A tool-holster hangs at Joseph's left hip; various tools are hanging against the wall above the bench, and include on the left a small axe and a brace-and-bit. Above these a canteen hangs against a post, to the right of which there is a cloth with a basket over it. The upper part of the window is glazed with square leaded panes; distant houses and some trees are visible through the open lower part. Climbing plants can be seen along the righthand jamb of the window, while on the window-ledge there is a half-filled glass through which the sunlight plays. To the left of the window a broad-brimmed hat hangs on the wall, while beneath it and below the window planks and pieces of timber are propped against the wall; stirrups can be seen hanging on the wall below the window.

High up in the room there is a timbered roof structure with beams resting on corbels. A saddle sits across one of the beams, which runs from the left front to a post behind the workbench. Set in the rear wall of the room, on the right, there is a closet-bed in which curtains and bedding are vaguely visible. To the right in front of this is a fireplace, seen from the side and flanked by pilasters; a string of garlic hangs on the wall behind, with below it a cat sitting on a child's chair. A kettle hangs on a chain in the fireplace; twigs and a thick chunk of wood lie partly in the patch of sunlight on the floor in front of the fireplace. To the right in front of this can be seen a fire-dog and, very indistinctly, a few more objects (a wooden tub?). Right at the front a large cabbage lies on a floor plank running parallel to the picture plane.

3. Observations and technical information

Working conditions

Examined in October/November 1968 (S.H.L., E.v.d.W.), out of the frame and with the aid of an X-ray film and an infrared photograph of the whole; these were also available later.

Support

DESCRIPTION: Oak panel, grain vertical, half-round at the top, 40.6 × 34 cm. Thickness 0.45 cm on the left, 0.9 cm on the right. This panel is stuck to another panel with a square top edge, measuring 41.8 × 34 cm; this second panel is thicker at the top resulting in spandrels between which the first panel is recessed. Against the bottom of the original panel a batten 0.7 cm thick is stuck to the second panel. This construction thus leaves only the side edges of the original panel visible. At the top the picture is continued on the spandrels of the second panel. These additions must have been made between 1769 and 1772, when the painting was in the coll. De Choiseul-Praslin (see under *6. Graphic reproductions*, 1, *7. Copies*, 2 and *8. Provenance*).
SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

Ground

DESCRIPTION: Not observed with certainty.
SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

Paint layer

CONDITION: This seems generally good so far as can be judged through a thick layer of yellow, cracked varnish. Especially on the left the painting of the additions to the panel at the top extend a little over the original paint layer.
DESCRIPTION: As the layer of varnish mentioned above masks the details of the brushwork, especially in the dark areas, only a very general description is possible for these passages. The treatment of the thinly-painted areas, in particular, is hard to make out. The dominant tone in the murky parts of the picture is a warm brown that seems to have a translucent character in parts of the background. In the shadowed areas of the floor in the foreground, too, the paint is partly translucent, merging into a more opaque and lighter brown by the patch of sunlight. Some parts of the interior are drawn with long brush-lines in a dark brown, and the gaps between the floorboards in black. In the basket hanging on the wall, and in the cat, there seem (though it is impossible to be sure) to be scratchmarks made in the wet paint. In the wall behind Joseph the paint is opaque, and the surface at this point shows clear traces of a pentimento (see below under *X-Rays*).

In the very detailed rendering of the group made up of Mary, the child and Anne the flesh tints in the shadows relieved with reflected light are determined by a relatively opaque warm brown. In the lit passages lighter flesh tints are set partly over this brown with small, modelling touches of paint and, in the thickest parts, with dots that give sheens of light on the peaks of convexities. A few bright colours are used in this group: strokes of white mark the lit folds in the cloth on which the child is laid, the edges of a shirt at both women's wrists, and the lit part of the shirt at Mary's breast, intersected by the blue lacing of her bodice. A lighter blue is used for the lit part of her skirt across the knee, while an edge of light on Anne's sleeve is in red. The rims of the latter's spectacles are drawn very finely in a yellowish paint. The contour of the blanket in the cradle, which catches reflected light, is shown with merging strokes of red, and a similar red is used in the blanket underneath the child. The relatively thoroughly worked-up passages include Joseph's shirt, in which fine and mostly parallel brushstrokes of a greyish paint with white sheens of light give the modelling of the folds. The patch of sky seen through the window consists of a light blue paint applied with small, dabbing strokes. The leaves and branches of the climbing plant have thickly-painted edgings of light.
SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

Fig. 1. Panel 40.6 × 34 cm



Fig. 2. X-Ray



Fig. 3. Infrared photograph



X-Rays

A light patch with an edge running upwards towards the left is located partly over the righthand half of the present window and partly over the present wall behind Joseph, suggesting that a square window was originally painted further to the right. In this first window there is, coinciding with part of the present figure of Joseph, a dark reserve in which in particular the bottom of his shirt and his right arm are clearly recognizable; where his head is

today, however, the reserve does not follow the present contour, and a marked light patch penetrates a fair way into his back. This makes it hard to assume that the reserve was left for the Joseph figure in its present form; it seems more likely that there was one reserve for climbing plants or trees along the edge of the original righthand windowframe (where Joseph's head now is) and another for a form whose upper border (a bent back ?) runs more or less parallel with that of Anne. To the left, next to the first window and partly coinciding with it one sees the light image of the present window, with dark reserves for the rebate where this extends beyond the first version of the window, and for the trees.

Otherwise, the radiographic image virtually matches what one would expect from the paint surface; radioabsorbent pigment shows up light in the parts of the central group that are lit directly or by reflexion, in the patch of sunlight on the floor and the twigs lying there, in the wall behind Joseph, and to some extent in the bedding in the cradle. The limit of the part of Mary's breast that shows light once extended further to the left, where a small area initially painted light has evidently been covered with a shadow tint.

At the top the half-round edge of the original panel is plainly visible; the panel that encases the original at this point, making up a rectangle, stands out from the latter in having a different grain structure.

At the bottom left, seen in reverse, there is the light image of a stamp on the back of this panel, with the letters 'MR' (Musée Royal) flanking the French fleur-de-lys, topped by a crown and with 'No 948' beneath.

Signature

At the bottom left on the horizontal floor-plank, in dark paint <*Rembrandt. f. 1640*>. So far as can be clearly made out, the letters are shaped rather round and broad, especially the *a* and *d*, and lack spontaneity. They are unconvincing enough not to count as evidence of authenticity.

Varnish

A yellow and very thick layer of varnish hinders observation.

4. Comments

The painting, the attribution of which to Rembrandt has never been put in doubt in the literature, is difficult to assess as a whole in its present state due to the unusually heavy layer of varnish, and perhaps also to darkening of large areas done in browns. Moreover the painting of the spandrels on either side of the original arched top of the panel has meant that especially on the left the original paint layer has been partly masked. The spandrels must have been added between 1769 (when the painting was described in the catalogue of the Gaignat sale as 'cintré du haut', and drawn thus by Gabriel de Saint-Aubin; see *7. Copies*, 2 and *8. Provenance*) and 1772 (when it was in the De Choiseul-Praslin collection and was engraved by Le Brun in its present rectangular form; see *6. Graphic reproductions*, 1).

It is however possible, on the basis of the clearly legible passages with the fully or half-lit parts of the figures and their surroundings, to get a reasonably good idea of the manner of painting. Taken broadly, this gives a very rembrandtesque impression, especially when one allows for the fact that the areas done mainly in browns show in the infrared photograph a more animated degree of detail than one finds in the painting today. In the easily legible passages of the strongly-lit areas one is struck by the extreme care devoted to gradating the reflexions of light, half-shadows, cast shadows and highlights, in particular in the closely-knit group of the two women and the child and in their surroundings. Differentiation of this kind is wholly in line with Rembrandt's handling of light, seen in works such as, for instance, the 1632/33 *Descent from the Cross* in Munich (no. A 65) to the 1637 *Angel Raphael leaving Tobit and his family* in Paris (no. A 121) or the 1640 *Visitation* in Detroit (no. A 138). A comparison with these last two works in particular makes one however aware of substantial differences both in the function of the brushwork and in the significance of the colouring. In the *Angel leaving Tobit* and the *Visitation* the brushstroke has an active, graphic function combined with a modelling one; it has a strong rhythm of its own which it never needs to give up in order to evoke a convincing suggestion of form, which in fact owes its attractiveness to this relative autonomy. The range of colours is kept very limited — strong contrasts occur only in the highest light, and even then they are in the form of piquant highlights used to mark a clear distinction either between light and shade or between warmth and coolness. In this *Holy family*, on the other hand, the brushstroke, very fine and often repeated in the lit areas, carefully builds up the modelling of the form; the result is consequently a little fuzzy, and lacks both the directness of method and succinctness of effect that marks Rembrandt's style in his history paintings from the years around 1640. This applies to the flesh areas — the relatively poorly articulated hands, for example — and to the draperies. In this respect Joseph's white jacket is characteristic, with numerous mostly parallel strokes giving a rather uninteresting pattern of folds. The colour, too, has features untypical of Rembrandt, for instance in the juxtaposing of colours of equal tonal value such as the blue of Mary's dress (itself unusual in Rembrandt) and the red of the blanket on which the infant is lying. Given these differences, which despite the similarity with Rembrandt's work point to an unmistakeably different artistic temperament, an attribution to him is unacceptable and one has rather to think of a painter from his immediate circle. The signature on the painting is no counter-argument to this — so far as it can be read, it is unconvincing, and the date of 1640 too is thus not a reliable indication.

It is possible to arrive at a working hypothesis as to the artist's identity; as Bruyn[1] has already stated, there are grounds for thinking of Ferdinand Bol, though one would then have to attribute to him, as a painter in the years around 1640, a rather more protean character than the known works by him

Fig. 4. Detail (1 : 1)



Fig. 5. F. Bol, *The Holy Family*, pen and wash, 18 × 27.2 cm. Darmstadt, Hessisches Landesmuseum



already demand. One is struck here by a more skilful handling of paint, a richer chiaroscuro and a greater subtlety in the modelling then one finds in other paintings by or attributed to him. The material that nevertheless prompts the thought of an attribution to Bol is to be found in the latter's drawings and an etching, in their relationship to each other and to prototypes in the work of Rembrandt. Bol must, probably in the early 1640s, have concerned himself very intensively with depictions of the Holy Family or the Annunciation in an interior. A major starting point for him was Rembrandt's etching of *The Holy Family* of *c.* 1632 (B. 62). In a drawing in Darmstadt (fig. 5) that can confidently be attributed to Bol (Sumowski *Drawings* I, no. 195 with further references) he expanded Rembrandt's composition widthwise; the figure of Mary with the child was, together with the open layette basket beside her, used (in reverse) in the lefthand half of the drawing. He further took from Rembrandt's etching, this time not in reverse, a tall piece of furniture — possibly a bed — that is partly visible on the right with a cloth draped over it; this he placed on the right behind Mary where it is now fully visible behind Joseph, who sits on a chair with his back to a fire before which lies a cat (or dog ?). Behind Mary to the left Bol showed a diagonally-placed cradle, Joseph's workbench and, hanging on the wall above it, his carpenter's tools; these motifs probably derive from Rembrandt's large painting of the *Holy Family* of *c.* 1634, now in Munich (no. A 88), a work that Bol knew well (to judge from his painted *Rest on the flight into Egypt* of 1644 in Dresden; Blankert *Bol*, no. 16 pl. 5; Sumowski *Gemälde* I, no. 81). When taking Mary and the child from the etching, he made a number of small changes — the somewhat shaded head of Mary is seen almost in profile, looking at the child, and the child holds his legs more pulled up than in the prototype. These changes are significant in as far as (again in reverse) they closely resemble the Mary and the child in the Paris painting, including the shadow on Mary's face which in the drawing (where the light falls from behind her) is more logical than it is in the painting; the cradle too reoccurs (in reverse) in the painting, albeit in front of rather than behind Mary, and the same is true of Joseph's workbench and tools by the window. In the drawing the existence of the window itself is only felt, and it may be assumed that between the drawing and the painting there were various stages in which Bol experimented with the interior. This includes, it would seem, three drawings of the Annunciation — a sketch in red chalk, in Wrocław, where Mary is seated by a window on the left that is partly covered by a looped-up curtain and a chimneybreast (Sumowski *Drawings* I, no. 153); a pen-and-ink sketch, previously in the coll. Earl of Dalhousie, where the curtained window is on the right and Mary kneels before the angel (ibid. no. 233); and a largely matching red and black chalk and wash drawing at Veste Coburg (fig. 6), probably done in preparation for a planned etching and the most thorough in its treatment (ibid. no. 147). In all three drawings there is a closet-bed in the back wall, beneath more or less distinct roof timbering, and one or more objects (not of course Joseph's carpenter's tools, but invariably Mary's

Fig. 6. F. Bol, *The Annunciation*, black and red chalk, grey wash and white bodycolour, 31.2 × 40.2 cm. Kunstsammlungen Veste Coburg



Fig. 7. F. Bol, *The Holy Family*, black and red chalk, pen and brown and grey washes, 18.1 × 20.7 cm. London, The British Museum



round hat and in two instances also a pouch (?) hang on the wall; a chair (in the first drawing) or a prayer-stool (in the other two) stands at the place by the window that in the Darmstadt drawing and Paris painting is occupied by the workbench; in the Veste Coburg drawing there is a cat lying below the window. There is everything to suggest that the artist, after completing the lastnamed drawing that was evidently a final preparation for an etching, abandoned the idea of making an etching of the Annunciation and — utilizing the ideas he had worked out in the meantime for the interior — reverted to the theme of the Holy Family.

This can be gathered from the known and frequently-imitated etching of the subject (Hollst. III, p. 18 no. 4) and the same-size working drawing for it in the British Museum (Sumowski, op. cit., no. 95; fig. 7); the composition of both of these incorporates elements from all the drawings described above. The interior in many respects resembles that in all three drawings of the Annunciation — the window is partly masked by a chimney-breast (as in the Wrocław drawing); a closet-bed opens in the wall alongside a post supporting a corbel, and a gourd and a basket hang on the wall between the post and the window; only Joseph's attributes as a carpenter are absent. Mary, with the cradle set askew behind her, sits just as she does in the Darmstadt drawing, though now facing the window; her large round hat (which hangs on the wall in the three Annunciation drawings) is however worn on the head, as in a probably earlier Bol drawing in the Louvre of a woman suckling her child (ibid., no. 96). For the first time, the child is seen with the head, rather than the legs, to the front. Behind Mary Joseph leans over her shoulder, parallel with her bowed head, to look at the child — perhaps a vague reminiscence of the Joseph in Rembrandt's Munich painting. On the left of the drawing the cat by the fire serves as a foreground-repoussoir; on the right a nursing-basket stands upright against a chest (?), and a chair is just visible in a way that reminds one of Rembrandt's 1639 etching of the *Death of the Virgin* (B. 99). The chiaroscuro effect is, especially in the largely dark etching, forcefully done, Of all these documents, only the etching is signed and dated, but unfortunately the year, set against the dark foreground, is not easy to read — Bartsch (II no. 4) saw it as 1648, Hind (*Catalogue of drawings by Dutch and Flemish artists . . . in the British Museum* I, London 1915, p. 61 no. 1) as 1643, and Münz (II, pl. 23b) as 1645. Given the marked variations in Bol's style it would not be easy to say which reading is the most plausible, but in view of the very rembrandtesque nature 1643 is perhaps the most likely.

The Paris painting shows very close similarities with this group of compositions by Bol and with the London drawing of the *Holy Family* in particular. They include the placing of Mary and child in relation to the window and the structure of the room and various details — the basket and gourd hanging against the wall, the post with a corbel (in the painting this is above Mary's head), the shape of the cradle (with various placings), and the floor planks the lowest of which runs parallel to the picture plane with the others at right angles to it. There are a few differences besides that of format: in the painting, for instance, Mary is not wearing her large round hat — it must probably be recognized in the object hanging on the wall to the left of the window — and the infant lying at Mary's right breast is turned with his legs towards the front. In both respects the painting comes closer to the Darmstadt drawing, with its motifs taken from Rembrandt himself, and the same can be said of the placing of the chimneybreast on the right opposite the window, and of the presence of Joseph's carpenter's tools. This resemblance suggests that the painting

preceded the London drawing and the etching based on this. A further divergence is of course the placing of Joseph, for which it would seem that each time a different solution had to be considered. In the Darmstadt drawing with its friezelike composition he sat on the right, in a casual pose, on a chair in front of the chimney, but the narrower panel ruled this possibility out; there was only room for the cat. Placing him in the middle ground — which so far as one can judge from the X-ray was not planned in its present form from the beginning — was made necessary by the introduction of the old woman Anne, who in the London drawing and the associated etching has once again made way for him. Besides, both the motif of Joseph standing bent forward and planing a piece of wood and the presence of S. Anne may be related to a scene in a drawing by Rembrandt, or his workshop, in London (Ben. 516), dated by Benesch around 1640/42. This shows Joseph working with his plane and seen almost in profile, opposite Mary seated next to the child at a window, and next to her S. Anne shown not (as in the Paris painting) as a heavily-built matron but as a thin woman with a sharp-pointed chin. Other motifs too, that with the various drawings as intermediate studies appear in the Paris painting, can be traced back to earlier works by Rembrandt himself or by his pupils. The large window was already used by Rembrandt in his 1631 *Christian scholar* that has survived only as a copy in Stockholm (no. C 17), and later in a *Tobias healing his blind father* and the *Parable of the Labourers in the vineyard* that likewise now survive only as copies (nos. C 86 and C 88); the motif recurs in works by pupils from the 1630s (such as no. C 51). The chimneybreast facing the source of light is already seen in Rembrandt's grisaille in Amsterdam, datable in 1633, of *Joseph telling his dreams* (no. A 66), at some time was owned by Bol himself, as appears from a document of 1669. Mention has already been made of the significance as a prototype of his Munich *Holy Family* of *c.* 1634.

The similarity between the Paris *Holy Family* and Bol's London drawing and his etching of the same subject has of course long been noticed, and has always been interpreted as evidence of borrowings by Bol from his master. In a broader sense that may be correct, but it is practically out of the question that the Paris painting was Rembrandt's prototype for Bol's composition. The resemblances between the painting and Bol's Darmstadt drawing are too strong for that to be so, and the latter is far too like a compilation (of a kind one might call typical of Bol) from Rembrandt's etching of *c.* 1632 (B. 62) and his painting of *c.* 1634 in Munich.

The question arises, naturally, of whether the Paris painting fits into Bol's painted oeuvre in his rembrandtesque phase, and if so of how it should be dated. The answer to the first question has to be that despite Blankert's monograph and Sumowski's contribution we still know very little of the early, rembrandtesque work by Bol[1]. There is certainly reason to picture that work as admittedly heterogeneous in colouring and composition — depending on the prototypes used — but where the panels with figures on a relatively small scale are concerned invariably marked by a small, painstaking, repetitive brushstroke when dealing with figures and draperies; there is also an intensive use of motifs borrowed from etchings and paintings by Rembrandt, or sometimes taken from other prototypes. That is, at least, the impression one gets from a painting like the *Jacob blessing Esau*, the attribution of which to Bol is supported by a drawing for the figures that is certainly from his hand; this painting repeats the setting of Rembrandt's Danaë (see no. A 119 fig. 6). This impression is not contradicted by the Leningrad *David's parting from Jonathan* (no. C 84), the rather more speculative attribution of which is based mainly on a compositional link with drawings. The same may be said for the attribution of the Paris *Holy Family*, which in turn has a certain resemblance in the brushstroke to both of the paintings mentioned, but differs from them in colouring and general appearance just as much as these paintings do from each other and from signed work such as the *Gideon and the angel* in Utrecht, which bears the date 1641 and in which the figure of Gideon is taken from Rembrandt's 1641 etching of *The angel Raphael leaving Tobit and his family* (B. 43) (Blankert, op. cit., no. 11, pl. 2; Sumowski *Gemälde* I, no. 79). If one attaches importance to the link between Bol's drawings on the one hand and the clear borrowings from Rembrandt on the other, as a means of penetrating the nature of the chameleonlike artist the rembrandtesque Bol must have been, one will not see any absolute bar in the differences between the paintings that can be ascribed to him on these grounds; rather, this variety will have to be accepted as characteristic of the painter.

In the case of the *Holy Family* there are however a number of additional features that can count as supporting the attribution. There is a connexion between this painting and Bol's etched work in two respects. In the first place the etchings repeatedly present a completely or nearly semicircular arched top; in particular, there is the etching of *S. Jerome* dated 1644 (Hollst. III, p. 17 no. 3) which has the same picture area closed off as a semicircle at the top that does not — as in Rembrandt's Munich series — have extra-tall proportions and thus looks somewhat squashed; it looks as if a rectangular field of normal proportions has had its upper corners removed, probably the reason for the panel having been expanded into a rectangle (around 1770). And in the

second, the etching of a philosopher meditating that in the third state is dated 1662 (Hollst. III, p. 19 no. 5) contains a motif found in literally the same form in the painting — the philosopher is holding his spectacles with the right index finger in exactly the way as S. Anne holds hers with the left. Neither of these is a totally clinching argument, but they form welcome support of an attribution to Bol.

The question of a date for the painting could be answered more accurately if that on the etching of the *Holy Family* could be read unequivocally. As we have already said, 1643 is the most likely reading, and one can well imagine the painting being done around 1642.

Eliminating the Paris *Holy Family* from Rembrandt's oeuvre means that one of the most renowned pieces of evidence for the domesticity of his interpretation of the theme looses its force. Not for nothing has the painting been known in France since the 18th century as 'Le ménage du menuisier' (see *6. Graphic reproductions*), and was a copy in Florence called, at the beginning of this century, 'Intérieur d'une maison' (see *7. Copies*, 1). An author like Vosmaer[2] was reminded by the interior of the work of Adriaen van Ostade, and Bode[3] thought that the Ostade might have served as a prototype. Leaving aside the attribution of the painting, this latter hypothesis does not seem really called-for: the type of interiors with a chimneybreast and open-truss roof — the archetype of which is provided by Hendrik Goudt's engraving after Elsheimer's *Philemon and Baucis* (Vol. I, no. A 16 fig. 5) — had already been fully developed by Gerard Dou using Rembrandt's example. Vosmaer[2] and later, also, Weisbach[4] thought they could sense Italian prototypes in the facial type of Mary; yet precisely the rather impersonal character of this seems typical of Bol, and can be compared with, for instance, the head of the angel (likewise shown in half-shadow and reflected light) in his signed *Jacob's dream* in Dresden, dated *c.* 1642 (Blankert, op. cit., no. 5 pl. 3; Sumowski *Gemälde* I, no. 80). More generally, one can say that the Paris painting takes Rembrandt's sense of the characteristic detail to the extreme, in a way typical of Bol, and at the same time remains on the vague side in the typing of the figures. The most salient figure is that of S. Anne, who is somewhat reminiscent of various holy women in Rembrandt's passion pictures — the *Descent from the Cross* (no. A 65) and the *Entombment* (no. A 126).

Finally, it is noteworthy that besides all the more or less rembrandtesque paraphenalia the painting has another motif that is not encountered in Rembrandt in the same way and that seems to contain a late-mediaeval symbolism — the partly-filled glass standing on the window-ledge with the light shining through it. Bol's Wrocław drawing of the *Annunciation* shows in the same position a book that Mary was reading before the angel entered, in accordance with a centuries-old iconographic tradition; in the London drawing too, and in the corresponding etching, there is (less appositely) a book in this position. The glass with the light falling through it can be hardly anything else than a reference to Mary's virginity, according to mediaeval tradition (cf. M. Meiss in: *Art Bull.* 27, 1945, pp. 175–181). One may wonder whether a motif like this is specifically Roman Catholic, and same goes for the inclusion of S. Anne, who of the main group in fact makes an 'Anne selbstdritt'-group. Bol was, at all events, baptized into the Dutch Reformed Church at Dordrecht in June 1616, and buried in the Zuiderkerk in Amsterdam in July 1680; there can thus be no doubt that he belonged to that denomination. The glass in the window must probably be seen as a relic of an iconographic tradition that harked back to the 15th century and that was recognized in the picture by Foucart[5].

5. Documents and sources

Schwartz[6] wrongly believed that the painting might be identical with *'De minnemoer van Rembrant'* (Rembrant's nurse), mentioned in a list of paintings bartered by Martin van den Broeck in Amsterdam in 1647 (Strauss *Doc.*, 1647/1). This description no doubt relates to Geertge Dircks, who from 1643/44 was nurse to Rembrandt's son Titus (see also Vol. II, p. 94 note 19).

6. Graphic reproductions

1. Etching by Pietro Antonio Martini (Trecasali 1738 - Parma 1797), completed in engraving by Jacques Philippe Le Bas (Paris 1707–1783). Inscribed: *Peint par Reimbrandt en 1640. - Gravé à l'Eau-forte par Martini,./Terminé au Burin par le Bas en 1772 /La Sainte Famille*, with on either side of the crest *Du Cabinet de Mgr. Le Duc de Praslin. / Grandeur de 15. pouces ½ sur 13* [= 41.9 × 32.1 cm], etc. Reproduces the painting in reverse, including the added spandrels at the top. Above the window the line of the semicircular top edge of the original panel is made into the lower contour of a curved supporting beam standing perpendicular on a tie beam that can no longer be seen clearly in the painting.
2. Etching by Antoine Abraham Goujon-Devilliers (Paris 1784–1818), inscribed: *Dessiné par S. Le Roi.-Gravé par Devilliers l'ainé / Le Ménage du Menuisier.* Filhol, *Galerie du Musée Napoléon* V, Paris 1808, no. 291. Reproduces the painting in the same direction; instead of a curved supporting beam as in 1. above, there is a longer, straight one.
3. Etching by Johann Pieter de Frey (Amsterdam 1770– Paris 1834; in Paris from 1800), inscribed: *Rembrandt, pinxit.- J. de Frey, Sculp./ Le Ménage du Menuisier.* In: *Musée Français*, Paris 1803–1809. vol. II. Reproduces the painting in the same direction; a curved supporting beam as in 1. above, though it here continues as far as the outline of the chimneybreast.

7. Copies

1. Panel 41 × 34 cm, Florence, Uffizi (inv. no. 1242), cat. 1905, p. 166 no. 922 as: Rembrandt, *Intérieur d'une maison*; cat. 1979, no. P1314: from the Elector Palatine's collection? already in the Palazzo Pitti by 1716? In the Uffizi in 1753. Pictured as hanging in the Tribuna in a drawing (Gabinetto dei Disegni no. 4582 F) that formed part of a drawn inventory from the 18th century (see D. Heikamp in: *L'Oeuil* 169, 1969, pp. 2–11, fig. 9).

2. Sketch in red chalk by Gabriel de Saint-Aubin (Paris 1724–1780) in a copy of the catalogue of the Gaignat sale, Paris 14–22 February 1769, in the Petit Palais (E. Dacier ed., *Catalogues des ventes et livrets de salons illustrés par Gabriel de Saint-Aubin* XI, Paris 1921 (Société de reproductions des dessins des maîtres), p. 27). The sketch, which reproduces the picture very freely, shows the painting with a half-round top, i.e. without the present additions.
3. The file in the Louvre mentions a copy by [Eugène] Richet, 42 × 33 cm, Louvre inv. no. 342. From the collection of the painter Diaz de la Peña, sale Paris 22–27 January 1877.

8. Provenance

The identification of no. C 87 by Hofstede de Groot[7] with a 'Joseph en Maria, met 't Kind Jesus aen haer Boesem, konstig van Rembrand' (Joseph and Mary, with the infant Jesus at her breast, skilfully done by Rembrand) in the Isaac van Thye sale, Amsterdam 22 April 1711 (Lugt 227) no. 1 (Hoet I, p. 140), which was accepted by Schwartz[6], is probably incorrect in view of the fact that this was the first lot in the catalogue and fetched a high price. The description more likely applies to the large painting of the same subject in Munich (no. A 88), which fits it better as S.Anne is not mentioned.
– Coll. Jeanne d'Albert de Luynes, Comtesse de Verrue (1670–1736), according to the catalogue of the Gaignat sale, 1769 (see below). Not in the De Verrue sale in Paris, 17ff March 1737 (Lugt 470).
– Coll. Gaignat, sale Paris 14–22 February 1769 (Lugt 1734), no. 19: 'Rembrandt van Ryn. Saint Joseph vu par le dos, & placé de façon que l'on apperçoit en entier son bras & presque tout son visage de profil: il est en chemise, ses manches retroussées; son occupation est de dresser un morceau de bois. La Sainte Vierge un peu plus sur le devant presqu'au milieu du Tableau, est assise présentant le téton à l'Enfant Jesus nu sur un linge que Saint Anne touche de la main droite, pendant que de la gauche elle tient des lunettes & un livre ouvert sur ses genoux. Ce sujet est représenté dans une chambre, où à droite on voit un lit, une cheminée, une marmite au feu, & un chat; de l'autre côté des outils attachés à la muraille; un gobelet sur la tablette d'une croisée ouverte par le bas, au travers de laquelle on remarque le haut d'une maison, du paysage & un peu de ciel. On trouve dans ce Tableau un dessein correct, de la beauté dans les caracteres des têtes, & un grand fini qui n'est pas ordinaire à Rembrandt; l'effet en est magique & le coloris séduisant: il fait l'admiration & la surprise des Artistes & des Amateurs qui connoissent la difficulté que l'on a pour rendre un morceau aussi piquant. L'Auteur l'a daté de 1640. Il est peint sur bois, ceintré du haut, & porte 15 pouces 6 lignes, sur 12 pouces 6 lignes de largeur [= 41.9 × 30.8 cm]. Madame la Comtesse de Verrue l'avoit en grande vénération dans son Cabinet.' (5450 livres to Aubert, for the Duc de Praslin).
– Coll. César-Gabriel de Choiseul, duc de Praslin (1712–1785), sale Paris 18–25 February 1793 (Lugt 5005), no. 41: 'Par le même [Rembrantz.]. Le sujet est la Sainte Famille, représenté dans l'intérieur d'une chambre basse, tirant sa lumière d'une croisée placée a droite, & par laquelle on découvre la campagne. Dans le milieu du tableau se voit la Sainte Vierge allaitant son enfant, qui est entièrement nud, étendu sur son lange. La figure de Sainte Anne, vue dans la demi-teinte, ainsi que la tête de la Vierge, forment un contraste heureux de ton pour laisser porter tout le foyer de lumière sur l'enfant. Derrière ce grouppe merveilleux, pour l'harmonie & l'expression, on voit Saint Joseph par le dos, & vêtu d'une chemise dont les manches sont retroussées jusqu'aux coudes, travaillant de son état de Charpentier. La partie gauche est occupée par une grande cheminée, dont le feu, contrastant avec un reflet vigoureux de soleil, porté sur le plancher, produit le plus grand effet; dans le fond de la chambre on apperçoit un lit sacrifié dans l'ombre, & quelques ustensiles de ménage. Ce tableau, étonnant pour son exécution, & magique dans l'intelligence du clair obscure comme dans la force & la richesse de la couleur, est encore un de ces chef-d'oeuvres, peut-être unique dans les morceaux de chevalet de ce grand Coloriste. Voyez tous les Auteurs qui en font mention; il provient du célèbre Cabinet de M. Gaignat, No. 19, de son Catalogue. Haut. 15 p. Larg. 13 p. 6 lig. [= 40.5 × 33.4 cm] B[ois]' (17 120 francs to Le Brun).
– Bought for the museum in 1793.

9. Summary

Although the layer of varnish hinders observation of the painting, which originally had an arched top, the lighter and more readily legible passages show a manner of painting that differs from that of Rembrandt around 1640. An attribution to him must therefore be ruled out. The general approach is however so rembrandtesque that one has to think in terms of an immediate pupil of his. A number of drawings that can be attributed with certainty to Ferdinand Bol and a signed etching from his hand, are so closely connected with the painting compositionally that Bol's authorship deserves serious consideration. Similarities to the rembrandtesque paintings by him known today are few, but it is conceivable that Bol's approach during the 1640s — during which both the drawings and etching and the painting must have been produced — varied widely, depending among other things on the prototype used.

REFERENCES

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2 C. Vosmaer, *Rembrandt. Sa vie et ses oeuvres*, The Hague 1868, p. 140; 2nd edn 1877, p. 212.
3 W. Bode, *Studien zur Geschichte der holländischen Malerei*, Braunschweig 1883, p. 446.
4 W. Weisbach, *Rembrandt*, Berlin-Leipzig 1926, pp. 153–154.
5 J. Foucart, *Les peintures de Rembrandt au Louvre*, Paris 1982, p. 44.
6 Schwartz 1984, p. 220.
7 HdG 93.

C 88 The parable of the labourers in the vineyard

LENINGRAD, THE HERMITAGE MUSEUM, INV. NO. 757

HDG 116; BR. 558; BAUCH 65; GERSON 83

Fig. 1. Panel 31.2 × 41.9 cm



1. Summarized opinion

A generally well preserved work that was most probably painted in Rembrandt's workshop in 1637, as a copy after a lost original by Rembrandt himself.

2. Description of subject

The scene is based on Matthew 20:1–16. The action — the lord of the vineyard paying the same amount to all the labourers though they have not all worked for the same time — takes place in an interior of complex structure lit from two windows on the left. The lord of the vineyard sits at a table on a raised area on the left, with an open moneybag and coins before him. Turning half-round towards two protesting labourers, he stresses what he is saying with a hand against his chest, while the other is stretched out to ward off the first of the labourers who is gesturing emphatically with the left hand as he holds a coin in the palm of the right — the penny he has been paid for his day's work. The second labourer leans forward behind him, pulling his cap from his head and jerking the thumb of the other towards a man who faces towards the right as he shows three others the wage he has just been paid — likewise a penny, even though he has worked only part of the day. On the other side of the table sits the steward, looking up from his accounts-book propped open on a writing-slope.

Behind the lord of the vineyard there is a wooden partition with a map and a pouch hanging against it; a birdcage hangs on a rope running over a pulley-block suspended from the ceiling. On the left, curtains are pulled back to uncover the bottom two arched windows in a side-wall. Further to the left the wall turns another corner, and mouldings and a dark archway or niche can be seen in it, with books piled up in front. Further in the foreground there is a chest with large locks, with more books lying on it, and at the very front two bales. The remainder of the foreground is taken up with steps, on which a cat is pouncing on a mouse; a dog lying further to the right turns its head to watch this. On the far right can be seen the edge of a pillar, on a rough-hewn base.

Behind the group of four labourers can be seen the dark vault of another dimly-lit space further back; to the right of this a half-column rises up to a ceiling with beams. In this area three men are at work; two are dragging a large box up a flight of steps, at the top of which a dim figure stands in a half-open door. Nearer to the front a servant rolls a barrel towards a pile of other barrels.

3. Observations and technical information

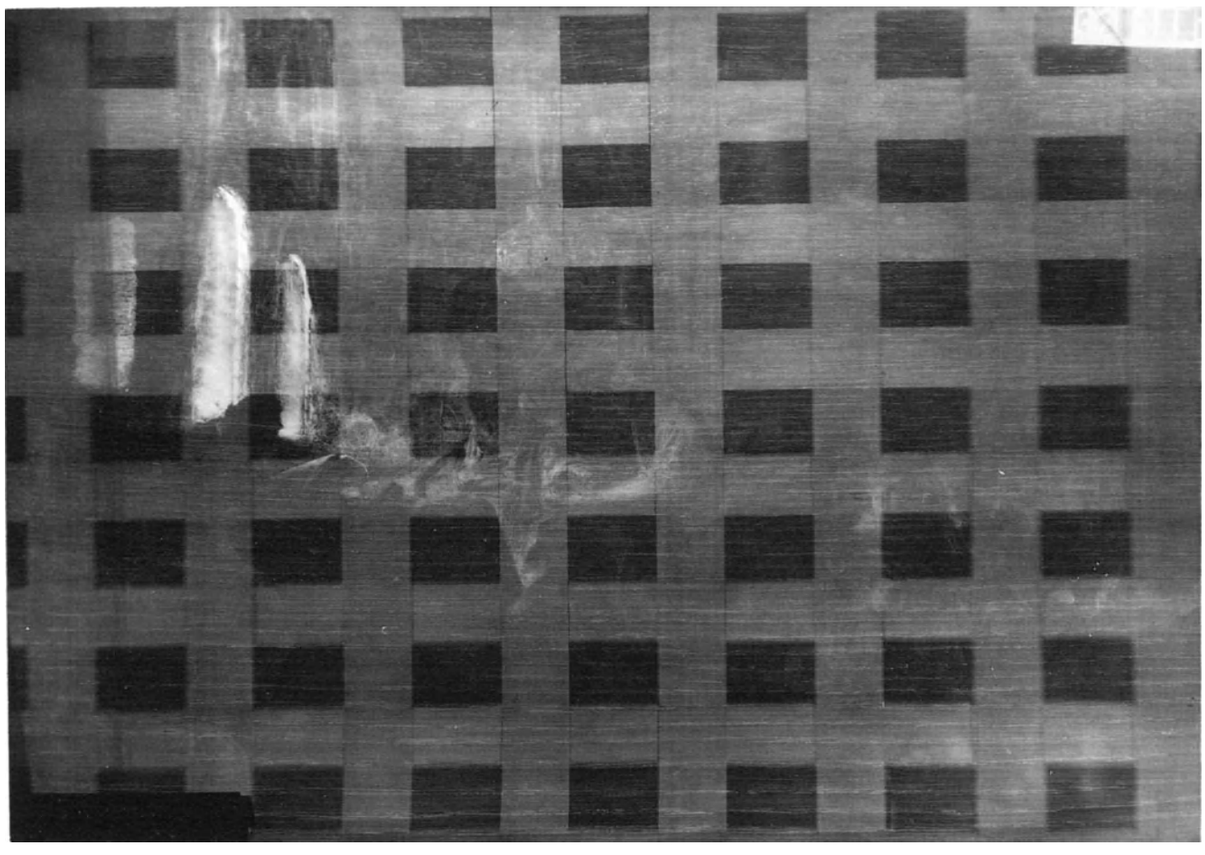
Working conditions

Examined in September 1969 (J.B., S.H.L.) in good light and out of the frame, with the aid of an X-ray film covering almost the whole painting; a print of this was available later. Examined again in the spring of 1983 (E.v.d.W.).

Support

DESCRIPTION: Oak panel, grain horizontal, 31.2 × 41.9 cm. Single

Fig. 2. X-Ray



plank, back planed to a thickness of about 0.4 cm and cradled. Two small strengthening pieces of wood have been attached near the top lefthand corner, alongside the cradle.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: Dendrochronology (Prof. Dr J. Bauch and Prof. Dr D. Eckstein, Hamburg) shows 146 annual rings of heartwood counted, extending almost to the border between heart- and sapwood, dated 1471–1616. Earliest possible felling date 1625, statistical average 1631.

Ground

DESCRIPTION: Yellow-brown, contributing to the tone everywhere and lying almost exposed in thin areas.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

Paint layer

CONDITION: Good for the most part; in some places the paint shows — at the tips of the relief — blanching; it has taken on a light-grey appearance that impairs the tonal relationships. This has occurred in the curtains and, especially, in the group of labourers in the middle ground. As a further symptom of ageing, one finds in various thinly-done dark areas the light colour of the ground showing through more strongly. Something of the same kind has happened in a number of thinly-applied light passages, such as the garments of the man to the right of the vineyard-owner. Craquelure: sporadic in the white of the windows, plus a few shrinkage cracks in the shadows, especially in the foreground.

DESCRIPTION: The whole painting is executed predominantly in translucent browns, with a draughtsmanlike rendering of form in dark brown. The grain of the panel is clearly visible. A generally thin but occasionally more opaque cool grey has been used throughout the picture — in the shadows of the curtains, here and there in the floor-slabs and steps, in the books and chest, and in the open door on the right. Red-brown and red are used in the foreground — on the left in the bales, along the steps and in the pillar on the right; the bales are further worked up with light brown and drawing in black, and the pillar with edges of light shown in light brown.

The flesh tints are a little ruddy, and the clothing generally grey-blue (the lord), greyish or ochre with some white; the paint is invariably more thinly applied in the figures towards the right.

The paint is thick in the windows, with the colour ranging from light blue at the top to white below and the edges of light along the rebates in thick white. Light blue is found again in the lit folds of the curtains.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

X-Rays

The radiographic image, which is substantially marred by the traces of the cradle, reveals many details that match what the paint surface leads one to expect. At a number of points there is however evidence of changes having been made as work progressed.

1. To the left of the strong image of the windows there is an almost equally light form that can best be read as a draft version of a window seen square-on. The brushwork, as it can be read in this area, gives the impression that a different layout of the room — if such was intended — never went beyond an underpainting.

Fig. 3. Detail (1 : 1)



2. Above the steward's open accounts-book there is the light image of a round shape that can also be detected in relief at the paint surface, but cannot be interpreted with any certainty. The tabletop has possibly been altered — in the X-ray the lord's forearm and elbow appear to rest on the table. The paint of the sleeve, showing up light, clearly continues (defined as a forearm) below the present table-edge.

3. Radioabsorbent paint along the righthand edge of the hanging tablecloth loses absorbency downwards, as if the light coming through the windows once lit up the lord's knee more strongly. In this area there is an angular and quite sharply edged dark reserve that does not match the present outline of the clothing.

4. On the left of the bent right knee of the closest labourer there is a narrow light zone that more or less coincides with the space between this leg and the righthand contour of the lord's chair. There is dark paint at the surface at this point, which may be supposed to have low radioabsorbency; here, too, there may have been a change in the lighting.

Signature

At the bottom right on the vertical face of the step on which the dog is lying, in brown <*Rembrandt. f:. 1637*>. The small letters and figures stand out clearly; their somewhat irregular shaping and the lack of a clear relationship to each other prompt doubt as to authenticity.

Varnish

No special remarks.

Fig. 4. Detail (1 : 1)



4. Comments

Since Rembrandt's history paintings of the mid-1630s (apart from the Passion series begun in 1632 for Frederik Hendrik) tend to be on a large scale, and works such as the Paris *Angel Raphael leaving Tobit and his family* of 1637 (no. A 121) and the Buckingham Palace *Christ appearing to Mary Magdalene* of 1638 (no. A 124) do not show such small-scale figures, this painting dated 1637 is surprising for the small size of the figures in the composition coupled with a very detailed rendering of a wide variety of active and gesticulating figures and of their surroundings. In itself, the way the gesticulating figures tell the story reminds one strongly of various of Rembrandt's earlier narrative works — the 1629 *Judas repentant* (no. A 15), or the *Incredulity of Thomas* or *Diana with Actaeon and Callisto* of 1634 (nos. A 90 and A 92), for instance — but one can point to no parallel in Rembrandt's work for the combination of this with such small-scale figures and an almost monochrome use of paint. There are surprising features in other respects as well. There is something of a contradiction between the emphasis with which, in the foreground, dark lines pick out the joins between the floor-slabs and the contours of the piled-up objects on the left, and the rather vague rendering, in modelling and shaping, of the figures and other forms in the middle ground. The latter phenomenon must to some extent be blamed on ageing of the paint — as explained above, the ground has assumed a greater role in thinly-done highlights as well as in a number of areas intended to be dark — but the often rather flat aspect and lack of contrast cannot be ascribed to this alone, and obviously stems from the execution itself. Even in places where one clearly recognizes Rembrandt's approach to plastic form, such as in the rope-bound bales and the curling and rippled papers and books, the relationship between contour and internal detail is surprising and creates an overall impression different from that produced by Rembrandt's treatment. Much the same can be said of the ever-so-slightly exaggerated drawing of the cat and dog, which are not however really well-constructed

Fig. 5. Copy after Rembrandt, panel 48.2 × 68.6 cm. England, private collection



and look a little like toy animals. Details like the map on the wall with its curling corner, and the birdcage, fail to achieve the proper effect despite the care devoted to them, and the expression of surprise in the face of the lord of the vineyard seems hardly adequate given the solemn words he is saying, culminating in 'the first shall be last'. Objections of this kind can only lead one to doubt the autograph nature of the little Leningrad painting, which has always been accepted in the literature including by Gerson, Schwartz and Tümpel[1].

This uneasiness becomes all the keener when one learns of a considerably larger version dated 1637 in private ownership in England, unfortunately known to us only from a photograph (see *7. Copies*, 1, fig. 5). There can be no doubt that this is no more than a mediocre copy; yet it makes it plain that Rembrandt's intentions as one may guess them from the Leningrad work were realised far more clearly in another version. This copy shows — besides a number of irrelevant discrepancies of detail — a more contrasty chiaroscuro and a consequently more clearly-organized spatial composition. The emphasis falls more on the main figures, and the shadow effect of the curtains and birdcage contributes to the sense of depth in that area. The men on the right behind this are seen in dim light, while the once again strongly lit group of three men pushing and pulling — effectively intersected by the middle group just mentioned — defines the next plane. The spill of objects in the left foreground now seems to be integrated into the gloom that predominates there. Individual details, such as the moneybag on the table, can be more readily made out than in the Leningrad painting. One cannot escape the conclusion that there was a prototype in which these qualities were to be seen, and it is reasonable to suppose that this was an original from Rembrandt's hand, now lost.

There is every reason to assume that it was this original that was described in an Amsterdam sale on 25 July 1804 (Lugt 6846) under no. 65 as: 'Rhyn (Rembrant van) hoog 20, breet 27 duim [= 51.5 × 69.5 cm], Paneel. In een aloud Gebouw, zit een bedaard Heer, in deftige Kleeding, ter zyde een Tafel met een Kleed bedekt, waaraan een Boekhouder geplaast is, de Rentmeester schynt met zynen Arbyders afreekening te houden, eenige weggaande hebben hun loon ontfangen, andere zyn nog bezig te Arbeiden; verders gestoffeert met Geldkist, Boeken en Papieren en ander Bywerk; het invallende Licht ter zyde door twee Glaasen Vengsters doed een schoone werking; het is kragtig en teffens bevallig van coloriet, en meesterlyk gepenceeld, zo eigen aan deeze beroemde Kunstschilder' (... In an ancient building a grandly-dressed gentleman sits dignified beside a cloth-covered table, at which a book-keeper is placed; the estate steward seems to be paying his workers, some of whom go away having received their wages while others are still at work; the picture is further furnished with a money-chest, books and paper and other accessories; the light entering through two glass windows creates a fine effect; it is powerful and also graceful in colouring, and painted in the masterful manner so particular to this famous artist) (350 guilders to the dealer Roos). That this describes a painting showing the same scene is beyond doubt; that it relates to the original one may suspect from the unusually high price obtained (the second highest in the whole sale — only no. 88, a large Jan Weenix, fetched more, at 370 guilders). But even if the panel described — somewhat larger in height and width than the copy in England just mentioned — was not the original, one may still assume that an original of about the same dimensions once existed, and provided the basis for not only the English copy but the example in Leningrad as well.

What that original looked like, and how it fitted into Rembrandt's work, we know fairly accurately from data now available. It must, slightly smaller in format and scale, have been very like the 1629 *Judas repentant* (no. A 15) in compositional type and kind of figure motifs; the lighting through windows on the left is reminiscent of the *Christian scholar* which has survived as a copy (no. C 17), and is a motif that seems to have enjoyed a certain revival in Rembrandt's circle in the later 1630s (see nos. C 51, C 86 and C 87). If the presumed original dated from 1637, in line with the date on both the English and Leningrad paintings, then it was a late and somewhat backward-looking specimen of a narrative style that Rembrandt had developed around 1630. It may seem surprising that nothing is known of any preparatory drawings for the complicated configurations of figures in movement, but the same is true of other paintings already mentioned that might be expected to have needed extensive preparation. One motif recurs elsewhere in

Rembrandt's work — the cat pouncing on a mouse (probably representing the inmutibility of innate wickedness — see e.g. Erasmus *Adagia* II, 613) is also seen in the etching of *The Virgin and Child with the cat and snake* of 1654 (B. 63). The cat (and probably the dog as well) may have been in the book 'vol teeckeninge van Rembrant, bestaende in beesten nae 't leven' (full of drawings by Rembrandt of animals done from life) that was listed in 1656 (Strauss *Doc.*, 1656/12 no. 249).

If one assumes the existence of such an original, then this would explain a number of inconsistencies in the Leningrad painting. It becomes clear that the contradiction between the rather unarticulated execution of the figures in the middle ground and the liveliness of their pose and gestures, is just like the overemphatic contouring of objects in the foreground, is the outcome of the copyist having to translate a large-format composition with a full colour-range into a small format with a limited gamut. That also explains why some details are rather disappointing and, more generally, why the chiaroscuro does not entirely achieve the three-dimensional effect that (to judge from the larger copy in England) the artist was aiming at.

There is one argument against the idea that in the Leningrad painting we have only a copy of a Rembrandt original now lost — that the X-ray shows a number of marks that do not coincide with what we see at the surface. Some of these differences can be interpreted as traces of a first lay-in of the kind that a copyist, too, might have made and then corrected; this could be true of the vineyard lord's arm, for example, which does not seem originally to have been intersected by the table. But other discrepancies from the present picture cannot be explained in this way; this applies to the light, round form on the left above the table, and in particular to the long light shape on the left in the X-ray that can be read as a third window (even though it is not easy to see how this might have fitted into the present composition). Such forms could conceivably have had to do with a picture painted previously on the panel but never completed; a similar circumstance is found with the workshop copy of the *Good Samaritan* in the Wallace Collection (no. C 48), attributable to Govaert Flinck. But neither in this case nor in that of the Leningrad *Parable* can it offer a cogent reason for refuting otherwise convincing evidence that the two works are copies, probably both done in Rembrandt's workshop.

There is a final reason for assuming the existence of a lost Rembrandt original — the great influence the composition has had, which one cannot really imagine as being founded on a relatively undistinguished near-grisaille. Not only were there variations on the composition in a number of drawings by Rembrandt's pupils (W.R. Valentiner,

Fig. 6. F. Bol, *Tobias in the house of Raguel*, pen and wash, 18 × 20.5 cm (Ben.C 6). Formerly Düsseldorf, C.G. Boerner



Rembrandts Handzeichnungen I, Stuttgart-Berlin [1925], pp. 390–391; ibid. II [1934], p. xxvi), but it gave rise to painted imitations as well, one by Salomon Koninck in Leningrad (Sumowski *Gemälde* III, no. 1091) and two by H.M. Sorgh (the first from 1665 in Braunschweig, inv. no. 308, and the second from 1667 in Dresden, inv.no. 1807). N. Moeyaert used the composition for another subject, the *Calling of Matthew* (drawing at Windsor, painting at Braunschweig, inv. no. 228).

One variant from the studio is a drawing that Lugt, Benesch and Sumowski have attributed to Ferdinand Bol and that depicts *Tobias in the house of Raguel*, which was in 1953 with the dealer Boerner in Düsseldorf (Ben. C 6; Sumowski *Drawings* I, no. 184; fig. 6). Sumowski already pointed out the link between the composition and the Leningrad painting, though without seeing any direct relation as possible. If one compares the drawing with the painting, it becomes clear however that the composition of the latter provided the immediate prototype for the somewhat compressed and simplified composition of the drawing, in both the arrangement of the figures and the setting. The drawing is an interesting document for showing how a pupil like Bol borrowed motifs from Rembrandt's work and varied them for the purposes of a different subject, perhaps under instruction from Rembrandt as part of his training. Whether Bol ought consequently also to be seen as the author of the Leningrad workshop copy is of course another matter, but the possibility cannot be rejected out of hand. We do know that he was later greatly involved in depicting the interior lit from a window to one side; one sees this in, for instance, the etching and drawings mentioned in connexion with the *Holy Family with S. Anne* in Paris (no. C 87), and perhaps (if it is from Bol's hand) in that painting itself as well.

The supposed 'genre'-like character of the picture

led in the late 18th century to its being called 'Le négociant d'Amsterdam'. In recent times it has been thought that the parable was here being brought up to date in a scene from Amsterdam commercial life[2], or was even an allusion to workers' unrest that occurred in 1637 in the cloth industry in Leiden[3]. However, neither the nature of the interior nor the garb of the figures indicates an intention to portray or allude to contemporary circumstances; and in the latter instance the tenor of the biblical theme would anyway not accord with the sympathy with the working class that is ascribed to Rembrandt. It has to be assumed that the purpose of the parable — to illustrate that divine mercy is independent of earthly works — still held a valid lesson in the 17th century. In this connexion it is not without interest that a painting of the same subject by Cornelis Holsteyn (Haarlem, Frans Hals Museum, inv. no. 171) was painted in 1647 for the Oudemannenhuis (old men's home) at Haarlem.

5. Documents and sources

For a description of the presumed original dating from 1804, see *4. Comments.*

6. Graphic reproductions

1. Engraving by Étienne Fessard (Paris 1714–1777); reproduces the Leningrad painting in reverse. Inscribed: *Rembrandt Pinx. 1637. — St. Fessard Sculp. 1767.*; beneath this, to either side of a coat-of-arms supported by lions: *Les ouvriers de la vigne./ A Monsieur Crozat Baron de Thierce / Gravé d'après le Tableau Original de Rembrandt, qui est dans son Cabinet. / Haut de 12. Pouces, et Large de 16. Pouces* [= 32.4 × 43.2 cm], etc.
2. Etching by Martinus Peirt (? – ?), with the picture in the same direction as in the print described under 1. Inscribed: *Rembrandt pinx. — Martinus Peirt sculp. / Le négociant d'Amsterdam. / Gravé d'après le Tableau Original de Rembrandt./ Haut de 12 Pouces et Large de 16 Pouces* [= 32.4 × 43.2 cm], *Tiré du Cabinet de Monsieur Vanderduren*, etc. Strongly resembles the Fessard print just described, and was thought by Hofstede de Groot[4] to have been printed from the same (though reworked) plate; small differences however prove this not to be the case. The print does seem to be based on that by Fessard, and the inscription gives in part the same information, but there are differences of detail. These appear sometimes to be intended to clarify the picture with motifs that are not taken from the versions of the painting known today: for example, a new rope-end hangs from where the rope supporting the birdcage is attached, and the map has different detail (such as partly legible wording) and its loose corner reveals a wood frame instead of a support attached to a wooden roller. Deliberate changes are in the face of the vineyard lord (given a small imperial beard) and his pose (with one hand resting on the table instead of against his chest). Since the names of neither the engraver 'Martinus Peirt' nor the collector 'Vanderduren' are known from any other context, one has to assume that these are meant to mystify though the purpose of doing so is quite unclear.

7. Other copies

1. Panel 48.2 × 68.6 cm with Rembrandt signature and date of 1637 (fig. 5); stated on a photograph in the R.K.D. in The Hague (L. no. 7338) to be in the coll. Rev. Gaville, Bellaport Towers, Shropshire, England. Not seen by us. Clearly not made after no. C 88, but from a prototype with greater contrast and a more effective impression of depth of which, despite the mediocre execution, this copy may give a fairly clear rendering. Possibly this prototype — most probably an original by Rembrandt — can be recognized in a painting of somewhat larger size described in 1804 (see *4. Comments*). Differences from the composition of the Leningrad painting are, in particular, the perspective of the joins between the floor-slabs and the absence of the cat (probably painted out later, to judge from a dark patch that has roughly the shape of the animal); the indication of a newel-post staircase on the extreme right is also absent here.
2. Probably a partial copy after no. C 88 was a painting described twice in Paris sales catalogues with the same deviant dimensions. Coll. Coypel, sale Paris April 1753 (Lugt 811), no. 41: 'Une copie d'un Tableau de Rembrandt, représentant la Parabole du Maître qui se fait rendre compte par ses Fermiers de leur administration, de 12 pouces de haut & 10 pouces de large [= 32.4 × 27 cm].' Coll. citoyen Martin (painter and member of the one-time Académie Royale), sale Paris 5ff April 1802 (Lugt 6396), no. 161: 'Rembrandt (Van Rhin). Un petit sujet du Banquier à son bureau, recevant de l'argent que lui apportent des paysans; il est éclairé par le jour d'une belle croisée en opposition à laquelle se trouve placé un commis écrivant; l'effet de cette composition est lumineux et d'un ton de couleur précieux pour l'ensemble. Haut. 12 pouc. larg. 10. T[oile].' (1180 francs to madame Lagrange). — The last description makes it clear that this small vertical-format painting reproduced only the lefthand part of the composition.
3. Panel 30 × 40 cm, coll. A. Jaffé, sale Berlin 15 October 1912, no. 90 (as Gerbrand van den Eeckhout); the picture cut down somewhat on the left. To judge from the catalogue reproduction it is doubtful whether this copy came from the 17th century.

8. Provenance

- Coll. Pierre Crozat (1665–1740), Paris. Described in the inventory of his estate drawn up on 30 May 1740, as no. 41: 'Un tableau peint sur toile [!] de onze pouces et demy de haut sur quinze pouces et demy de large [= 31 × 41.8 cm], représentant Judas qui apporte aux Juifs les deniers qu'il avait reçu pour le prix du Seigneur, peint par Rainbrand, dans sa bordure de bois sculpté doré, prisé 600 l.' (M. Stuffmann in: *G.d.B.-A.*, 6th series, 72, 1968, p. 101 no. 368).
- Coll. Louis-François Crozat, marquis du Châtel (1691–1750), Pierre Crozat's eldest nephew, who inherited his paintings.
- Coll. Louis-Antoine Crozat, baron de Thiers (1699–1770), who was to inherit Pierre Crozat's paintings in the event of his elder brother Louis-François dying without male heirs (Stuffmann, op. cit. pp. 32–33). Described in *Catalogue des Tableaux du Cabinet de M. Crozat, Baron de Thiers*, Paris 1755, p. 80: 'La Parabole du Fermier qui paye également les Journaliers qu'il a employés, sans égard au tems qu'il ont travaillé; par Rembrandt: sur bois, de 11 pouces de haut, sur 15 pouces de large [= 29.7 × 40.5 cm]'.
- Bought in 1772 with the entire Crozat collection for Catherine II, Empress of Russia, at the instigation of Diderot and after negotiations conducted by François Tronchin, and described in: *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, Leningrad), no. 644: 'Paul Rembrant. La Parabole du fermier qui paye également les Journaliers. Précieux Tableau composé d'onze figures. Il est du plus beau fini et la lumière est distribuée avec cette intelligence supérieure qui caractérise ce Maître. Sa datte est de l'année 1637, on en a l'estampe gravée par Etienne Fessard en 1767. Sous le nom: Les Ouvriers de la Vigne. Sur bois. Haut 7 V[erchokk], Large 9½ V [= 31.1 × 42.2 cm]'.

9. Summary

While the approach to the subject and the lively way the story is portrayed undeniably carry the stamp of Rembrandt, a certain unevenness in execution prompts doubt about the painting being autograph. An overemphatic definition of form in the foreground areas is difficult to reconcile with a rather uncertain and poorly articulated rendering of the mid-ground figures. The organization of space is not really effectively supported by the chiaroscuro. A larger copy of mediocre quality, like the present work bearing the date 1637, confirms that there must have been an original in which Rembrandt's intentions as to form, chiaroscuro and spatial effect were more clearly realised. This original may perhaps be recognized in a painting described in 1804 (when it fetched a high price), which has not come to light since. In the 17th century the original must have had a considerable influence, even outside Rembrandt's immediate circle.

The Leningrad painting was most probably done in Rembrandt's studio in 1637, the same year as the presumed original from which it was copied must have been produced. One cannot say for sure which pupil did this, but it could well have been Ferdinand Bol, who must at all events have been familiar with the work.

REFERENCES

1 Gerson 83; Schwartz 1984, fig. 187; Tümpel 1986, cat. no. 55.

2 B. Knipping, *De iconografie van de Contra-Reformatie in de Nederlanden*, Hilversum 1939, I, p. 301. R. Hamann, *Rembrandt*, Berlin 1948, pp. 264–266.

3 Y. Kuznetsov, 'Le tableau de Rembrandt "La parabole des vignerons"', *Travaux du Musée National de l'Hermitage* 6 (1961), pp. 60–88 (in Russian with French summary). Idem in: *Rembrandt Harmensz. van Rijn. Paintings from Soviet Museums*, Leningrad [*c.* 1971], no. 11.

4 HdG 116.

C 89 Half-length figure of an old woman, presumably the prophetess Anna

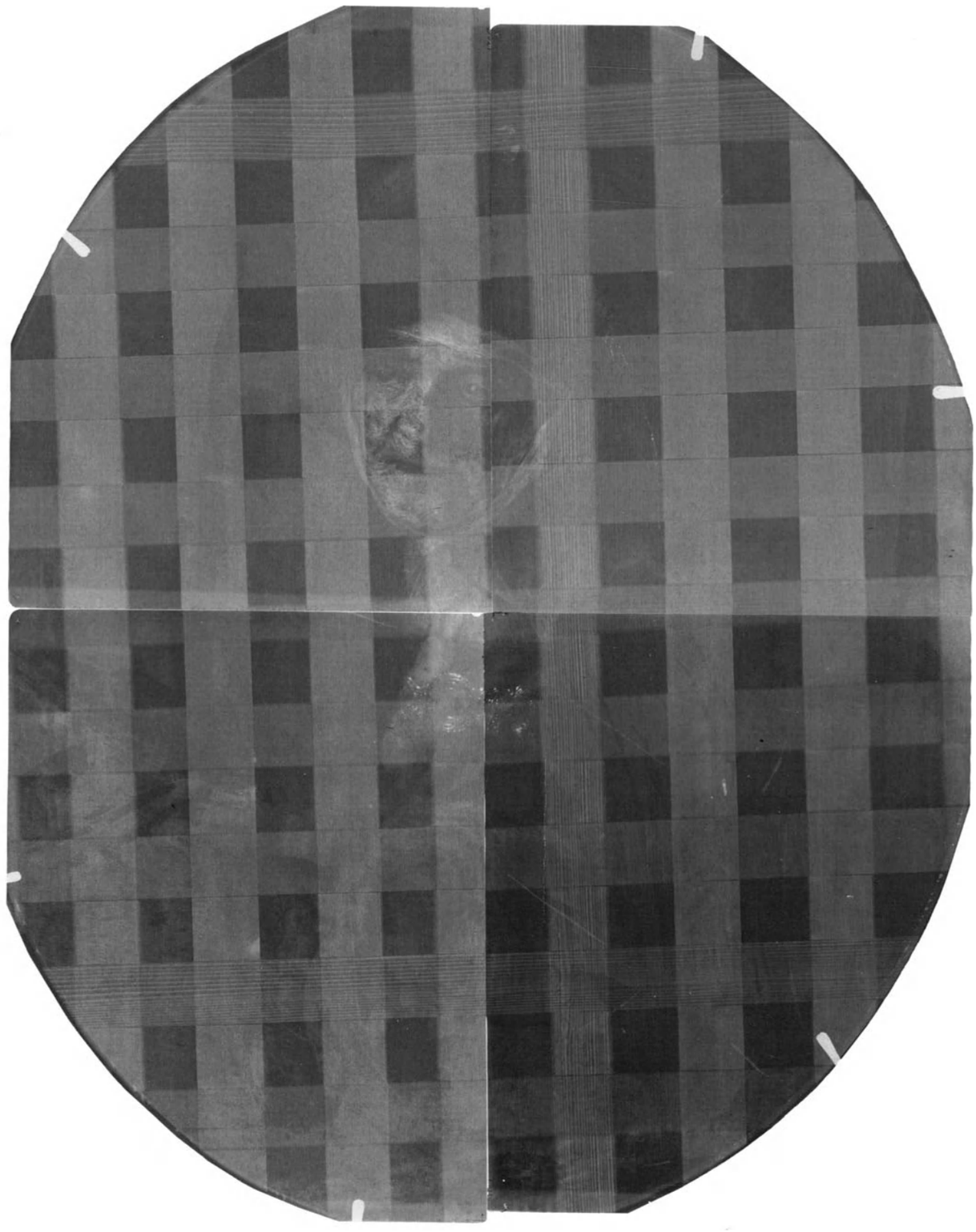
VIENNA, KUNSTHISTORISCHES MUSEUM, INV.NO. 408

HDG 511; BR. 71; BAUCH 262; GERSON 190

Fig. 1. Panel 79.8 × 61.5 cm



Fig. 2. X-Ray



1. Summarized opinion

A partly quite poorly preserved and perhaps originally rectangular painting from Rembrandt's circle, that may be a copy after a lost original.

2. Description of subject

Seen almost square-on and to below the waist, an old woman stands bowed slightly forward, leaning on a stick held in her left hand and with the right hand folded over it. Her head is tilted a little to the right, and she looks towards the left.

The wrinkled face is surrounded by a white wimple that covers the forehead; over this she wears a head-covering, with a purplish lustre, that hangs down to the shoulders and whose inside surface, folded back at the front, has a pattern in ochre-yellow, red-brown and grey. At the bottom edge this is adorned with a fringe of cords with small, shiny golden balls at the ends. She also wears a black velvet cloak, trimmed with fur on the shoulders and, on the left, along the edge of the front panel draped over the arm. By the wrist on the right, folds of a wide shirt sleeve are seen projecting from beneath the cloak. The cloak is held together at the breast with an ornate, gold-coloured clasp lying over a dark undergarment with a straight neckline; above the latter a finely-pleated shirt has a collar standing up against the throat.

The figure is in light falling from the left, and stands before a neutral background.

3. Observations and technical information

Working conditions

Examined in June 1970 (B.H., E.v.d.W.) in reasonable daylight and out of the frame; examined again in March 1977 (J.B., S.H.L.). Four X-ray films, together covering the entire surface, were received later.

Support

DESCRIPTION: Oak panel, grain vertical, oval 79.8 × 61.5 cm. Three planks (see SCIENTIFIC DATA below). Vertical plane-marks can be seen at thin places in the paint surface. Vertical cracks run from the top and bottom edges, a little to the right of centre. Back cradled. So far as may be seen, the edges bear no trace of bevelling, which by itself is not unusual for a cradled panel; however, the fact that on the left parts of a signature are intersected by the present somewhat irregular edge shows that it cannot be the original edge. It is of course hard to tell for certain how much of the panel has been lost. The original format may have been rectangular (see also *7. Copies*, 1).

SCIENTIFIC DATA: Dendrochronology (Prof. Dr J. Bauch and Prof. Dr D. Eckstein, Hamburg) shows the three planks to come from the same tree; the centre one has both the most and the youngest annual rings of heartwood, numbering 235 with the latest dated as 1622. The earliest possible felling-date is thus 1631; bearing in mind the age of the tree, one must however reckon on 15 or more rings of sapwood, which would make a felling-date of 1637 or later probable[1].

Ground

DESCRIPTION: A yellow-brown that may be assumed to belong to the ground is visible in the fur trim by the hand on the left, and shows through in the background. The clearly-apparent and virtually uncovered grain structure in the left background, and even occasionally vertical plane-marks in the planks of the panel, indicate that the ground was applied only very thinly.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

Paint layer

CONDITION: One is struck by the translucency of the paint layer in thinly painted passages such as the very patchy background, the fur trim on the cloak, the hands and the edges of the shirt sleeve at the lower right. Though increasing translucency in paint is not uncommon as part of the ageing process, its extent here is exceptional; the reason has to be looked for in a shortcoming in the material used (in the priming or the composition of the paint, or both) the results of which have become apparent with time and now mar the relationship between these passages and their surroundings. Wearing may also play some part in the remarkably bald appearance of the hands, though this area seems never to have been more than meanly executed. Small, darkened retouches can be seen here and there. Craquelure: a very fine craquelure with a squarish pattern occurs in light parts of the face and shirt; small cracks are found in the cast shadow on the fur collar on the left by the clasp.

DESCRIPTION: In general, the panel's grain is visible. At places the surface has a lumpy relief that at most points corresponds to the shapes of the face and clothing.

The background is dark grey at the top, becoming a warmer and lighter grey further down. Brushstrokes running in various directions can be seen, quite uncorrelated with the present appearance of this area (which, as already said, is very blotchy). In the lit part of the face, mainly yellowish light flesh tints are set over a neutral flesh colour with short strokes placed side-by-side in small fields. The contour of the cheekbone and cheek is here formed by a few longer, flat strokes partly overlapping strokes of grey-brown that also provide the contour. A little pink is used here and there, and the ridge of the nose has a row of highlights in white. The fold in the cheek on the left is insensitively done with a stripe and dots of brown-red and ochre-yellow. In the cast shadow on the left on the temple and forehead, there is a substantial amount of red merging into a reddish brown in the upper eyelid. A yellowish grey is used for the white of the eye on the left, some red in both corners of the eye, and a light pinkish red limiting the lower eyelid, which is bordered at the top by a finickily painted rim of moisture in white. The eye-pouch consists of thin strokes of brownish and yellowish paint over which a little light grey has been laid at some places. The shaping of the eye area is hazily defined; a certain bite is introduced by the indication of the eye itself with its dark grey iris in which a tiny spot of dark paint is placed on the right, and a black accent of the pupil with a catchlight in white. Immediately above this the border of the upper eyelid is extended downwards on the left by means of a carelessly placed stroke of black. The eye on the right shows a similar variety of colour and a similar fuzzy handling of form to which strength is given by coarse accents in black — in the eyelash and alongside it in the pupil — and by a stroke of thin red used to border the lower lid, here slovenly shaped by being continued upwards by the inner corner of the eye. The shadow side of the face is executed mainly in a reddish grey-brown, with a squiggly indication of wrinkles in the skin in brown and a few strokes of ochre-yellow on the cheekbone. The cast shadow from the nose is dark grey. The mouth comprises lips shown very vaguely in a pale grey-pink and a mouth-line accentuated by a few strokes of black; the creases running out from the corners of the mouth are done in grey-brown. The outline of the face against the wimple is shown on the right with long, modelling strokes of dark grey and black.

Both the white wimple and the pleated shirt are done with meticulous, and in the case of the latter rather cramped detail. The headcloth is painted in a fairly thick white in the lit part and grey in the shadow, with long strokes of yellow-white, a muddy grey and black for the folds; the shirt is in a dingy yellow-white in the light and, once again, grey in the shadow. The inner surface of the dark head-covering, with a cloudy motif drawn in brownish red, grey and a little quite thick ochre-yellow, is a dark blue-black in the shadow on the left applied with sometimes broad brushstrokes. At the top the wimple is painted quite thinly

Fig. 3. Detail (1 : 1)



Fig. 4. Detail (1 : 1)



in a purplish brown, and more thickly with opaque grey in the shadow on the right; broad, dark strokes running along the contour at the top seem there to belong to the background, while to the right they coincide with the shadow part of the head-covering. The fringe of cords is rendered with loose strokes of yellowish brown and grey; most of the small gold balls are given a light yellow catchlight. The highlights in the clasp holding the cloak together are done in an ochre colour and a very thick light yellow. The folds in the cloak are shown with strokes of dark grey over an almost uniform flat black; lower down the contours of the fold of cloak hanging over the hand on the right are painted with long and insensitive strokes. At the lower left, by the fur trimming, two recessed curved lines running one into the other seem to have been scratched into the paint and then overpainted with the black of the cloak; these are also seen faintly as dark in the X-ray. As already mentioned, the paint layer in the fur trim is remarkably translucent. In the area beside and below the hand on the left there is furthermore a virtually bald passage, in a brownish tint with strokes of grey over it that give only a remote idea of the structure of the fur, and at the bottom a few scratchmarks. The hands offer a similar picture: taken as a whole, a passage that is partly bald and partly covered with translucent paint, the outer contours of which are in part determined mostly by the black of the adjacent areas of the undergarment and cloak. Within this, the rendering of form is limited to a sketchy indication of the outlines of the fingers and a ring on the woman's left hand, plus a little greenish grey in the shadows and a lustreless, dirty brown-yellow in the lit areas.
SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

X-Rays

The radiographic image is dominated by the cradle, which shows up fairly light but does not interfere too badly with the legibility of light parts of the picture. The impression gained broadly matches what is seen at the paint surface. In the lit part of the head one sees a complex of short and partly merging brushstrokes. The radioabsorbency is fairly evenly distributed in this area. The cheek-fold on the left and the mouth show up as dark reserves, more strongly than one might expect. At the top right in the light image of the wimple, strokes of paint appearing light show the front fold in the cloth as running further to the right than one sees today. On the left below the chin there is a light triangle, and adjoining it to the right a slightly less radioabsorbent area in which there is a dark line discending to the right; these features, probably stemming from a light underpainting, are hard to define more closely. At the lower left, appearing as dark reserves in an area showing up weakly light, there are the two curved lines described earlier (see *Paint layer*, DESCRIPTION) as subsequently overpainted scratchmarks. In the lower lefthand area especially there are dark bands and patches that bear no relation to the picture.

Signature

At the bottom left, in brown-grey with the date in a cool light grey <*Rembrandt. f ft. 1639.*>; the *R* and *f* are intersected by the present edge of the panel. The (strengthened) *R* and *e* are more distinct than the rest of the signature and date. The script is spindly and lacks flow, and it does not make an authentic impression.

Varnish

No special remarks.

4. Comments

The attribution of the painting to Rembrandt, already rejected by Tümpel[2], cannot on close inspection be maintained. Allowance must it is true be made for the fact that the balance of the picture has been upset by the paint layer in thinly painted areas like the background, the fur trim on the cloak and the hands having, with the passage of time, become remarkably translucent. So excessive an occurrence of what is in itself a normal phenomenon of ageing may be mainly due to the obvious thinness of the ground described above; it has never so far been seen in work by Rembrandt, and would seem to point to a departure from his usual procedures and use of materials.

The treatment of more thickly painted and well preserved passages shows a lack of quality when compared with work by Rembrandt. Typical of this is the heart of the picture, the old woman's face, where a very thorough execution has not led to any convincing suggestion of material and modelling. A great deal of care and patience has been devoted to rendering wrinkled skin with a complex brushwork and innumerable strokes that do not add up to a satisfactorily homogeneous whole. Around the eyes the rendering of form is fuzzy, and the overall effect is in the end dependent on quite coarse accents in black (in eyelashes and pupils) and pink-red (in the borders of the lower eyelids). The representation of the white wimple and pleated shirt is marked by a similar industry and perseverance in providing detail, but with a similar lack of finesse in rendering material. Of the other parts of the costume, only the dark undergarment just below the shirt and the elaborate metal clasp have been done with care (the latter not entirely in vain), while the rest have been given no more than cursory treatment. The rendering of the black cloak is flat and pictorially weak, and the same is true of the area in the lower centre — the hands and stick, the fur-trimmed cloak hanging down on the left, and the folds of the shirt sleeve on the right. Along the contour of the dark cloth above the head and in the shadowed area to the left of it there are bold strokes that ought perhaps to be seen as corrections.

That despite these weaknesses the painting could pass for so long as a Rembrandt is perhaps due to an overall impression governed largely by the design of the picture, which is certainly far superior to the execution. The variation in movement created within the figure by the set of the head on the shoulders and forming part of the convincing typifying of frail old age, and the attractive lighting of the head, are elements that lend the picture a certain interest. A reasonable explanation for both the difference in quality between execution and concept and the certainly not un-Rembrandtlike character of the latter might be that the Vienna painting is a copy, perhaps made in Rembrandt's circle of a work from his own hand of a level we can still see in, to quote an example with a similar subject-matter, the Chatsworth *Man in oriental costume (King Uzziah?)* of *c.* 1639 (no. A 128). In this connexion it may be commented that there are a number of copies of the *Uzziah*; one of them, now in the coll. Lord Margadale, probably came from Rembrandt's studio (see no. A 128, *7. Copies*, 1). The results of dendrochronology of the panel of the present work broadly confirm the date of 1639 found on the painting, which would thus give the year in which the presumed original could at the latest have been painted.

Undoubtedly the esteem enjoyed by the Vienna painting was due in part to the tradition of a biographical approach to Rembrandt's work, which gave it significance as the only picture he painted of his mother in Amsterdam, a year before she died in 1640. Vosmaer[3] already accepted this identification, and this personal link continued for a long time to flavour people's perception of the painting, though Weisbach[4] pointed out that there was no direct evidence for the identification. Since then Bauch[5], and subsequently Tümpel[6] and Demus[7], have seen the work as a picture of the prophetess Anna for which Rembrandt's mother sat as the model — a shift in emphasis that, probably rightly, gave primary interest to the depiction of this biblical character. Apart from exotic clothing, depictions of the prophetess Anna in Rembrandt's oeuvre are sometimes marked by attributes such as a book (in the Amsterdam painting dated 1631, no. A 37), a child (in etching B. 51 dated 1630; in etching B. 49 of *c.* 1639 the child carries the book), and a stick (also in etching B. 49). The old woman in the Vienna painting seems to fit this iconography quite well, though it remains doubtful whether the model used is to be identified as the artist's mother.

5. Documents and sources

None.

6. Graphic reproductions

None of interest.

7. Copies

1. Panel, rectangular, 74.5 × 59.7 cm, Leipzig, Museum der bildenden Künste, inv. no. 1622. To judge from the photograph, a possibly 17th-century painting of no more than mediocre quality, whose rectangular shape does not necessarily warrant any conclusion as to the original format of the Vienna painting; the line taken by the contour of the cloak at the lower right even makes one rather suspect that this is an infilling by the author,

and that the model from which he was working — and it is by no means certain that this was no. C 89 — was oval in format.

8. Provenance

– In the Imperial collection since at least 1772, when the painting was moved to Vienna from the castle at Pressburg. Described in: Christian von Mechel, *Verzeichnis der Gemälde der kaiserlich königlichen Bilder Gallerie in Wien*, Vienna 1783, p. 90 no. 25: 'Von Rimbrandt. Das Portrait von Rimbrandts Mutter, in welchem sie als eine sehr alte Frau, die sich gebeugt mit beyden Händen auf einen Stab stüzet, vorgestellt ist. Sie hat einen dunkelbraunen Pelzrock um, der vorn mit einer goldenen Spange zusammen gehalten ist, und auf dem Kopf eine weite sammtene Haube. Auf dem Gemälde liest man Rimbrandt f[t] 1639. Auf Holz ovalförmig im Durchschnitte 2 Fusz 6 Zoll hoch, 2 Fusz breit [= 79.02 × 63.22 cm]. Halbe Figur. Lebensgrösse.'

9. Summary

Though no. C 89 has until recently be looked on as an autograph Rembrandt, the uninspired and hardly suggestive handling of the head and the frankly poor treatment of the cloak and hands make it impossible to maintain this attribution. In thinly painted areas the paint layer has with the passage of time become remarkably translucent, which seems to indicate shortcomings in technical procedure and the use of materials. The inherently interesting and rembrandtesque nature of the picture may well indicate that the present work must be seen as a copy after a work by Rembrandt, possibly done in his circle. The traditional interpretation of the picture as being of Rembrandt's mother has in recent times given way to the belief that it shows the prophetess Anna.

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. See however *New findings 1987*.
2 Tümpel 1986, cat. no. A 15.
3 C. Vosmaer, *Rembrandt. Sa vie et ses oeuvres*, The Hague 1877, p. 520.
4 W. Weisbach, *Rembrandt*, Berlin/Leipzig 1926, p. 285.
5 Bauch 262.
6 C. Tümpel, *Rembrandt legt die Bibel aus*, Berlin 1970, no. 49.
7 K. Demus, *Katalog der Gemäldegalerie Holländische Meister des 15., 16. und 17. Jahrhunderts*, Vienna 1972, pp. 76–77.

C 90 S. Francis at prayer

COLUMBUS, OHIO, THE COLUMBUS MUSEUM OF ART, MUSEUM PURCHASE, DERBY FUND, ACC. NO. 61.2

HDG 187; BR. 610; BAUCH 175; GERSON 97

Fig. 1 Panel 59.1 × 46.4 cm

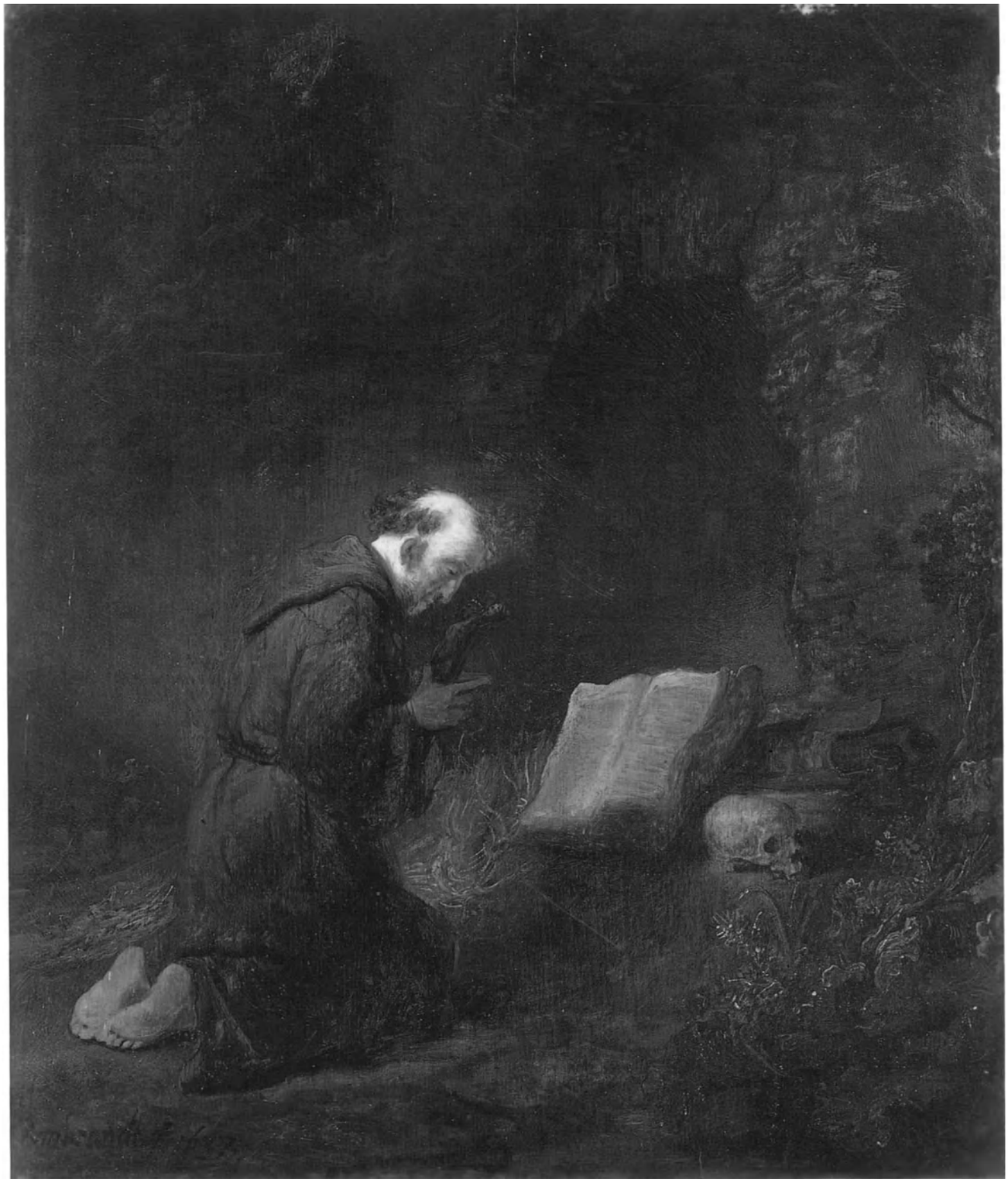
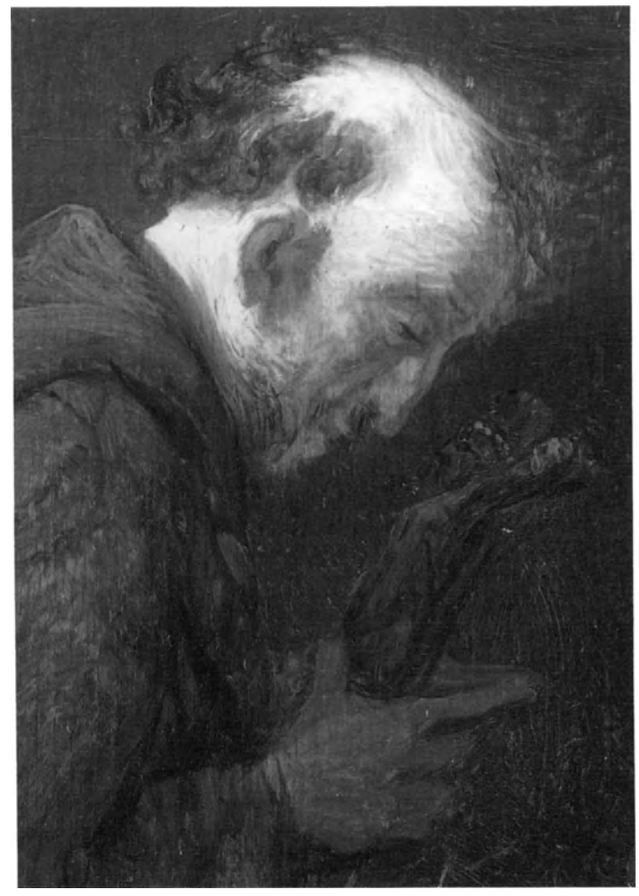


Fig. 2. Detail (1 : 1)



1. Summarized opinion

A reasonably well preserved painting, probably painted in the 1640s (or even before 1640?) under the influence of Rembrandt and of Ferdinand Bol, by the same hand as no. C 91.

2. Description of subject

The saint — recognizable by his brown cowl, a crucifix and a skull, and seen in right profile — kneels in front of a masonry arch in what seems most like a murkily-lit, foliage-covered wall; his lower legs are turned somewhat towards the viewer, showing the soles of his bare feet. The light falls from the left on his neck, bald head and back. In his clasped hands he holds a crucifix in front of him in the shadow; in front of him on a small mound are two books, one open and propped against the other lying closed. Next to the books there is a skull, and to the right of this a partly visible pilgrim's flask. Behind the figure some straw forms his bed, and to the left and especially right there are low plants.

3. Observations and technical information

Working conditions

Examined on 14 September 1972 (S.H.L., E.v.d.W.) in good daylight and out of the frame.

Support

DESCRIPTION: Panel, probably oak, grain vertical, 59.1 × 46.4 cm. Single plank. Let into a larger panel, so that neither the back nor edges can be seen. Two cracks run downwards from the top, and a short one up from the bottom.
SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

Ground

DESCRIPTION: A grey is exposed or shows through in the archway on the right, to the right of the man's forehead, and in the background at the top to the left of centre.
SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

Paint layer

CONDITION: Slightly worn in the thinly painted passages, otherwise good apart from some minor paint-loss to the left of the feet and at the top righthand corner.
DESCRIPTION: The paint ranges from relatively thick, e.g. in the plants on the right, in the dark arch area and in the saint's neck and hood, to thinner and comparatively flat at places in the left foreground. The brushstroke is mostly relatively coarse, giving little suggestion of form. The colour is virtually limited to browns, greys and black, with a few yellow and green tints.

At the upper left black has been applied with a broadish brush in various directions over the grey ground, which shows through. Further down, a cloudy dark yellow and green are probably meant to suggest plants. A lighter grey is placed along the contour of the man's back, using fine strokes; below the figure there is some vegetation in dark brown, and small strokes of a thicker brown-yellow and brown render the straw. The foreground has on the left strokes of thick and thin brownish paint, and in the centre a thin patch outlined in black (a stone?). Above the dark — but mostly thickly painted — shadow on the right foliage and plants are indicated with a certain animation and thick edgings of light, in dark greens and blue-green, yellows and browns. The wall, which seems to support a climbing plant, shows mainly horizontal strokes of partly thin dark red-brown, over which there are dark lines that must be meant as the joints between the stones. Just above the middle is a patch of vertically-brushed grey — perhaps an area of plasterwork? — surrounded by a thinner grey lying over the exposed ground, with dark lines that seem to suggest cracks. At the left this grey merges into a darker tint on which strokes of grey-brown may represent vegetation. The masonry arch is indicated crudely round the black-to-grey opening in the wall, with strokes of a black that shades downwards into grey. Here, a yellowish grey with touches of a lighter yellow shows straw.

The man's head and neck are rendered, in the light, with confused brushwork in a yellow flesh tint merging into strokes of brown, yellow and grey in the shadows, with a stroke of black for the eye. The hair is rendered with strokes of grey placed over the ground. The ear is done fairly thoroughly with some pink, brown and light pink; its cast shadow, and that of the hood, are painted over the ground in brown. In the light, the cowl is done with strokes of a thick ochre brown that thins towards the shadow, with thick lines of dark brown; in the shadows a flat, thin and somewhat translucent brown is used. The feet are executed clumsily with vertical strokes of yellowish and greyish brown, with brown-black cast shadows. The hands are vague, in strokes of a muddy yellowish grey-brown, and the crucifix is done in ochre yellow and brown, with thick black lines.

The open book is rather lifeless, in a thick grey, and its edges in shadow are done in brown-grey and brown-yellow. The closed book is in browns with dark brown edges and thick yellow-brown in the light, as is the flask. The skull is executed in a warm yellow-brown with partly thin, flat shadows, and with thick flicks of black.
SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

X-Rays

None.

Fig. 3. Detail with signature (reduced)



Signature

At the lower left in black <*Rembrandt. f 1637*>. The script lacks the firmness of Rembrandt's painted signatures, and does not make an authentic impression.

Varnish

No special remarks.

4. Comments

Presumably because of the signature — which by itself does not give an impression of authenticity — the painting has long passed for a Rembrandt and enjoyed a certain reputation; a copy was made of it, and either the original or this copy formed part of the collection of the Duc d'Orléans (see *7. Copies*, 1 and *8. Provenance*). Until recently the attribution has never been doubted in the literature, though Gerson stated that he had never seen the painting[1]. Schwartz[2] was not convinced of its genuineness, and Tümpel[3] ascribed it to Rembrandt's circle. Rembrandt's authorship must indeed be regarded as out of the question; the unsatisfactory cohesion in the generally ragged brushwork, and the very poor suggestion of form and material that results in both the figure and most of the accessories, make this amply clear. The most lively suggestion is achieved in the plants in the right foreground, but even these are far inferior to comparable passages in, for instance, the Leningrad *Flora* of 1634 (no. A 93). The composition — in particular the structure of the figure seen mostly in profile but with the feet twisted towards the front — cannot be called other than weak, and one has to conclude that the work wrongly bears the Rembrandt signature, so that the date of 1637, too, is not above suspicion.

For all the disparity in quality, there is nonetheless in the lighting, colouring and brushwork where these have some success in rendering the form of plants, books and the skull, enough similarity with the work of Rembrandt and his school to make some connexion with this acceptable. The theme and execution remind one most of work from Rembrandt's last years in Leiden, especially the lost *S. Jerome* of *c.* 1630/31 (see Vol. I, p. 38 fig. 6) and the *S. Peter in prison* of 1631 (no. A 36). In execution, however, the painting falls far behind these prototypes, and shows a remarkable resemblance to another work previous attributed to Rembrandt, the Budapest *Scholar at a table* (no. C 91). That painting, too, offers in its motif a number of reminiscences of the Leiden Rembrandt, though in an execution that

Fig. 4. Attributed to F. Bol, *S. Jerome at prayer*, pen and wash, 17 × 16.1 cm. Brno, Moravská Galerie



shows forms in a very comparable slovenly and weak manner. This is true of the head and hands, which exhibit the same streaky brushwork and the same plastically-ineffective shadow effects as one sees in the *S. Francis*, for the scarcely convincing drapery, and also for the still-life — in particular, the closed book with curling binding is (in reverse) almost identical to that in the present work. The similarities are such that it is reasonable to ascribe both paintings to a single hand.

The Budapest painting seems to have been based on a drawing in Mainz attributed to Ferdinand Bol (Sumowski *Drawings* I, no. 275), the design of which was initially followed but then altered by introducing Leiden motifs. The idea of it having been produced in Bol's studio or circle in the 1640s merits serious consideration, and bearing in mind the great stylistic likenesses the same could be said for the *S. Francis*. Though the composition of this is not derived exactly from a Bol drawing known to us, there is a resemblance to a number of drawings by Bol showing S. Jerome in profile and kneeling in a grotto overgrown with plants, in particular (in reverse) to that in Brno (Moravská Galerie; Sumowski *Drawings* I, no. 212; our fig. 4), which is put by Sumowski in the mid-1640s and is very like the Mainz drawing already mentioned as the basis for the Budapest *Scholar*. As in that case, the artist would have changed the setting to a Leiden style one — on the model of Rembrandt's lost *S. Jerome*, of which one is also reminded by the soles of the feet facing the viewer — into a masonry niche. The date in the 1640s assumed for the Budapest painting probably also applies to the Columbus *S. Francis*, but the

character of the brushwork (especially in the vegetation) might rather point to a date shortly before 1640. In that case, the date of 1637 on the painting would give an accurate indication.

5. Documents and sources

None.

6. Graphic reproductions

1. Engraving by Heinrich Guttenberg (Wöhrd nr Nuremberg 1749–Nuremberg 1818), inscribed: *Peint par Rembrant Van-Ryn, — Dessiné par Vandenberg, — Gravé par H.Guttenberg* / (on either side of the Orléans arms:) *De la Galerie de S.A.S. Monseigneur le Duc d'Orléans.* / *A.P.D.R.*. Published in: *Gallerie du Palais Royal, gravée d'après les tableaux des différentes écoles qui la composent...Dédié à S.A.S. Monseigneur d'Orléans... par J. Couché...*, Paris 1786–1808, with a text that inter alia says: 'Peint sur Bois, ayant de hauteur 1 Pied 10 Pouces, sur 1 Pied 7 Pouces de large [= 59.5 × 51.4 cm]. Les sujets les plus stériles deviennent riches sous le Pinceau de *Rembrant* par la force de son Coloris et la fierté de l'effet dont il savoit les rendre susceptibles. . . .C'est un des bons Tableaux de ce Maître, des plus finis et des mieux conservés'. Reproduced in reverse. The print shows a number of details that cannot now be seen on either the original or a copy in Philadelphia (see *Copies*, 1), such as an arched window in the rear wall above the figure to the left, two stones in the centre foreground, and so on. It is not easy to tell which of the two versions served as the prototype, which is important for their respective pedigrees. In some respects — the pronounced cast shadow of the figure, and the straight cover of the binding of the horizontal book — the print seems closer to the copy, and in others — the line of the archway, and the straw to the right of the figure — closer to the original. The saint has a beard, not seen in either of the paintings. The dimensions quoted tend to favour the belief that the painting in the Orléans collection being reproduced was the copy now in Philadelphia.

7. Copies

1. Panel 61.6 × 48.3 cm, Philadelphia, John G. Johnson Collection, no. 481. An old and very mediocre copy. Bought by Johnson in 1912 from Sedelmeyer, Paris, who gave its origin as the Duc d'Orléans collection. Hofstede de Groot[4] mentions a copy from that collection, described by him as being in private ownership in Budapest; this is probably identical with the one in Philadelphia. On the degree of probability that this copy was in the Orleans collection, see *6. Graphic Reproductions* above. Cf. De 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. Un Saint François. Peint sur bois, haut d'un pied dix pouces et demie, large d'un pied sept pouces [= 60.9 × 51.4 cm]. Le Saint est à genoux, aiant devant lui un grand livre ouvert avec une tête de mort a côté.' The statement by Dutuit[5] and Hofstede de Groot[4] that this painting was previously in the 1751 Crozat sale (i.e. the sale of the coll. Joseph-Antoine Crozat, Baron de Tugny, in mid-June 1751, Lugt 762) is probably based on a misunderstanding. The painting from the Orleans collection was sold by Philippe Égalité with the other Dutch and Flemish paintings to Thomas Moore Slade, who acted also on behalf of Lord Kinnaird, Mr Morland and Mr Hammersley (W. Buchanan, *Memoirs of Painting* I, London 1824, pp. 18–19, 196); exhibited at 125 Pall Mall, London in April 1793, no. 4: 'St. Francis in meditation by Rembrandt'. A painting sold in Amsterdam in 1809 was probably not this copy, but no. C 90.

8. Provenance

On possible confusion about which painting (the present work or a copy of it) is intended in old descriptions, see *6. Graphic Reproductions* and *7. Copies* above.
*– Coll. [Bicker and Wijkersloot], sale Amsterdam 19 July 1809, no. 48: 'Rembrand. hoog 23, breed 18 dm [= 59.1 × 46.3 cm]. Paneel. Een Biddende Heeremiet, knielende, en houdende een Krucifix in zijne Handen, voor hem ligt een opengeslagen Boek en Doodshoofd. Fiks en meesterlijk behandeld.' (A hermit at prayer, kneeling, and holding a crucifix in his hands, before him lies an open book and a death's head. Skilfully and masterly done.) (80 guilders to Gruyter). It is not impossible that this is the copy described under *7. Copies*, 1, but the dimensions better and remarkably closely match those of no. C 91.
– Dealer Charles Sedelmeyer, Paris (*Catalogue of 100 paintings* III, Paris 1896, no. 31).
– Coll. Alfred Beit (d. 1906), London; coll. Sir Otto John Beit (d. 1930), London; Sir Alfred Lane Beit, London.
– Purchased by the museum in 1961.

9. Summary

The weak execution of the painting rules out an attribution to Rembrandt. There are remarkable similarities with *A scholar at a table* in Budapest (no. C 91), first of all in the manner of painting but also in the use of motifs reminiscent of Rembrandt's work from 1630/31. In the Budapest work free use is made of a drawing by Ferdinand Bol, and something of the same kind could apply to the *S. Francis*. Both paintings seem to come from a single hand, and probably date from the 1640s or a little earlier.

REFERENCES

1 Gerson 97; Br.-Gerson 610.
2 Schwartz 1984, p. 380.
3 Tümpel 1986, cat. no. A 25.
4 HdG 187.
5 E. Dutuit, *Tableaux et dessins de Rembrandt, Supplément*, Paris 1885, p. 3.

C 91 Scholar at a table with books and a candlestick

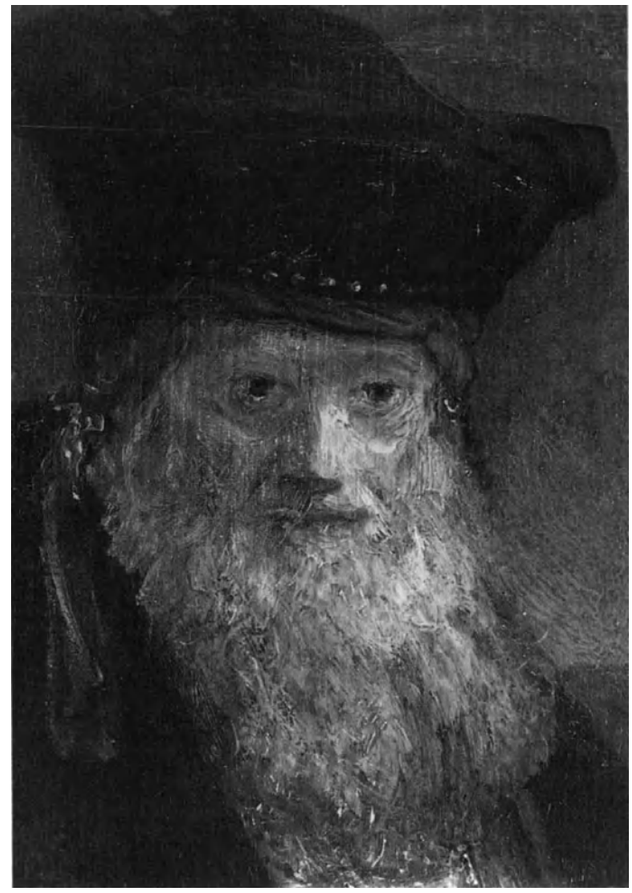
BUDAPEST, SZÉPMÜVÉSZETI MÚZEUM, NO. 235

HDG 230; BR. 435; BAUCH 177; GERSON 222

Fig. 1. Panel 70.7 × 52.9 cm



Fig. 2. Detail (1 : 1)



1. Summarized opinion

An apparently well preserved painting that was done probably in the 1640s in Rembrandt's circle, using a drawing by Ferdinand Bol, and by the same hand as no. C 90.

2. Description of subject

An old man with a long beard is seen full-length, facing three-quarters right, seated in an armchair. His long black cloak, fur-trimmed down the front and fastened with a gold clasp, hangs over the chairback. He wears a brown undergown, decorated with colourful motifs at the hem. A black cap is worn over a headcloth with earflaps and dangling decorations. His hands rest, one over the other, on a long walking-stick lent against his right knee. To the right of him a table is covered with a dark red cloth with a decorated and fringed edge. On the table, a closed book rests on a cushion, while further back a gold candlestick holding a long, snuffed candle stands on another book; to the left of this, standing upright and lying flat, are further books. The background is formed by a wall with a heavy half-column. Light falls from the right, illuminating most strongly the wall to the right where the candle and candlestick cast a shadow. The direction of this shadow and that of the walking-stick indicate that the source of light is very close, just outside the picture.

3. Observations and technical information

Working conditions

Examined on 9 August 1972 (B.H., E.v.d.W.) in good daylight, out of the frame.

Support

DESCRIPTION: Oak panel, grain vertical, 70.7 × 52.9 cm, comprising three vertical planks measuring (from left to right) 11.8, 30.2 and 10.9 cm in width. Thickness *c.* 0.8 cm on the right, *c.* 0.5–0.6 cm on the left. The joins are covered with battens on the back, where all four sides are bevelled (more deeply on the right than on the left). The back has been coated with reddish paint.
SCIENTIFIC DATA: Dendrochronology (Dr Peter Klein, Hamburg) showed: lefthand plank 80 annual rings heartwood, datable 1524–1603; middle plank 216 rings, datable 1400–1615; righthand plank 68 rings, undatable. Felling date for the middle plank 1624 at the earliest, but given the age of the tree, more probably 1630 or after.

Ground

DESCRIPTION: A light yellow-brown is most clearly visible in the candlestick, as well as in places among the books, on the knee on the left and in the half-column.
SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

Paint layer

CONDITION: Apart from retouches along the joins there are no obvious defects, but a badly yellowed layer of varnish makes the condition hard to judge. Craquelure: In the still-life of books there are shrinkage cracks in the rather more thickly painted areas. In one zone below the hands there is a very small craquelure pattern, likewise due to shrinkage, differing from the rest of the surface which shows a fairly fine pattern with, in the background, vertical bands in which a horizontal crack pattern predominates.
DESCRIPTION: The paint is in general applied thinly, and the grain of the panel can be seen in the paint surface almost everywhere. Left of the half-column the background is painted with mainly vertical strokes in an almost opaque dark grey. Here and there the ground can be glimpsed within the brushstrokes. A number of strokes apparent in relief have a curved shape or lie almost crosswise over the vertical strokes and edges, and may hint at architectural features. Similar brushstrokes, mostly horizontal and readable as the shape of a tablecloth are found lower down, and interfere with the presentday cloak and chair. To the right of the half-column animated strokes of a relatively impasto grey depict the plastered wall; here and there lighter zigzag strokes suggest fissures in the plaster. The thick grey paint continues in the base of the half-column to the right of the head. Elsewhere in the half-column the grey paint, in a darker tint, is quite thin, so that the ground shows through; at the transition between base and shaft lively brushstrokes in a dark grey appear to indicate a decoration.

The standing books on the table are painted with distinct strokes, and are given slightly hesitant highlights along the edges. The candlestick and the horizontal book on which it stands are in a reserve left in the paint of the background, and at places are painted so thinly that the ground shows through, and in fact is occasionally wholly exposed. The highest lights are done with relatively thick spots and dabs of paint; the candle is painted, not very convincingly, in a thick ochre colour. On the cushion, over the base tone, a knotted pattern is indicated with tiny dots and lines of green-yellow paint; a fringe is rendered with small, rapidly-drawn strokes. The tablecloth is set down with a red-brown base tone over which strokes of brighter red represent patches of light.

The man's face comprises a multiplicity of strokes and touches of the brush, and the form can hardly be described as clearly defined. The highest lights consist of thin streaks of light

paint. In the cursorily drawn eyes the irises are irregular in shape; the shadow of the nose and the mouth are done roughly, in dark paint. The beard is painted, with scant suggestion, using coarse brushwork, and at the bottom overlaps the cloak fastening, which is done in touches of pink and yellow. The hat is drawn, with quick lines of black, over a very thin, semi-translucent black. Strokes of reddish and yellow paint show through the back, and continue — visible through the grey — towards the right, outside the present outline of the hat. This gives the impression of the headdress having originally been squatter in shape and different in colour. The kerchief, projecting from beneath the hat, is rendered in a muddy yellow-grey with dark contours and lines of shadow; the ornament dangling over the ear on the left is executed partly with strokes of black and partly with firm strokes of a madder-like red.

The cloak is predominantly a deep black with greyish lights that are partly placed on top of the black but partly also seem to occupy reserves. The long shirt-sleeve on the left is in greyish tones; the fur trimming on the cloak is rendered most clearly along the left arm, above the hands with regular strokes the ends of which show up against the dark paint of the cloak in a sawtooth line.

The hands are poorly shaped. The lower one consists of streaky brushstrokes of yellow-brown paint; the middle finger shows, in relief, a rather more curved initial version. The upper hand has obviously been painted over the black of the cloak. Below the hands and next to and above the wrist on the left there are shapes apparent in the relief that suggest that changes have been made.

The undergown is executed with very unorganized brushstrokes in a thin light brown. Here and there, e.g. by the knee on the left, some black shows through and seems to lie in long strokes beneath the brown. The sheen of light on the part hanging down from the knee is painted in a translucent brown; the decoration is done with dabs and strokes in yellowish, greenish and madder-like red. The stick is painted with fine, long and slightly hesitant strokes; the shadow it throws is rendered vaguely on the floor, which in the light is in a thick grey and elsewhere in a darker paint.

The man's tall wrinkled boots are drawn with deft strokes; in the leg part the paint is a yellowish grey, the feet are mostly in a reddish brown, and the cast shadow is black. The chairlegs, in grey, are outlined by a few darker lines. A number of curved and horizontal strokes, still visible in relief, make it likely that there have been alterations in this area.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

X-Rays

None.

Signature

At the lower left in black <*Rembrandt. f 1642*>. At the top of the righthand bowl of the capital *R* one can see a dash running away towards the right (as if the brush had slipped). The writing is so regular and over-carefully done that there is reason to doubt the authenticity. Possibly because of an incorrect retouch on a photograph, the date was read by Bredius and Gerson[1] as 1643.

Varnish

A badly yellowed layer of varnish somewhat hampers observation.

4. Comments

The painting is marked by a certain similarity to work by Rembrandt and his pupils from various periods, combined with a manner of painting that is at one and the same time free and singularly feeble.

Fig. 3. Detail with signature (reduced)



The resemblance with Rembrandt and his school lies partly in the motif — the scholar seen in a gloomy room with his books. This subject occurs especially in Rembrandt's Leiden period (see nos. C 15, C 17 and C 18) and, though less frequently and at a larger scale, in Amsterdam (see no. A 95). The half-column in the rear wall is a motif that appears time and again in Rembrandt's early history paintings — the 1627 *S. Paul*, the *Simeon in the Temple* of 1627/28 and the *Judas repentant* of 1629 (nos. A 11, A 12 and A 15) — but it was also frequently used by pupils like Gerard Dou and Isack Jouderville. Against these reminiscences of Leiden there is a manner of painting that renders the forms only summarily in a way that, however awkward and unsatisfactory it may be, would be inconceivable without the example of Rembrandt's work from the 1640s. While these somewhat contradictory features already arouse suspicions, the poor quality of the execution makes an attribution to Rembrandt out of the question. Though the yellowed layer of varnish certainly affects the present appearance of the painting, the muted treatment of colour and light — with the light falling, one notices, from the right — and the overall weak and unarticulated rendering of form put this judgment beyond doubt. It may be termed amazing that though Rembrandt's authorship was doubted by Wurzbach[2] and rejected by Van Dyke[3] (who ascribed the work to Karel van der Pluym), it has until recently found acceptance in the authoritative literature. Schwartz[4] again doubted the attribution, and Tümpel[5] saw it as by one of Rembrandt's circle. The latter opinion seems to be right, and can be narrowed down further still.

Some of the motifs employed in the Budapest painting can be linked with works that can be attributed to two different hands from the Rembrandt school. The pose of the old man's legs is closely akin to that in a drawing in Mainz that Sumowski (*Drawings* I, no. 275) attributes convincingly to Ferdinand Bol; but the similarity with this drawing is not limited to this feature alone (fig. 4). Precisely at those points where the drawing and the painting in its present state differ, the latter shows traces (in the paint relief) of earlier, underlying forms or (from the nature of the craquelure) of changes having been made — in the area below the hands, which in the drawing rest in the man's lap; in the hat, which must in the painting have once been flatter and of another colour; and in the left background, where the underlying forms noted match the table, bookcase and curtains seen in

Fig. 4. Attributed to F. Bol, *Scholar seated in his study*, pen and wash, 19.5 × 16.7 cm. Landesmuseum Mainz, Graphische Sammlung



the drawing at this point. One may thus suppose, with some caution, that the painting originally showed far more resemblance than it does today to Bol's drawing, which Sumowski puts — perhaps somewhat late — in the end of the 1650s. The artist probably only at a second stage altered his composition, changed the pose and clothing of the figure, shifted the table with an added still-life to the right, and replaced the bookcase and curtains in the background with a continuous wall with an engaged column. The latter motif too, Leiden-period though it is, occurs in similar form in later and sometimes surprisingly rembrandtesque works by Bol, such as the etching of *The meditating philosopher* dated 1662 (Hollst. III, p. 19 no. 5). Here, also, one finds the cloak draped over a chair-arm which likewise goes back to Rembrandt's Leiden work (cf. the *Old woman reading* of 1631, no. A 37, and Jouderville's *Minerva*, no. C 9), and in a way similar to that seen in the final state of the Budapest painting. The final pose of the hands resting on the stick, too, is seen in a similar manner in an etching by Bol, albeit of earlier date — the *Old man with flowing beard and velvet cap* dated 1642 (Hollst. III, p. 23 no. 9). Of the objects belonging to the still-life on the table that has been moved to the right, the book lying at an angle and the candlestick appear in almost identical form in a *Scholar* attributed to Rembrandt's second cousin Karel van der Pluym (*c.* 1625–1672) (previously with dealer Van Diemen, Berlin; illustrated by A. Bredius in: *O.H.* 48, 1931, p. 259 fig. 15, and in Münz II, pl. 27(b)), a work that may be dated in the 1650s. And lastly, the Budapest picture shows distinct similarities, especially in the figure's facial features, to a group of drawings that Sumowski attributed to the young Bol, particularly a *Nathan admonishing David* at Windsor Castle (Sumowski *Drawings* I, no. 134).

So what conclusions can be drawn from these resemblances with respect to the authorship and date of the Budapest painting? The simplest answer would be to attribute it to either Bol or Van der Pluym. But the manner of painting does not suggest that of Bol in any phase of his development, and an attribution to Van der Pluym — already suggested by Van Dyke — falls down on the differences from his style as we know this from a number of signed works. All that is clear is that the painting is closely connected with Rembrandt's circle in the wider sense of the word, but was not necessarily produced in his workshop. Since there can be hardly any doubt that the painter made use of Bol's Mainz drawing, the most obvious place to look for him is perhaps in Bol's studio. Sumowski persuades us that Bol's pupils made use of his drawings in producing their paintings in the cases of G. Kneller and C. Bisschop (see Sumowski *Gemälde* III nos. 970, 976, p. 1961 and plate on p. 1980). Probably the present work has to be dated somewhere in the later 1640s (which would mean a rather earlier date for Bol's drawing than that given by Sumowski).

The Budapest painting does not however stand all on its own. The same approach and manner of painting can be found in the *S. Francis at prayer* in Columbus, Ohio (no. C 90). The way that forms are shown with small strokes and touches of paint that do not result in a really clear structure, and the way the lighting produces a rather indeterminate chiaroscuro with scant suggestion of depth or plasticity, is identical in both works. A detail like the closed book with its curling binding occurs in both (in reverse) in more or less the same form, and here too (though the evidence is less precise), a compositional idea Bol used in drawings appears to be combined with motifs from Rembrandt's Leiden period. The year of 1637 on the painting in Columbus is perhaps a little early, although the way vegetation especially is done in that work reminds one most of work by Rembrandt and his school from the late 1630s. One ought perhaps to imagine both paintings as coming from around 1640/45, with the one in Budapest produced in 1642 as the inscription states.

5. Documents and sources

None.

6. Graphic reproductions

None.

7. Copies

None.

8. Provenance

Wrongly regarded by Hofstede de Groot[6] as probably identical with a painting in a sale at Amsterdam, 23–24 May 1798 (Lugt 5767), no. 157: 'Door denzelven [(Rembrand van) Rhyn]. hoog 15, breed 12½ duim [= 38.5 × 32.1 cm]. paneel. Een deftige Grysaard met een krukje in zyn Hand, zittende te rusten in een Leuningstoel, nevens hem op de Tafel staat een Kandelaar en een Glas; Meesterlyk behandeld en fraay gecoloreerd' (... A dignified old greybeard with a crook in his hand, sitting resting in an armchair, alongside him on a table stand a candlestick and a glass; skilfully treated and finely coloured) (27 guilders 10 stuyvers to Berkenbosch). The absence of any glass and the totally different dimensions rule out this identification.
- Coll. Esterházy (cat. 1812, XII, no. 10).
- Bought with this collection by the museum in 1869.

9. Summary

In its general character the painting resembles Rembrandt's work from the 1640s, though it also has reminiscences of his Leiden period. A Rembrandt attribution is ruled out by the very poor execution. It has some similarity to a drawing by Ferdinand Bol, and differs from this at precisely those points where pentimenti can be detected. One may thus suppose the painting to have been done from the drawing, probably not by Bol himself but perhaps in his studio, in the 1640s. The *S. Francis praying* (no. C 90) at Columbus appears to be by the same hand.

REFERENCES

1 Br. 435; Gerson 222; Br.-Gerson 435.
2 A. von Wurzbach, *Niederländisches Künstler-Lexikon* II, Vienna-Leipzig 1910, p. 397.
3 J.C. Van Dyke, *Rembrandt and his school*, New York 1923, pl. XXXII fig. 124 (not mentioned in the text).
4 Schwartz 1984, pp. 234, 380.
5 Tümpel 1986, cat. no. A 41.
6 HdG 230.

C 92 Half-length figure of Rembrandt

ENGLAND, PRIVATE COLLECTION

HdG 584; BR. 25; BAUCH 309; GERSON 171

Fig. 1. Panel 90.5 × 71.8 cm (reproduced after W. Bode and C. Hofstede de Groot, *Rembrandt* III, Paris 1899)



1. Summarized opinion

A well preserved painting that was probably done in Rembrandt's workshop around 1638.

2. Description of subject

The sitter is seen half-length and turned three-quarters to the right in front of a flat wall, in light that falls from the left. Over quite long hair he wears a black velvet cap with a gold chain and a jewel into which two light-coloured ostrich feathers are stuck; the shape of the head and cap are clearly recognizable in the cast shadow on the wall to the right alongside the figure. He wears a short black velvet cloak with a broad gold-embroidered edge and fringe. Above this can be seen a gorget and the collar of a white shirt; a short gold chain hanging down from this and terminating in a crossbar is probably the loose clasp for the cloak. At the front, where the cloak hangs open, one can see an ochre-coloured garment (perhaps a buffcoat) over which three thin gold chains running diagonally and supporting a medallion with a swastika-like motif. The line of the abdomen, towards the right gives the figure a portly appearance. To the right the cloak stands away from the body, giving the impression of the man's left elbow being pushed out somewhat, with the hand perhaps resting on his hip.

3. Observations and technical information

Working conditions

Examined in April 1972 (B.H., E.v.d.W.) and September 1972 (J.B., S.H.L.), in reasonable daylight and in the frame. Five X-ray films, four of which together covering most of the painting and the fifth showing the head, were received later.

Support

DESCRIPTION: Panel in a hard light-coloured and fine-grained wood (beech?), grain vertical, 90.5 × 71.8 cm. Thickness *c.* 1 cm, Single plank. Back quite crudely worked, bevelled on all four sides and painted brown.
SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

Ground

DESCRIPTION: Light yellow-brown, showing through in the brushstrokes in large areas of the cloak, in the hair, the shadow on the forehead immediately below the cap, in brushstrokes on the right in the thickly painted background, and on the left in a rather patchy thin area alongside the head. Also visible in a small strip at the bottom along the lit part of the white shirtcollar.
SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

Paint layer

CONDITION: Good. Very minor local retouches in the background; a pink patch on the jaw on the left is possibly also a retouch. Craquelure: very fine small cracks in the white paint on the shoulder and somewhat above it in the thickly-done area of the background. Irregular fissures can be seen in the shadow area in the undergarment.
DESCRIPTION: The painting is marked by a rather coarse treatment that can often be termed vacuous, using thick and somewhat muddy paint. It has a great deal of black, against which whites and the frequently-used ochre colours make a quite stark contrast.

The background, in which a considerable amount of care has been devoted to the play of light, is for the most part thickly painted, especially towards the bottom left, where the layer of grey is in part over the contour of the cloak. Towards the top the paint becomes a somewhat darker grey, applied with a strong and everywhere apparent brushstroke. At head level the yellowish ground shows through the grey; further up, across the full width above the head, the paint is once again thicker and more opaque, in bold brushwork that here and there has left the underlying ground exposed through scratchmarks made by the bristles of the brush. Along the righthand contours of the cap and head a thick, lighter grey paint has been used. Above the cap there is a strikingly thin patch where the ground is visible at some points; the distinct upper border to this patch shows that originally there was a more generous reserve left in the background for the shape of the cap, and that the background was here filled in later with an autograph retouch. The remarkably precisely defined cast shadow (where on the far right the transition from the head to the shoulders is suggested by a light-grey triangle) is likewise painted thickly in a dark grey-brown. Here, too, hard bristles have left scratchmarks in the wet paint that go down to the ground.

The head is, on the whole, painted quite thickly even in the shadows, apart from a strip on the forehead immediately below the cap. Here one can see on the yellowish ground a number of dark strokes that probably belong to the initial lay-in; in the eye on the right, too, one can detect a dark line that must form part of it. The brushwork is nowhere easy to follow. The transitions from dark to light are in most instances fluid, with no appreciable difference in the consistency of the paint other than on the nose, where the paint is thinner and the ground shows through to some extent. The lit part, done in a creamy flesh colour with an occasional tinge of pink, offers a modelling that though executed with care is not really effective due to the indeterminate nature of the cast shadow. In the shadow half of the face, too, modelling has been attempted with nuances of tone. In the eye-sockets, on the cheek in shadow and below the chin reflexions of light are suggested (not all that successfully) with a thin grey. The eyes, in shadow, are dealt with cursorily with insensitive outlines in brown and dark grey; by the confused way the brown irises and small pupils are painted add to an effect of flatness in this area. The black nostrils and long, almost black mouth-line between pale red lips likewise do little to create plasticity. The moustache and beard are rendered summarily, with quite fine brushstrokes.

The hair on the left is translucent and has the ground showing through — it may be that here an underpainting has to a large extent been left visible, with greyish brushstrokes set on top of it to show highlights on the curls, and darker curling strokes that continue into the shadowed temple and cheek. The righthand part of the hair is done in similar fashion, though on the whole darker and covering more fully. Below the curls reaching down to the shoulder there are firm brushstrokes visible in relief, extending as far as the chin.

The lit part of the shirtcollar of the shirt is shown with a single bold stroke of thick white paint, while in the shadow a thin grey is placed over the ground, which shows through. The catchlight on the upstanding rim of the gorget, too, is rendered with a crude white stroke that contrasts sharply with the black used for the remainder of the rim. A small, firm stroke of white shows a highlight on the flat part of the gorget, and below this a matt sheen of light is suggested with a thick grey in which the ground has been exposed in the scratches made by the bristles of the brush. The rest of the gorget is painted in a semi-translucent dark brown with a stroke of thin grey to suggest reflected light.

The cap is for the most part in a thick black, with rather insipid strokes of grey rendering the sheen of light on the velvet. The plume to the front is in monotonous strokes of grey-white to either side of a spine sketched in matt yellows and greys. The shadow part of the rear plume is in a flat brown, while the lit edge has curved strokes of a dark ochre yellow.

The velvet cloak is, in the shadows, in long strokes of dark grey placed over the warm-toned underpainting, which contributes to the total effect. In the lit passages the ridges of folds facing the light are done with lighter greys, with strong strokes of white and off-white to give the highlights. The lit gold embroidery at the hem is executed with small strokes of thin ochre yellow and brown, highlighted with catchlights done with

thick touches of ochre yellow and white; in the shadow parts the embroidery is indicated in brown and a thin dark yellow and with touches of an ochre colour. The ornamented edge is, at the contour on the left, abruptly intersected by the overlapping paint of the background, so that no suggestion of depth is achieved at that point. The dangling chain of the neck-clasp of the cloak is suggested in impasto ochre colour and light yellows, bordered to the right by a heavy cast shadow. The undergarment has firm strokes in browns and ochre colour, with the chain rather awkwardly indicated with spots of a dark ochre yellow.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

X-Rays

The radiographic image presents a restless picture that at a number of places differs from what one would expect from the surface paint. Some of the features that can be seen do not match the painted picture, but evidently have to do with the paint used on the back of the panel: for instance, the wood grain shows up remarkably light in an irregularly edged strip along the bottom of the panel, obviously due to paint having accumulated where at the bevelling the grain structure is more exposed than elsewhere. The band of light patches along the lefthand edge of the X-ray is probably also connected with a painted bevel. At the bottom of the lefthand half there is a multiplicity of light, curved patches that probably correspond to other irregularities in the back surface of the panel that have been filled up with paint. The broad vertical brushstrokes, showing up relatively light, that are seen over the whole surface are related to these patches and thus most probably also match the brown paint on the back. At the upper left there are light patches and stripes, probably from filled-in damages on the back of the panel. At the top right there appears to be an L-shaped insert in the panel — probably, in view of the intact appearance of the front surface, only at the back.

The background offers a number of unexpected light patches that must have to do with corrections to the contour. Very striking is the fact that at the level of the mouth the light image of the background follows the contour of the right cheek, neck and the entire shoulder; this shows that the hair on the right was once much shorter. The reserve for the head differs considerably from the space occupied by the head seen at the paint surface, and offers a shape for the chin so much shorter that one gets the impression of the underpainting having shown a figure with different facial features.

A curved light form with distinct sinuous brushstrokes just to the right of the light patches matching the white catchlights on the jewel worn on the chest does not correspond with the image of the brushwork in the shadow part of the undergarment; the shape may be read as an original partly-illuminated sleeve-cuff, and might show that the man initially held his left hand on his chest. Some lightish strokes that run obliquely upwards from this 'cuff' can be tentatively linked to an underpainting of a hand, especially as they bend in the horizontal direction just where there would then be knuckle-joints.

Further differences from what is suggested by the paint surface that can be seen in the radiographic image concern the line taken by the contours, which were sometimes made broader when the background was being painted (as at the top of the cap, and along the back), and sometimes more cramped (e.g. at the righthand outline of the cap, where there was evidently a further correction using radioabsorbent paint, and at the lefthand contour of the hair).

The radiographic image of the lit parts of the face is rather lacking in contrast and patchy, with hardly any strong accents. In the shadows around the eyes there is some radioabsorbency, matching the opaque paint noted at this point. The somewhat haphazard distribution of radioabsorbent paint in the right background seems to be connected with the reserves left for the cast shadow of the plumes on the cap.

Signature

At the lower right background in dark brown-grey paint, partly masked by the frame <*Rembran (.) / f* (followed by three dots in a triangle pattern) *1635*>. The letters and figures are rather irregular in their placing, in a slightly downward-sloping line. They lack spontaneity, and do not give the impression of being authentic.

Varnish

No special remarks.

4. Comments

At first sight the painting has a certain impact, through the bold effect of the highlights on the shoulder on the left which, together with the play of light and shadow in the face, give an overall impression of the bulky figure lit strongly from the upper left. In this respect there is some similarity with Rembrandt's 1629 *Self-portrait* in the Stewart Gardner Museum in Boston (no. A 20), in which the tall ostrich plume (in a slightly different shape) offers a matching motif. On closer inspection, however, no. C 92 exhibits a great many jarring features. Though there can be no doubt that it is in fact Rembrandt who is portrayed, it is consequently hard to imagine that he painted it himself.

In view especially of the ambitious composition, it is disappointing to see how clumsily the structure of the body relates to the arms hidden beneath the cloak; the depiction of form is so poor that large areas of the painting have a strange emptiness. This extends to the head, where the rather uncertain modelling in the lit and shadow parts produces hardly any effect alongside the overwhelming light accents on the adjacent collar, gorget and cloak; the eye area, in shadow, is not only fairly flat (which is to some extent to be expected) but also weak and insensitive in its linear construction. Brushwork and use of paint do lead, seen overall, to rembrandtesque effects, but they differ quite decisively from Rembrandt's own. In the face the brushwork plays scarcely any active role, an impression confirmed by the remarkably diffuse appearance of the X-ray, which in this respect must be termed untypical of Rembrandt. The strongly linear treatment given to the eyes strikes an even more discordant note. The care given to the lit side of the face is carried into the shadow passages as well, where a thin layer of opaque paint meticulously hides every trace of underpainting (if there is one). In the clothing one notes a broad and only partially effective treatment. Apart from the effect of a sheen on the lefthand shoulder, achieved with rather coarse brushstrokes — which occupies something of an isolated place in the whole — the suggestion of bulk and the rendering of material are feeble. The execution of the jewellery and the gold-embroidered hem to the cloak does not once have any of the rhythm of

Rembrandt's brushwork that one knows from comparable passages (cf., for instance, the Munich *Bust of a man in oriental dress* of 1633, no. A 73, or the London *Belshazzar's feast* of *c.* 1635, no. A 110). The absence of a rhythmic quality is also evident in the contours, especially that of the cap with its plume which in both placing and painting has a wooden look to it. This lack is very evident when one compares the present work to a painting of a similar subject such as the *Scholar seated at a table* of 1634 in Prague (no. A 95). Such comparison also reveals the extent to which Rembrandt integrated the eyes even when in shadow. Because of these findings one has to conclude that the attribution of this work to Rembrandt, long accepted in the literature, cannot be maintained. Gerson[1] did express certain doubts and mentioned the name of Flinck, though without taking any definite stance. Schwartz did not include the painting in his 1984 book, and Tümpel[2] saw it as the work of a pupil, possibly Flinck.

The signature and date on the painting do not give an impression of authenticity, yet the year of 1635 might, as often in such cases, give a correct indication of the picture's date. There is indeed some resemblance, in the use of large fields of black, to the London *Belshazzar's feast* datable in 1635. A further pointer in the same direction may be seen in the recurrence of the plumed cap, with the feathers in virtually the same position, on the head of one of the secondary figures in the large *Ecce homo* etching (B. 77), the first state of which is dated 1635 and the second 1636. In other respects, however, the picture reminds one rather of features of Rembrandt's style during the later 1630s. This is true of the distribution of light which, coupled with a subdued colour-scheme, suggests more colour than there actually is, just as Rembrandt himself used, more successfully, in his 1636 *Standard-bearer* (no. A 120). It is interesting to note in this connexion that a copy formerly in the Cook Collection (see *7. Copies*) carries a date of 1638. There thus seems to be sufficient reason not to rely on the date of 1635 on the picture, and to date it rather around 1638.

The painting belongs in the same category of portraits of Rembrandt done by another hand, probably that of a pupil, as those in Berlin (no. C 56), in the Wallace Collection (no. C 96) and in the Norton Simon Museum in Pasadena (no. C 97).

It is hard to say which of Rembrandt's pupils was responsible for the painting. It does not show the hand of Govaert Flinck (b. 1616), who in his earliest signed works of 1636 had already found a style of his own. Gerson[1] pointed to a certain resemblance to the *Young man with a sword* in the North Carolina Museum of Art, Raleigh N.C. (on loan from the Samuel H. Kress Foundation, New York), which he attributed to Flinck; there is undeniably some similarity of motif, but the Raleigh painting can most probably not be seen as coming of Rembrandt's circle and thus provides no answer to the problem.

In all this one has to consider that the production of no. C 92 involved quite a few changes. It shares this with the Berlin *Portrait of Rembrandt* that we ascribe to Flinck, where adding the cap entailed an adjustment of the shadow effect was used in the face, and the hair, clothing and background were altered (see no. C 56, *Comments*). In the case of the present painting the course of events cannot be reconstructed as accurately, but the X-rays do give us some idea. In the first lay-in of the background the reserve for the cap was somewhat taller and narrower than it ended up, and hair and chin on the right were also substantially shorter in their reserve than they appear today; in both respects the figure we see now must have looked more like a drawing in Leningrad of a man in Polish costume (Ben. 45). Along the top of the cap there is a distinct autograph retouch to fill in the background, and the same has been done along the lefthand contour of the present cloak in the final stage, so that grey paint lies over that of the cloak and its ornamented hem. Moreover, the figure as initially designed probably had the left hand in front of the chest, roughly as can still be seen in the Paris *Self-portrait in a cap* of 1633 (no. A 72) and a *Self-portrait* that has survived only in copies at Woburn Abbey and Ottawa (nos. C 93 and C 94); the radiograph provides fairly unequivocal evidence of this. We can see, therefore, that there were more or less radical alterations to the figure's pose and dress, though these were probably not, as with the Berlin painting, made to a virtually completed painting but to one done only in underpainting. It is important to note here, as with the Berlin work, that there is nothing to point to more than one hand being involved. If (as one might speculate) all the changes were the outcome of hints given by the master, his hand can certainly nowhere be detected in these corrections. Even the signature on no. C 92 cannot have been written by him — it is too unsure in its execution.

The wood used for the panel is not the usual oak but a fine-grained, light-coloured species, perhaps beechwood. This cannot be taken as an argument either for or against an attribution — Rembrandt himself time and again used uncommon kinds of wood when he started to work in Amsterdam, such as walnut, poplar, cedrela and mahogany, and one meets these in works done in his workshop as well. Only one on beechwood is however known, the *Slaughtered ox* in Paris (Br. 457) (cf. J. Bauch and D. Eckstein, in: *Wood science and technology* 15, 1981, p. 252–255).

Even more than in other representations of Rembrandt by himself or his pupils the emphasis is here placed on the notion of *Vanitas*, not only in the costly garb with the gorget and ostrich plumes but

also in the distinctly rendered cast shadow, which reminds one of the text of Job 8:9: '... because our days upon earth are a shadow' (cf. cat. exhn *Tot leering en vermaak*, Amsterdam 1976, introduction p. 18 and no. 4). That the picture was indeed understood as a *Vanitas* in the 17th century is evident from the depiction of it as a reproduction on paper in a *Vanitas still-life* by Johan de Cordua (Brussels *c.* 1630–Vienna 1702), painted in Vienna around 1670 (cf. N. Voskuil-Popper in: *Gaz. d. B.-A.* 6th period 87, 1976, pp. 68–70). From this it may also be inferred that the painting was already in Vienna by that date.

5. Documents and sources

None.

6. Graphic reproductions

1. Mezzotint by Johann Peter Pichler (Bolzano 1765–Vienna 1807) inscribed: *Peint par Rembrandt. — Gravé à Vienne par J.Pichler 1791. / Rembrandt van Ryn / Gravé d'après le Tableau tire du Galerie chez S.A. Monseigneur le Prince / de Lichtenstein consiste en largeur 3 pieds et en hateur quatre pieds — zu finden in Wien und Mainz bey Artaria Comp.* (Charrington 138). Reproduces the picture in the same direction and bordered by a wide flat frame at the bottom.

7. Copies

Hofstede de Groot[3] mentions old copies in the museum at Wiesbaden (see Th. Frimmel, *Kleine Galerie Studien* I, Bamberg 1892, p. 113) and in the Galleria Nazionale in Rome (no. 761), the latter omitting the ostrich feathers on the cap. Gerson[1] mentioned a copy with Rembrandt's signature and date of 1638 in the Cook sale, London (Sotheby's) 25 June 1958, no. 113 (photo R.K.D.). We have seen none of these, nor another (on panel, 77 × 63 cm) in a Swedish collection.

What was possibly a copy ('Rembrandt. His own Portrait, habited in black Drapery, with velvet Cap and Feather') was sold with the coll. John Parke, London (Coxe) 8–9 May 1812 (Lugt 8170), 1st day no. 15.

8. Provenance

- Coll. Princes of Liechtenstein, Vienna. Acquired by Prince Josef Wenzel (b. 1696, reigned 1748–1772); described in: Vincenzio Fanti, *Descrizione completa di tutto cio che retrovasi nella Galleria di pittura e scultura di S.A.Giuseppe Wenceslao del S.R.I. Principe regnante della Casa di Lichtenstein* ..., Vienna 1767, p. 101, no. 504: 'Ritratto di un uomo con penacchio sul capo, dipinto dal *sudetto Rembrand* [altezza:] 2 [piedi]. 11 [once], [larghezza] 2.3½ [= 92.1 × 72.4 cm]. One may assume that the painting was already previously in Vienna, where Johan de Cordua included a reproduction of it in a *Vanitas still-life* (see *4. Comments*).
- Dealer Speelman, London, in the 1960s.
- Coll. Lord Samuel, Wych Cross, until 1987.

9. Summary

Because of differences from Rembrandt's style, especially in the partly very careful though plastically ineffective painting (in the face) and partly coarse and scarcely suggestive treatment (of the clothing), no. C 92 cannot be seen as an autograph Rembrandt. The differences in manner of painting are confirmed by un-Rembrandt-like features in the X-rays, which also reveal that the composition underwent quite substantial changes. Because of links with Rembrandt's work from the later 1630s, the painting may be dated roughly in 1638. It is impossible to pinpoint the author among Rembrandt's pupils from the period; as a portrait of Rembrandt done by a pupil, it falls in the same category as nos. C 56, C 96 and C 97.

REFERENCES

1 Gerson 171; Br.-Gerson 25.
2 Tümpel 1986, no. A 64.
3 HdG 584.

C 93 Half-length figure of Rembrandt

WOBURN ABBEY, BEDS., THE DUKE OF BEDFORD

HdG 585; BR. 33; BAUCH –; GERSON –

1. Summarized opinion

A reasonably well preserved painting, which like no. C 94 was copied after a lost Rembrandt original. It may have been executed in the 17th century though probably outside Rembrandt's circle.

2. Description of subject

The sitter is seen to below the waist, the body turned three-quarters right. The head is rather more towards the viewer, on whom the gaze is fixed. With his left hand he holds the front edge of a black, fur-trimmed cloak that hangs over his right shoulder. Beneath this he wears a dark brown doublet with a stiff, upstanding fur collar that leaves a small amount of white shirt showing. Two rows of gold chain, with a coin pendant on the lower one, hang over the shoulders across the chest. A black cap is worn over dark, curling hair. A mainly grey background shows a horizontal fold or ridge level with the man's neck. The light, falling from the left, throws a shadow from the figure onto the wall at the lower right.

3. Observations and technical information

Working conditions

Examined on 8 September 1971 (J.B., S.H.L.) in relatively poor conditions, with the picture in the frame and high up on the wall, with the aid of UV fluorescence. Again on 30 November 1987 (E.v.d.W.) in good artificial light and out of the frame. X-Ray films covering the whole of the picture were received later.

Support

DESCRIPTION: Canvas 92.3 × 76.4 cm, not counting strips of some 2 cm wide that have been folded over the stretcher along all four sides. As a result, the signature *Rembra* stops at the righthand edge, remnants of the missing letters being visible on the folded edge of the canvas. The same is true of the sitter's right hand, of which the back and the roots of the fingers are to be found on the bottom edge. According to the Hamilton Kerr Institute, Cambridge, the lining and stretcher appear to date from the first half of the 19th century; the same date probably applies also to the folding over of the canvas.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: Cusping is seen at both top and bottom, varying in pitch between 7 and 9.5 cm and extending inwards *c.* 15 and 14 cm respectively. Given the small amount of distortion it is likely that, in addition to the strips *c.* 2 cm wide being folded over the stretcher, the canvas was reduced along the top and bottom. No cusping can be detected at left and right, though the legibility of the X-ray is impaired by the radiographic image of the stretcher. The vertical threads are drawn towards the right in the upper half of the canvas, apparently as a result of the canvas having been stretched in this peculiar way either before or just after the ground was applied. Threadcount: 13.3 vertical threads/cm (12–14), 12.5 horizontal threads/cm (12.5–13). From the more even density of the horizontal threads it may be concluded that the warp runs in that direction. The presence of cusping along only the top and bottom, together with the horizontal warp, suggests that the canvas comes from a longer strip one-and-a-half ells (110 cm) wide.

Ground

DESCRIPTION: Not seen.
SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

Paint layer

CONDITION: Reasonable, so far as could be judged. Some small retouches were found, mostly in the head. It is difficult to tell whether the numerous glazes and scumbles in the face are all original. The comment by Winkler[1] that 'im Gesicht nicht eine einzige Stelle zu erkennen (sei), die als alt bezeichnet werden könnte' is however somewhat exaggerated. Winkler's suspicion may have been aroused by the fact that these cover a rather freely brushed paint layer, in the relief of which dark sediments are occasionally sitting under the glazes and scumbles. Craquelure: there is a varying pattern of irregular cracks. In the background, to the left of the head, there are traces of underlying relief (or damage?) running diagonally to top right and causing the craquelure to run in the same direction.

DESCRIPTION: In general the paint is applied opaquely. In the highlights on the nose and cheekbone the paint there is evident and mainly diagonally-placed brushwork in a light flesh colour. In the shadows on the forehead, thin browns and a brown-grey are laid partly over a thickly-brushed darker flesh colour. The eyebrows are indicated in darker grey, at places somewhat vague. The upper eyelid on the left is bordered with lines drawn in a darkish brown, partly covered by the yellowish flesh colour used for the eyelid itself. The lower edge of the eye is formed by a band of flesh colour, thick especially on the left, which towards the right becomes browner and flatter; the corner of the eye has flat touches of flesh colour. The eyepouch is modelled rather sketchily with two strokes drawn in brown over a grey-brown. Iris and pupil form a large black patch with some grey in the iris. The minute catchlights are placed rather high up and are ineffective. The white of the eye to the left of this is shown by a stroke of flesh colour, and that to the right with a dingy greyish flesh colour. The eye on the right is shown, alongside the flat greys and browns of the shadow thrown by the nose, in grey-browns (possibly retouched here and there) with some yellowish flesh colour along the lower edge, on the upper lid and in the eye-socket. The adjoining shadow side of the face is in flat brown-greys with some scumbled flesh colour (perhaps added later) on the lit part of the cheek.

The nose presents, besides strokes of a quite thick yellowish flesh colour, some thinner white-pink and, on the poorly modelled wing on the left, a stroke of light brown. Black is used to mark both the lefthand and the further nostril; above the latter a flat dab of brown renders reflected light standing out against the dark grey of the shadow. On the lefthand cheek strokes of a thick pink are placed on top of the flesh colour; the same colour is used for the lit part of the neck and for the jaw, where it becomes thinner downwards and is masked by a thin grey. The moustache is on the left set partly over the flesh colour in yellowish paint, while to the right it is in a flat grey with some brown. The top lip is a flat brown, the lower showing a small patch of lighter brown; between these a firm dark brown mouth-line runs across the full width.

On the left the hair is in a flat dark paint over which there are short brushstrokes of grey-brown; on the right there is a dark grey placed partly over the background. The throat, in shadow, is painted in a flat brown, contrasting with the greyish paint of the shirt, and has a few strokes of yellow.

The cap is in a flat black, and the clothing in thick black with short strokes of brownish yellow that provides an indifferent rendering of the fur edge of the cloak. The chain is painted, with no clear suggestion of form, with touches of yellow-brown and yellow with a few spots of white and some red-brown — but with none of the black usual with Rembrandt in chains like this. The sitter's left hand is rendered cursorily in a brownish tint (over black?), with grey-brown in the shadows; the back and part of the fingers of his right hand are on the folded bottom edge of the canvas.

The background is executed predominantly in an opaque grey with some brown; the paint is thickest round the head and shoulders, with distinct brushstrokes. Level with the neck there is a band of a somewhat lighter grey; above and to the right of the figure a darker brown-grey is used.

Fig. 1. Canvas 92.3 × 76.4 cm



Fig. 2. X-Ray



Fig. 3. Detail (1 : 1)



X-Rays

In part the radiographic image does match what one would expect from the paint surface; this is true, for instance, of the character of the brushwork in the background on either side of the head, and of the light parts of the face. The reserve for the figure however only partly coincides with the picture seen today; that for the cap was flatter and wider to the right, while that for the trunk was substantially narrower on the left. The observation that the shadow side of the forehead was set down with thick (but not all that light) paint and then toned down with darker paint is confirmed.

The reserve for the hair on the left has a strangely sharp edge, as if radioabsorbent paint (belonging to the background) had been wiped away with a finger. In the adjoining background, and also to some extent in the reserve for the hair and even in the face, one sees light marks running diagonally upwards to the right that coincide with the underlying relief (or damage?) that has already been described (see *Condition*).

One remarkable feature is that wherever radioabsorbency is apparent there is, besides the dark image of the craquelure, a fine network of small cracks that shows up light and has to do with the weave pattern. The most likely explanation for this is that small cracks had appeared in the ground before the painting was done, and were then filled in by the paint.

Signature

Near the righthand edge in the cast shadow: <*Rembra*>; remnants of the missing letters are found on the folded edge of the canvas. The inscription is only faintly visible and its authenticity cannot be judged.

Varnish

No special remarks.

4. Comments

Until a second version differing in some details (no. C 94) from the Earl of Listowel's collection became known when it was purchased by the National Gallery of Canada in Ottawa, the painting in the coll. Duke of Bedford was generally accepted as a genuine Rembrandt. Van Gelder was still of this opinion in 1950[2], and dated it in 1641–43. When it was compared with the Ottawa version, however, some doubt began to be expressed. Bauch[3] illustrated the latter and obviously (with Blunt and Wilde[4]) considered the Ottawa painting to be superior to that at Woburn Abbey; he believed that both versions could have been done in Rembrandt's workshop, after a lost original dating from around 1639. Winkler[1], too, thought it not impossible that the Woburn Abbey painting was a (restored) copy. Gerson[5] illustrated the Ottawa version, and wrote that he found the Bedford painting too weak to see it as authentic, though he had not himself seen the other version. In his comments it was incorrectly stated that the Ottawa painting showed the vestiges of a signature and was regarded by Winkler as a copy (both statements in fact relate to the Bedford version). Rosenberg[6] continued to see the Bedford version as original. Schwartz and Tümpel did not include either in their books, published in 1984 and 1986 respectively.

In handling of paint and use of colour the present painting however differs quite markedly from works by Rembrandt, including those from around 1640 which has up to now been the usual dating for it. The brushstroke, where it is visible, has a minimal modelling function in the face and serves mainly to set fields of varying tonal value one against the other. For instance, the way the nose is modelled, with the relatively thin highlight on the tip and the weak modelling of the wing, is entirely foreign to Rembrandt; the same can be said of the flat and undifferentiated appearance of the moustache and the rather linear rendering of the eyes with their large and almost uniformly dark irises and pupils. Also strange — and virtually evidence that one is dealing here with a copyist — is the way the pink on the cheek is applied with thick strokes (instead of as a thin layer).

The manner in which light and shade alternate on the forehead is not without subtlety, but where the presence of a thick layer of a fairly dark flesh colour underneath still darker glazes is concerned it is almost inconceivable in Rembrandt, even if (as stated under CONDITION above) it is difficult to estimate to what extent the latter are original. In the clothing too — the cap in flat black, the clumsy rendering of fur, and the incoherent treatment of the chain — one cannot recognize Rembrandt's hand. In the background, finally, there is no clear arrangement of tonal values linked with a suggestion of space and fall of light, and the horizontal ridge or fold is a strange motif.

On the other hand the pose and lighting do, seen broadly, make a strongly rembrandtesque impression. While the contours often do not have the suppleness and tension so characteristic of Rembrandt's portraits, there is a certain amount of vitality, and they take a not uninteresting line resembling that of Rembrandt. There is every evidence to suggest that while the idea of this itself being a Rembrandt original must be ruled out, his work surely provided the starting-point for it.

The general impression given by the paint layer is, partly because of the way it has cracked, that of a 17th-century painting. The identification, suggested in the older literature, with the self-portrait that Lord Ancrum gave to Charles I of England before 1639[7] is wrong (see *8. Provenance*), and cannot be used as an argument for the painting's age. There are several possibilities — it may be a copy after a lost original, it may be a more or less independent shop-work, or it may be an imitation. The existence of the second version in Ottawa — though this differs on a number of points — makes it very likely that both versions were, as Bauch[3] believed, done by different hands after an original that is now lost. This conclusion is borne out by the X-rays of the Woburn Abbey picture. It turns out that here the initial design for the body was very much like its

shape in the Ottawa version. After at first having followed the original on this point, the painter must have embellished the lefthand outline according to his own taste.

On the grounds of the pose, the colour-scheme and the general impression the painting makes one could imagine the prototype as being comparable to the London *Self-Portrait* of 1640 (no. A 139), and thus datable around that year. The date of the copy — if such it is — at Woburn Abbey cannot be determined with any accuracy. The pictorial execution reflects Rembrandt's manner of painting not so much from the years around 1640 as from a somewhat later date, when his broad brushstroke modelled forms in flat fields rather than convexities; a detail such as the rendering of the further nostril with an edging of light above it is reminiscent of self-portraits from about 1650 more than from 1640 or thereabouts. Speculating about this cannot lead to any definite conclusion. It is not impossible that the painting was produced at some time in the 17th century, though the aberrant manner of painting makes it unlikely that this happened in Rembrandt's circle.

One can take it that the painting has indeed been somewhat reduced in size; the Ottawa version shows the figure in a wider framing, in which the leaning right forearm and hand are visible — just as they are on the folded part of the Woburn Abbey canvas — and offer a motif approaching that of the 1640 London *Self-portrait*. On this point, therefore, the Ottawa picture gives a better idea then does no. C 93 in its present state of what the assumed lost original may have looked like.

5. Documents and sources

None.

6. Graphic reproductions

None.

7. Other Copies

1. See no. C 94.
2. Panel 91 × 71 cm, coll. J. Hare, sale London (Christie's) 16 April 1937, no. 62. Shows an upright plume on the cap.

8. Provenance

Formerly wrongly identified with the self-portrait that Lord Ancrum gave to Charles I of England, listed in the inventory of *c.* 1639[7]. This mention most probably relates to the Liverpool *Self-portrait* of 1630/31 (no. A 33).
– A bill at Woburn shows that the picture was acquired by the 4th Duke at Mr Bragge's sale, May 1748 (not in Lugt), no. 56[8].

9. Summary

In its pose, lighting and general appearance the painting is closely akin to work by Rembrandt. It differs however in the way paint is applied, and in the use made of colour, to such an extent that it cannot be looked on as an authentic Rembrandt work. It must originally have been somewhat larger and even now it has strips of canvas folded over the stretcher.

After a second version now in Ottawa (no. C 94), varying on a number of points, became better known in the literature some doubt began to be voiced as to authenticity. The existence of this second version makes it likely that both are copies after a lost original which would then, given the resemblance to the London *Self-portrait* of 1640 (no. A 139), have to be dated around that year. The Woburn Abbey version may have been executed in the 17th century, though probably outside Rembrandt's circle.

REFERENCES

1 F. Winkler, 'Echt, falsch, verfälscht', *Kunstchronik* 10 (1957), pp. 141–144, esp. 143.
2 J.G. van Gelder, 'The Rembrandt exhibition at Edinburgh', *Burl. Mag.* 92 (1950), pp. 327–329, esp. 328.
3 Bauch p. 16 (under no. 314).
4 *The National Gallery of Canada, Catalogue of paintings and sculpture, I, Older schools*, Ottawa–Toronto 1961, p. 88.
5 Gerson 236.
6 J. Rosenberg, *Rembrandt. Life and works*, revised edn London 1964, p. 371.
7 HdG 585.
8 Cat. exhibn. *Paintings and silver from Woburn Abbey*, London (Royal Academy) 1950, no. 14.

C 94 Half-length figure of Rembrandt

OTTAWA, THE NATIONAL GALLERY OF CANADA, INV. NO. 4420

HDG –; BR. –; BAUCH 314; GERSON 236

1. Summarized opinion

A quite well preserved painting, presumably from the later 17th century, that was probably like no. C 93 copied after a lost Rembrandt original.

2. Description of subject

The sitter is seen to below the waist, the body turned three-quarters right. The head is rather more towards the viewer, on whom the gaze is fixed. With his left hand he holds the front edge of a black cloak that hangs over his right shoulder; to the left of this hand the back of the other hand and the man's left forearm (seemingly resting on a sill) can just be seen. Beneath the cloak he wears a dark brown doublet with a stiff, upstanding fur collar that leaves a small amount of white shirt showing. Two rows of gold chain, with a pendant gold cross, hang over the shoulders across the chest. A black cap encircled by a gold chain is worn over dark, curling hair. In the background on the right there is part of an archway, darker than the rest of the almost evenly-toned wall, so that the impression is given of the figure standing before a niche. To the right, in front of the arch, stands a stone object shaped something like a capital or pedestal.

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 six X-ray films covering virtually the whole painting apart from the edges, and of an infrared photograph that was also available later.

Support

DESCRIPTION: Canvas, lined, 94.4 × 74 cm (measured along the stretcher).

SCIENTIFIC DATA: The canvas is stretched in a singular way. Cusping of widely varying pitch ranging from 8–21 cm can be seen along the top and lefthand side, but none to the right; the distortions in the canvas along the lefthand side are so severe that they extend to the righthand edge. Along the bottom there are innumerable small wavelike distortions. Threadcount: 14.7 horizontal threads/cm (14–16.5), 13.8 vertical threads/cm (13–16.5). The greater uniformity in density of the vertical threads makes it probable that the warp runs in that direction.

Ground

DESCRIPTION: Probably a light red-brown, showing through the dark thin parts of the background by the cap on left and right.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

Paint layer

CONDITION: Some retouches in the background, including to the right of the cap and in the top lefthand corner. A coating of thin brown paint has been laid over part of the background; otherwise the painting appears to be in good condition, though allowance must be made for the possible consequences of the removal of 18th-century overpaintings that covered the hands, lengthened the hair and added a plume to the cap[1]. Craquelure: in the lit flesh passages there is a fairly bold, irregular crack pattern, while a finer pattern can be seen in the thinner parts of the face and in the background.

DESCRIPTION: In the lit flesh areas the paint is rather thicker than elsewhere, but other than at some points in the chain one could nowhere speak of any appreciable relief. In the lit parts of the head the paint surface is quite flat, though not smooth; the brushwork is scarcely distinguishable other than on the nose, where the brushstrokes follow the form and where the tip has a rather restless, confused relief. Where the highest lights fall the flesh tint is yellowish, and on the cheek, tip of the nose, earlobe and fold in the cheek some pink is used that seems to have been rubbed rather hazily over the yellowish paint. Along the jaw and lower side of the cheek a greyish paint is used. In the shadows and half-shadows the brushstrokes are even more difficult to follow than in the lit passages; only where some lighter paint is used, e.g. in parts of the forehead, the cheekbone and above the righthand eye, can a trace of brushwork be detected. The colours in the shadow areas alternate between a cool grey-brown and a warmish red-brown. On the whole the shadow passages make a rather murky impression.

The eyes are painted hesitantly with hardly any suggestion of depth. The edges of the eyelids are drawn with careful lines of reddish paint (on the left) and a black-brown (on the right). In both eyes the white is done in a muddy grey. The righthand eye has a larger iris and pupil than that on the left (and is placed slightly higher). The catchlights — small and bright on the left, larger and vaguer on the right — are not located effectively in the eye, and there is hardly any lightening of the iris opposite the catchlights. In the inner corner of the eye on the left there is a touch of purplish red.

The plasticity of the nose is impaired somewhat by the nostril on the left, done in a dark brown, rather shapeless and isolated in its surroundings. The moustache is painted in a yellowish grey; the mouth-line is set down in a very dark red-brown tending almost to black, rather wider at the corners than in the centre. The red of the lips is a subdued red-brown, with horizontal brushstrokes that follow the shape of the lips. A dark grey is used for the shadow by the corner of the mouth. The neck, in a lead-grey, has strokes that follow the curve.

The hand on the right is sketched coarsely with strokes of yellow and brown, but remains flat and formless. A rather unsuccessful attempt has been made to provide some suggestion of plasticity by adding a few details such as a stroke of light paint on the back of the hand, and others in dark paint for the shadows of the fingers. The visible part of the hand on the left is hard to judge, due to wear.

The cap is in an even, flat black, and the chain around it is shown with lumps of brown paint. The hair is done in a patchy brown and grey. The somewhat lighter fur on the collar is rendered in much the same way, in thin paint, without achieving any real impression of the material. At the neck there is a long stroke of grey-white, perhaps intended to represent part of the white shirt that can also be seen at the throat where it is executed ineffectively in grey. The doublet is for the most part in dark brown, with little drawing of detail; only at the left, beneath the chain, are folds suggested with a few vertical strokes of a lightish brown. A few folds are also indicated below the arm on the right, this time with undulating strokes of a dirty grey. The cuff of the shirt is done in greyish paint, with scant suggestion. The cloak is a flat black, and given a few folds by the shoulder on the left. Along the lefthand contour of the shoulder and upper arm one gets the impression — even stronger in the IR photograph — that there was initially a more generous reserve left in the background for this passage, and that the background was subsequently extended up to the presentday outline.

The chain is painted, with little suggestion of form, in thick and occasionally impasto strokes and spots of a goldish ochre colour over strokes of a subdued ochre-coloured paint, where the back of the cloak shows through; the intensity of colour is everywhere almost uniform, so that the round of the shoulder and trunk offers little impression of depth.

The lightest part of the background comprises a lead-grey, opaque paint with little variation in colour and thickness of application. It is thickest in broad and cloudy bands at various points along the figure contour. To the right this paint lies partly over the thin dark grey used to indicate an archway; the transition to the lighter paint is occasionally vague and uneven. The whole produces no suggestion of depth, and cannot be

Fig. 1. Canvas 94.4 × 74 cm



Fig. 2. X-Ray



readily understood in terms of architectural forms. The object at the extreme right shows a light and a shadow side, with some highlights on an excrescence on the left; the distribution of light and shade in the part at the top vaguely suggests the form of a shallow bowl.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

X-Rays

The whole radiograph presents a patchy image, with a light-and-dark picture that one would only partly expect to find from observation of the paint surface. In the background, along the outline of the figure, there is a patchy zone showing up with a varying degree of lightness, with uneven and abrupt borders with the darker regions at the edge of the painting. The border of this zone coincides roughly, on the right, with the shape of the dark arch.

Stronger concentrations of radioabsorbent paint occur in the head, where one finds the same kind of patchiness as was noted in the background; here, there are traces of brushwork. The shadow areas, eye-socket and moustache show up dark and present strong contrasts.

Signature

None.

Varnish

A fairly thick layer.

4. Comments

The execution of the whole of the painting is marked by a strange vagueness that even makes it difficult to grasp the significance of some shapes, especially in the background where the patchy and rather ineffective application of paint is hard to understand as corresponding to any artistic intent. The figure's contours stand vaguely and generally slackly against the background. Compared with the negligently painted hands and the only occasional (and even then awkwardly done) internal detail in the clothing, the head is painted relatively carefully; but even there the modelling is not really successful and the structure is far from solid. The rendering of the eyes remains sketchy and they do not match each other, the nostril lacks an effect of depth, and the brush-stroke in the lit passages is feeble and gives a flat result. An attribution to Rembrandt must be seen as out of the question and has not indeed been defended by any author, even though Bauch[2] and Gerson[3] included an illustration of it in their book and Blunt and Wilde are reported[1] to have regarded this version as superior to the one at Woburn Abbey (no. C 93).

As we say in the comments on that painting, the work in the Duke of Bedford's collection and the one in Ottawa must probably both be looked on as copies after a lost Rembrandt original comparable to the 1640 *Self-portrait* in London (no. A 139) and datable to the same period. The Ottawa version seems, with its unclear execution, to be a pale reflexion of Rembrandt's style in a considerably later period, and an hypothetical dating in the later 17th century may for this reason — and perhaps also because of the presumed red-brown ground — be justified. It is not impossible that it was produced in Rembrandt's circle; however, the way the canvas is stretched with some of the cusping deep and irregular is unknown to us from any painting by Rembrandt or from his circle.

The importance of the painting resides mainly in the fact that it can yield additional information about a lost Rembrandt original that, one may assume, provided the basis for the Duke of Bedford's very similar though stylistically very different *Half-length figure of Rembrandt* (no. C 93) as well as for the Ottawa painting. The paintings differ in various details (besides the manner of painting) — compared to the slackly hanging cloak in the Ottawa work the Woburn Abbey version has a bulging fur trimming at the shoulder (which must have been the copyist's fancy as the X-rays show that the reserve left for the body corresponded to the Ottawa version) and more lively contours throughout; in the first a cross hangs from the chain around the neck, while the second has a coin; they have backgrounds that differ from each other and are both untypical of Rembrandt. The Ottawa painting however still shows the sitter's right forearm and hand (which in the other version are no longer visible since the bottom edge of the canvas has been folded over) as the lost original must have done.

5. Documents and sources

None.

6. Graphic reproductions

None.

7. Other copies

See no. C 93.

8. Provenance

– Coll. Earl of Listowel, London. Acquired by the museum in 1939.

9. Summary

The painting falls so far short in its hesitant and vague execution that it cannot be accepted as a Rembrandt; nor, in fact, has it ever been so in the literature. Most probably it was, together with another version at Woburn Abbey (no. C 93), copied after a lost original of *c.* 1640. It may be dated in the later 17th century.

REFERENCES

1 *The National Gallery of Canada. Catalogue of paintings and sculpture I: Older schools*, Ottawa-Toronto 1961, p. 88.
2 Bauch 314.
3 Gerson 236.

Fig. 3. Detail (1 : 1)



C 95 Half-length figure of a young woman in fanciful costume

PRIVATE COLLECTION

HDG 613; BR. 104; BAUCH 490; GERSON 184

Fig. 1. Panel 99.5 × 71 cm (reproduced after W. Bode and C. Hofstede de Groot, *Rembrandt* III, Paris 1899)



1. Summarized opinion

A fairly well preserved and probably slightly reduced painting that in all probability was painted in the 17th century, perhaps in Rembrandt's circle.

2. Description of subject

The sitter, seen to above the knees, stands with the body turned three-quarters left and the head slightly towards the viewer on whom the gaze is fixed. Her right arm rests on what seems, in the semi-darkness, to be the back of a chair; the right hand is gloved, as is the left held in front of the body. Over long blond hair that hangs down on the left she wears a large brown cap with a greyish plume; beneath this one can see a cloth wound round the head. Under a dark wide-sleeved velvet coat one sees a white pleated shirt hanging open slightly at the throat. A wide, transparent shawl covers the shoulders; at the left shoulder there is a rosette from which hangs a golden jewel with a thick yellow-brown tassel. A teardrop pearl hangs from her ear, and a pearl necklace encircles her throat. The light falls from the left, so that the figure casts onto the rear wall to the right a shadow in which one can make out the shape of the hat and plume.

3. Observations and technical information

Working conditions

Examined on 19 April 1971 (J.B., S.H.L.) in good daylight and in the frame.

Support

DESCRIPTION: Oak panel, grain vertical, 99.5 × 71 cm (sight size). No join apparent, so presumably a single plank. A vertical crack runs at about 30 cm from the righthand side from the top edge down into the face. Back planed and cradled.
SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

Ground

DESCRIPTION: A light tint shows through in the cast shadow from the hat on the head, and in the ear.
SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

Paint layer

CONDITION: Quite good, so far as may be judged through the heavy layer of yellowed varnish. A few retouches can be seen in the flesh areas. Craquelure: a few cracks, some quite long and parallel with the grain.
DESCRIPTION: Apart from a few more thickly painted passages in the face and numerous dark accents — mainly in the shawl, cap and glove on the left — the paint is applied relatively thinly so that the grain is generally visible in relief. The background is for the most part done in a fairly flat dark grey, lighter and thicker only on the right along the shoulder and the cast shadow, itself again in a thinner and darker paint. By the cap underlying brushstrokes visible in relief suggest that the cap was originally wider and flatter than it is today.

The lit parts of the head are painted fairly flatly in a yellowish flesh colour with a little pink on the cheek, above the tip of the nose, above the top lip and on the chin. The shadows show first a translucent brown that then leads into a more opaque greyish brown. The large area of reflected light on the right along the cheek is done in a thick, opaque grey that continues in the neck where it merges into a yellowish flesh colour. The border of the eyes is unsharp and — especially on the left where the upper eyelid has no termination on the left — lacks clarity of structure. In the corners of the eyes some pinkish brown is used in a shapeless patch, and continues along the underside of the lids. Fairly coarse horizontal strokes of a grey-white provide highlights extending over the border between the white of the eye and the iris.

The lips, corners of the mouth and mouth-line are executed with strokes of pink (on the left in the upper lip), pink-red and some red (in the lower lip), brown, light brown and black. On the left, in the light, the hair is shown with strokes of a quite thick yellow, grey and ochre-brown paint, with a few scratchmarks at the ends; along the cheek contour grey can be seen as if in a fissure, and alongside this in the hair there are a few strokes of carmine red. The hair on the right is done with strokes of a muddy yellow and brown set over a fairly thick brown; among this, and rather formless, the ear is shown in thin paint. The eardrop is done quite diagrammatically with lines of ochre-yellow, a little black and a white catchlight; the pearl is in grey with (on the right) a white catchlight, as are the pearls of the necklace whose cast shadow — like that of the shirt — is rendered in a flat yellow-brown.

The cloth wound round the head beneath the cap is painted in ochre-yellow and black, the cap itself in browns with the shape indicated in a thick black; in the crusty paint at the edges there are small strokes of a greenish brown that must be meant as a sheen of light. Brown-grey strokes give a summary impression of the plume. The shirt is painted with strokes of off-white that give a not very suggestive rendering of pleats; the shawl has accents placed over a grey and brownish base tone in a fairly thick yellow and, lower down, in brownish hues. The coat is executed in very dark browns in which (certainly through the present layer of varnish) one can see hardly any differentiation, and on the lefthand sleeve strokes of a grey-blue show a lustre on the cloth. The tasseled ornament on the shoulder is rendered with rather ineffective strokes of brown and ochre-yellow, plus a few yellow highlights in the metal. The glove on the left is painted in thick yellow-brown with brown and grey lines, that on the right in a fairly flat brown-grey with meaningless strokes of grey and brown.
SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

X-Rays

None.

Signature

At the top right, in dark paint offering so little contrast that the inscription can hardly be seen, <*Rembrandt f...*>. The date that follows is very hard, and the last figure quite impossible, to read. In the literature the year is usually given as 1635; Gerson[1] mentions a restorer's report quoting 1638.

Varnish

A thick layer of yellow varnish hampers observation.

4. Comments

The painting must, to judge by the existence of a number of copies (see *7. Copies*), have once enjoyed a certain reputation and it was until recently always regarded as a Rembrandt, including by Bauch[2] and Gerson[1] who had not seen it in the original. Schwartz[3] however expressed doubts, and Tümpel did not include the work in his book in 1986. Bauch stated that it was painted on top of an earlier painting; the basis for this statement is unclear — we have found only evidence that might point to a pentimento in the cap, and the thin application of paint at many places does not constitute any positive indication of an underlying painting.

Despite the generally rembrandtesque motif, it cannot be assumed from the manner of painting that the work is by Rembrandt; the application of paint

and characteristics of form are too little like his. The paint is unusually smooth in the lit flesh areas and shows an equally unusual use of colour in the shadows, where a translucent brown leads into an opaque grey-brown (certainly after 1632 the sequence would have been reversed). In the head the rendition is generally diagrammatic, especially in the eyes which have an unclear plastic structure and have catchlights that can be termed atypical in both shape and placing. Where the rendering as such succeeds, e.g. in the mouth, the treatment still differs from what one is used to seeing in Rembrandt — an animated mouth-line in an almost uniform colouring is absent. Both hair and clothing have a certain floridity and sometimes even over-brilliance in the brushwork, and a superficiality, very far from Rembrandt's subtly varied handling which however summary still produces a suggestion of plasticity. Against this, the treatment of the jewels is quite poor, and the shoulder ornament lacks any spatial logic. Though it cannot be fully assessed through the present layer of varnish, the colour range does not, amid all the browns and greys, have any colourful element such as Rembrandt generally uses to boost the effect of the lighting. The form of the cast shadow (in which the shape of the cap and plume are projected onto the rear wall) is uncharacteristic, and the whole distribution of light in the background provides little of the effect of depth one is used to finding in Rembrandt.

The in themselves somewhat jarring motifs and features in the picture carry less weight as counter-arguments, but coupled with the objections based on the pictorial execution they can be taken as negative evidence. The woman's clothing seems overdone, and to include motifs that never occur in the same way in Rembrandt — the labile form of the cap, the shawl round the neck, and the rosette on the shoulder with a tassel reminding one most of what, in the Washington *Half-length figure of a man in 'Polish' costume* of 1637 (no. A 122), must probably be seen as a cavalry attribute. One is moreover struck by inconsistencies in the lighting that, though one must on this point not look too closely at Rembrandt himself, here really do leap to the eye — while the light is quite clearly falling from the left, the catchlights on the pearl eardrop and shoulder ornament do not match this in the slightest.

It is very hard to say when the painting was produced. The fairly considerable differences from Rembrandt's way of doing things make attribution to him unacceptable, and also prompt doubts as to whether it comes from his immediate circle; yet it is difficult to say anything definite. The author must have had a certain familiarity with Rembrandt's work. The pose makes one think of, for instance, the London *Flora* of 1635 (no. A 112), and the picture type — especially the lighting — is in line with an interpretation of Rembrandt's style as it probably existed quite early on; a cast shadow of similar shape from a plumed cap (recognizable as such in the shadow) can also be found in the *Half-length figure of Rembrandt* formerly in the coll. Lord Samuel (no. C 92), which seems to have been done by a pupil. It is thus not wholly impossible that the painting was produced in Rembrandt's circle in the later 1630s. It must at all events have won itself a reputation in the 18th century, to judge by a number of copies of it that are known (see *7. Copies*). One of these shows the picture in an area somewhat larger all round (copy 2). The notion that the painting was larger on all sides (which would improve the composition) finds some confirmation in the description given in a sale in 1795 of a painting that is probably identical with it; if so, then it would also have had an arched top.

5. Documents and sources

None.

6. Graphic reproductions

None.

7. Copies

Hofstede de Groot[4] mentioned, in 1915, copies that at that time were or had been in Darmstadt (cat. 1875 no. 348), in a private collection in Mainz, and with a Paris dealer. To what extent these were identical with one or more of those listed below it is impossible to tell.

1. Canvas 85 × 75 cm, sold in Paris on 31 May 1929 as by Alexis Grimou (Argenteuil 1678–Paris 1733); cf. L. Réau in: *Les peintres français du XVIIIe siècle*, L. Dimier ed., II, Paris-Bruxelles 1930, p. 213 no. 94: 'en buste'.
2. Canvas 100.5 × 81 cm, private collection (photo Schweizerisches Institut für Kunstwissenschaft, Zurich, arch. no. 2743). Shows the subject in an area slightly larger all round.
3. Canvas 82.6 × 67 cm, coll. Catholina Lambert, sale New York 21–24 February 1916, no. 239, as by Ferdinand Bol; according to the reproduction in the catalogue, it shows the figure to just below the waist in an area larger than the original at the top and narrower on the other three sides. 'Purchased from Edward Brandus. This portrait was presented in 1787 by the Duc d'Orléans to Alexandre Pieyre, tutor to the Duc de Chartres (afterwards Louis Philippe), and came from the Palais Royal collection. It was afterwards the property of Madame de Genlis, the famous authoress'.
4. Canvas 92 × 71 cm, coll. Hermann von Königswarter (Vienna), sale Berlin 20 November 1906, no. 21 as by Govaert Flinck.
5. Panel 97 × 74 cm, Potsdam, Sanssouci. See G. Eckardt, *Die Gemälde in der Bildergalerie von Sanssouci*, Potsdam 1975, p. 54 no. 100. Already in Schloss Sanssouci in 1773.
6. Canvas 33 × 29.5 cm, Basle, Kunstmuseum Basel (inv. no. 501). A greatly reduced copy, showing the figure to just below the waist.

8. Provenance

*– Probably coll. Vve. Lebas-Courmont, sale Paris 26ff May 1795 (Lugt 5323), no. 9: 'Rembrandt. Une belle femme représentée de trois quarts, & coeffée d'une toque de velours ornée de plumes,

elle est vue jusqu'aux genoux, dans un habillement noir, largement drappé & relevé de diverses parures de gazes, mêlées de chaînes d'or dans le stile le plus pittoresque. Cet admirable Tableau peut être cité comme une des productions gratieuses de ce grand coloriste. On ne doute point que son admirable empâtement de couleur ne justifie les éloges dues à un ouvrage aussi beau que distingué dans son ensemble. Haut 46 pouc. larg. 28 [= 124.2 × 75.6 cm]. B[ois]. de forme cintrée.' (10 100 francs to Vogel). The description leaves no doubt that it concerns either no. C 95 or a copy of it. If the former, the dimensions and additional comment 'de forme cintrée' indicate that the painting had an arched top and was then larger than it is today; this would be to some extent confirmed by the surviving copies (all on canvas) (cf. *7. Copies* above).
– Coll. Graf Luckner, Altfranken nr Dresden[4].

9. Summary

Though the painting's subject makes a Rembrandtlike impression, the execution shows clear differences from what one would expect from Rembrandt and exhibits in general a certain superficiality in the rendering of form combined with poor detail and a dreary colour range. The differences from Rembrandt's work are such that an attribution to him must be ruled out, though production in his circle is conceivable. It is likely that the painting was originally somewhat larger on all four sides.

REFERENCES

1 Gerson 184; Br.-Gerson 104.
2 Bauch 490.
3 Schwartz 1984, p. 380.
4 HdG 613.

C 96 Bust of Rembrandt in a black cap

LONDON, THE WALLACE COLLECTION, CAT. NO. P52

HDG 559; BR. 27; BAUCH 315; GERSON 237

Fig. 1. Panel 64 × 49 cm



Fig. 2. X-Ray



1. Summarized opinion

A painting that is in execution so inferior to Rembrandt's work that it cannot be regarded as authentic. It was probably done, in his workshop, *c.* 1637, on a panel that had already been used in *c.* 1634. Apart from an alteration of the panel's shape and size and the associated overpaintings, it is well preserved.

2. Description of subject

The figure is seen to just above the waist, with the body facing right and the head tilted up a little and turned slightly towards the viewer, on whom the gaze is fixed. On his curly hair the man, whose features are clearly those of Rembrandt, wears a black cap adorned with a narrow gold chain. Over a dark coat with a fur collar he has two gold chains the lower of which he is touching with a gloved left hand. The light falls from the left, and the figure casts a distinctly-edged shadow on the rear wall.

3. Observations and technical information

Working conditions

Examined in May 1968 (B.H., E.v.d.W.) in reasonable daylight and artificial light, and in the frame. Examined again in November 1984 (E.v.d.W.). A transparency of the X-ray mosaic covering almost the entire painting apart from the side edges was received from the Courtauld Institute of Art, London.

Support

DESCRIPTION: Oak panel, grain vertical, *c.* 64 × 49 cm. Single plank, with a semicircular top that on each side comes down to a horizontal step about 6 cm deep, some 45 cm from the bottom edge; filled in to make a rectangle with a single piece of wood (grain horizontal) that is attached to the upper edge of the truncated panel with a rebated joint (?). Two laths are attached to the back diagonally across this joint to strengthen it. Back bevelled along the bottom; the remains of bevelling can be seen along the sides, but none at the top. The panel was undoubtedly originally rectangular and a little wider, and most probably also taller.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: Dendrochronology (Prof. Dr J. Bauch and Prof. Dr D. Eckstein, Hamburg) showed at the bottom edge 254 annual rings heartwood, dated 1353–1606. Earliest possible felling date 1615; in view of the absence of sapwood and the belief expressed above that the panel was once wider, it may be assumed that the likely felling date needs to be put somewhat later than this. The panel comes from the same tree as that of the Berlin *Self-portrait in a cap and fur-trimmed cloak* of 1634 (no. A 96).

Ground

DESCRIPTION: A yellowish-brown colour, possibly the ground, is exposed in scratchmarks in the hair.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: Three cross-sections taken and prepared by Mrs C.M. Groen of the Hamilton Kerr Institute, Cambridge, all show the same two-layer ground: over one layer consisting of chalk with (as one might expect) a gluelike binder, there is another layer containing mainly white lead, some yellow ochre and occasional dark brown or black pigment grains — the 'primuersel'. Double grounds of this kind are frequently found (cf. Vol. I, Chapter II, pp. 17–20 notes 26 and 27; Vol. II nos. A 75, A 76 and A 104; Vol. III, nos. A 115 and A 135).

Paint layer

CONDITION: Generally good. The background has evidently been partly overpainted in connexion with the enlargement of the panel, with paint that differs from the original through its now darker colour. This is so above and to a large degree to both sides of the head, along the lefthand edge to quite far down (though from the border between the hair and the cap the original background is exposed along the figure), and along the righthand edge in a wide zone tapering downwards to reach the cast shadow (here too the original background can be seen in a broad area along the jawline and body). The present contour of the cap is determined by this overpainting. Craquelure: some cracking can be seen here and there in the flesh areas.

DESCRIPTION: The original parts of the background are painted in an opaque grey paint, using lively, short brushstrokes. The cast shadow is in a darker and somewhat translucent paint.

In the light areas the face has a fair measure of impasto and a structure that suggests that the initially bold strokes were later brushed smooth, so that the relief did not wholly disappear but the brushstrokes as such were virtually merged together. The eye areas are painted quite coarsely without any clear definition, and the suggestion of plasticity suffers as a result. In the eye on the left this effect is due to an indistinct border between the white of the eye and the lower lid, which consists of touches of greyish and flesh-coloured paint that do not create any cohesive image. The upper lid — shown with small lines of red — likewise has, towards its inner corner, strokes that mar the suggestion of plasticity. On either side the white paint of the white of the eye and the dark grey used for the iris run into each other. The pupil is black, with a white catchlight on the left. The righthand eye (placed too high compared to that on the left) similarly has a number of brushstrokes in the inner corner that impair the form. A fairly thick, light catchlight is placed on the upper eyelid. The surroundings of this eye are painted with a fair degree of impasto in a grey that tends to red, possibly because of an underpainting showing through. Along the cheek contour the grey becomes rather lighter and displays distinct brushstrokes following an uneven path. Along the nose the shadow is applied with a darker and rather caked paint; by the tip of the nose there is an inexplicable, very dark stroke, alongside which some red is used on the border between light and shadow. The lips are painted in red, vaguely outlined and running out into the red of the surrounding flesh colour. The shadow cast on the forehead by the cap is slightly greenish, and continues into the shadow of the frown-line on the forehead and into the shadow half of the face on the right.

The moustache and tuft of beard are indicated with squiggly strokes, and the structure of the latter enhanced with a few scratchmarks. The rather ruddy brown hair has, especially on the lefthand side, numerous fine and rather confused curved and S-shaped scratchmarks that leave a yellowish-brown colour exposed; they continue into the background and into the black of the man's cap. At the temple and along the edge of the cap some of the scratchmarks have been painted-in again. The earlobe in the light is painted thickly, and has some red besides the yellowish flesh colour.

The fur collar is painted in fine strokes and touches running in various directions, in black, brown and an ochrish yellow. At the neck the almost vertical brushstrokes were evidently painted while the flesh colour was still wet — the brown and the flesh colour have merged slightly. The individual hairs of the fur along the contour are painted over the background.

The manner of painting of the coat is loose and sketchlike, with here and there a red-brown that can perhaps be seen as an underpainting showing through. The chains are painted fairly cursorily with squiggly strokes of an ochrish yellow, a somewhat ruddy ochre colour and white, and are depicted rather nonchalantly. The gloved hand is done coarsely and sketchily in greys with black lines.

Under raking light one can see in the paint surface, in relief, the traces of underlying impasto brushstrokes that are unconnected with the form of the coat (see also under *X-Rays*).

SCIENTIFIC DATA: The three cross-sections mentioned earlier (see *Ground*, SCIENTIFIC DATA) were prepared from samples taken from the background. Sample 1 (Hamilton Kerr, 626.1) was taken

about 2 cm from the lefthand edge of the original panel and *c.* 1 cm below the 'shoulder' of that panel. Sample 2 (Hamilton Kerr, 626.3) was taken *c.* 1 cm from the righthand edge and *c.* 7 cm below the 'shoulder' of the original panel. These two samples were to see whether the background at these points is overpainted. The structure of both is identical: on the 'primuersel' there is a layer containing a mixture of bone black, white lead, coarse grains of red ochre and fine red pigment. This layer also has, in sample 1, an organic red pigment (part of which is in the form of a fibre); in sample 2 the layer further contains dark brown pigment grains. X-Ray microprobe analysis showed in this layer, in both samples, the elements Mg, Al, Si, P, Pb and Ca. The layer is evidently to be identified as the original background. In both samples a layer of varnish was found on this layer; on top of this there was, in both, a layer of identical paint — undoubtedly that of an overpainting applied when the panel was expanded to a rectangular format. This overpainting contains for the most part white lead and bone black, coarse grains of red ochre (plus in sample 1 a little yellow ochre); the paint layer was rich in binder. An X-ray microprobe showed this layer to contain the elements Mg, Al, Si, P, Pb, Ca and Fe.

Sample 3 (Hamilton Kerr, 626.2) was taken from the background some 2 cm to the right of the hair, level with the tip of the nose, at a point where a dark paint layer shows through. The top layer at this point appears, from inspection of the surface, to adjoin the overpainting mentioned above. This assumption is confirmed by the cross-section — the top layer in this sample has the same composition as the top layers of the other two samples. It is separated from the underlying paint only occasionally by a layer of varnish. Beneath the overpainting, directly on the *primuersel*, there is only one very dark paint layer comprising mainly bone black with a little translucent red-brown and bright red ochre. The addition of a small amount of translucent red to black was, it would seem, usual in the 17th century, perhaps to deepen the black. This dark layer is in all probability connected with an underlying, uncompleted portrait of a woman (see *X-Rays*).

X-Rays

The radiographic image is determined in part by the work and additions that were associated with the alterations to the panel's format (the semicircular top of the panel filled out to make a rectangle, with two horizontal 'shoulders', and the diagonal laths strengthening the join of the additions).

The cap and hair are seen partly in the form of dark reserves, with the dark shape quite sharply outlined. On the right this border more or less coincides with the oblique line of one of the laths and does not differ greatly from the present contour. The reserve for the topmost point of the cap matches the presentday contour but bends diagonally downwards to the left, far more abruptly than it does today. There is beside this, less dark, a much larger and partly angular reserve that is wider than the present contour. The incoherent picture seems to come from reserves for other, underlying forms (see below).

The head itself broadly matches what one might expect from the paint surface. There is a very evident brushwork, and the scratchmarks in the tip of the beard and hair are visible. Below the neck on the right the dark reserve for the upper body spreads less far to the right than the contour of the body does today; the final contour has quite plainly been set over the background.

A light, partly curved and partly straight and angular line runs across the chest, through the hand and over the shoulder; there is no clear explanation for this — it may have to do with a previously-painted (but uncompleted) woman's portrait a number of unmistakeable traces of which can be made out. Below and to the left of the hand there is a form with light edges and patches that indicates that there was a bow or rosette at this point; to the left of this rosette one can see the light image of horizontal lines that kink diagonally upwards further to the left, and belong to a belt. All these elements show a strong resemblance to items of fashionable female dress of the kind worn by well-to-do women in the 1630s. In this context the dark reserve by the man's cap can be understood as corresponding to the woman's left-turned head; a narrow, curved light zone below the present mouth would then be a reflexion of light along the woman's jawline. The relationship is further clarified through infrared examination showing, to the left of and above the present righthand eye, the image of another eye that obviously belonged to the woman's head (fig. 4). It may be that the partly curved light zone already mentioned is connected with a chain.

At the position of the man's gloved hand there is a concentration of radioabsorbent paint; the hand may initially not have been gloved and would thus have been lighter, though it is also possible that this light patch has to be related to the underlying woman's costume.

Signature

On the right in the cast shadow, and hard to read <*Rembrandt / ff.*> The letters make a slovenly impression, and the inscription as a whole is unconvincing.

Varnish

No special remarks.

4. Comments

From what has been said earlier (see *Support*, DESCRIPTION) it can be deduced that the painting was originally somewhat wider and probably taller, and of normal rectangular shape. From this one may assume that the figure was more normally placed (i.e. less high up) in the picture area.

From the X-ray observations it is apparent that the panel was almost certainly first intended for a woman's portrait. The rosette and belt that can be still seen from this were very specific articles of fashionable women's attire of the kind that Rembrandt and others painted on a number of occasions in 1633 and 1634 (cf. nos. A 79, A 84 and A 101). Taken together with other elements — the reserve for the head, in which there are on the right the traces of a reflected light along the jawline, plus an eye seen in the infrared photograph (fig. 4) — they provide a fairly clear picture of the bust, facing left, of a stylishly-dressed woman. This underlying portrait was certainly unfinished, and perhaps never went much further than an underpainting. Remarkably the X-ray shows no trace of the collar, not even in the underpainted state.

The picture seen today has, in its lighting and pose, an unmistakeable rembrandtesque stamp. The way the head is placed in relation to the trunk, which is turned away from the viewer, and very lightly raised while the gaze remains fixed on the viewer, corresponds to a formula that can be termed characteristic of similar works by Rembrandt; the same can be said of the overall character of the bulging contour of the man's trunk (though this does lose some tension through the repetition of the convex forms), and of the lighting in the background (leaving the overpainting out of account, of course).

Fig. 3. Detail (1 : 1)



Within the head the lighting is broadly the same as one would expect from Rembrandt. The sketchy depiction of the clothing and gloved hand chimes with the scanty detail that Rembrandt gave to peripheral items. These similarities to Rembrandt's work are most clearly illustrated by the Paris *Self-portrait in a cap* of 1633 (no. A 72). Apart from the pose of the head there is such a striking resemblance between the two that one is justified in speaking in terms of a direct connexion. The distribution of light

Fig. 4. Detail (infrared photograph, 1 : 1)



in the head and background is almost identical as is, especially, the posture of the gloved hand. Comparatively minor details — the ear, the jewellery, the cast shadow and the placing of the signature in the latter — also match.

This makes the differences in execution all the more noticeable. These could be explained in part by the fact of the panel having already been painted on; more significant however are the weaknesses in brushwork and rendering of form. The most evident example of this is the feeble suggestion of form in the eye area, where a great many strokes and touches of the brush and the placing of the lights have not produced a cohesive whole; the construction of the head, too, leaves something to be desired. The execution of the chains, clothing and glove shows, compared to that of the Paris painting, a remarkably weak suggestion of form. The contours of the body where, as we have already said, bulging shapes are repeated, are filled in without any sense of tension, and the result is flat and flabby. The cast shadow, finally, does not, compared e.g. to that in the Paris self-portrait, have the interesting pattern that could have contributed to the feeling of depth; the round shape in no. C 96 is such that the relationship to the body casting the shadow is lost. Furthermore, the scratchmarks in the hair, which are here fine and numerous, are found in Rembrandt mainly in works from his early period such as the Amsterdam *Self-portrait* of, probably, 1628 (no. A 14) and the Munich one of 1629 (no. A 19): he seldom used this technique so freely as this later on (though one may note the hair of Samson in no. A 109). Because of all this one cannot escape the impression that the painter of no. C 96 was not Rembrandt himself but someone from his circle who based himself extensively on his prototype, using not only the 1633 *Self-portrait* as his model but — as the nature of the scratchmarks in the hair shows — earlier work as well. In working up the painting this artist however fell clearly behind Rembrandt in terms of quality.

It is perhaps significant that the date given for no. C 96 has in the literature varied a great deal. Bode and Hofstede de Groot[1], in 1899, placed the painting around 1634, a date that Hofstede de Groot later[2] upheld. Bredius[3] put it between 1635 and 1637, H.E. van Gelder[4] dated it around 1637, Bauch [5] gave it as 'wohl um 1640 gemalt', and Gerson[6] (who voiced some doubts as to its authenticity, which he however accepted) included it in the works from around 1640. The latter dating was also given by Tümpel[7], who was in fact the first to ascribe the work — rightly, in our view — to a pupil.

Dendrochronological examination has shown that the panel comes from the same tree as that of the Berlin *Self-portrait* of 1634. It is reasonable to assume that the panel was in Rembrandt's workshop about then. The first painting, of a woman's portrait, must then have been done around this time, as the legible part of the woman's costume bears out. The supposition that this female portrait was not completed, and the clear borrowings in no. C 96 from the Paris *Self-portrait in a cap* from 1633, are grounds for putting its production at 1634 at the earliest. In all likelihood this took however place only *c.* 1637. Not only does the apparent age of the sitter suggest this but the manner of painting too points to such a date. Among the dated paintings by Rembrandt we know none that is closer to no. C 96 in the broad indication for forms (especially around the eyes and nose) and the use of indistinctly-bordered shadow accents than the 1637 *Half-length figure of a man in 'Polish' costume* in Washington (no. A 122). In this picture, a similar loose, occasionally wet-in-wet technique has resulted in a much more firmly-built form. The similarity in execution is however such that a date of *c.* 1637 must be considered probable for the Wallace Collection.

The question of which pupil was responsible for producing the painting cannot be answered with any certainty. One could think of Govaert Flinck, but comparison with his signed and dated work (from 1636 onwards) does not yield enough support for the notion. There is, however, every reason to suppose that no. C 96 belongs among the group of portrayals of Rembrandt done by his workshop assistants, which comprises also the Berlin painting (no. C 56) and those in a private collection (no. C 92) and in Pasadena (no. C 97).

5. Documents and sources

None.

6. Graphic reproductions

None.

7. Copies

- Mentioned in the coll. Duke of Hamilton sale, London (Christie's) 17 June–20 July 1882 (1st day), no. 29: 'Rembrandt. Portrait of the artist in a furred robe and gold chain, his left hand gloved, and black cap with gold ornament, 26 in. by 21 in. [= 67 × 53 cm]' (£703.10s).

8. Provenance

Identified by Hofstede de Groot[2] hypothetically, but in view of the differing elements in the description certainly wrongly, with a painting ('Een dito [schoon] Jongeling, met eene Hand, zynde een Krygsman . . .' (A ditto [handsome] young man, showing one hand, a soldier) in the Gerard Hoet sale, The Hague 25–28 August 1760 (Lugt 1109), no. 48, and with a painting ('Portrait ressemblant à Rembrandt . . . habillé en Officier avec le Haussecol . . . la tête couverte d'une toque garnie de plumes . . .') in the F.W. van Borck sale, Amsterdam 1–3 May 1771 (Lugt 1926), no. 6.
- Coll. Comte F. de Robiano, sale Brussels 1ff May 1837, no. 544 (5500 francs).
- Coll. Casimir Périer, sale London (Christie's) 5 May 1848, no. 12 (£294 to Lord Hertford).
- Coll. the 3rd Marquess of Hertford, London; by descent to Sir Richard Wallace (illegitimate son of the 4th Marquess). Bequeathed by Lady Wallace to the nation, as part of the Wallace Collection, 1897.

9. Summary

On the evidence of the X-rays the panel was originally painted with a woman's portrait. It is doubtful whether this portrait was ever finished; most probably the panel was rectangular and rather wider and higher than it now is. Some time after the present picture was painted the panel was reduced at the top to an arched shape; it was subsequently filled in to form a rectangle again, at which time the background was for the most part overpainted.

Though no. C 96 shows, in the pose and lighting, unmistakeable resemblances to the work of Rembrandt (and in particular to the Paris *Self-portrait in a cap* of 1633, no. A 72), it is in quality of execution far inferior to that work, mostly through a hardly convincing suggestion of form and the poor construction of the head. On these grounds one may take it that no. C 96 is not by Rembrandt himself, but by a painter working in his studio. The signature does not give the impression of being authentic.

In view of the dendrochronology findings and the costume, the underlying woman's portrait must have been produced in *c.* 1634. The superimposed *Bust of Rembrandt* was probably executed only *c.* 1637, as one may conclude from a striking resemblance in the manner of painting of Rembrandt's 1637 *Half-length figure of a man in 'Polish' costume* in Washington (no. A 122).

REFERENCES

1 W. Bode and C. Hofstede de Groot, *Rembrandt* III, Paris 1899, no. 171.
2 HdG 559.
3 Bredius 27.
4 H.E. van Gelder, *Rembrandt en zijn portret*, Amsterdam, Paletserie [n.d.], p.25.
5 Bauch 315.
6 Gerson 237.
7 Tümpel 1986, cat. no. A 68.

C 97 Bust of Rembrandt

PASADENA, CAL., NORTON SIMON MUSEUM OF ART

HDG 576; BR. 32; BAUCH 313; GERSON 229

1. Summarized opinion

A well preserved work that certainly portrays Rembrandt. It may be attributed to Carel Fabritius, and dated *c.* 1641.

2. Description of subject

The sitter (who certainly has the facial features of Rembrandt) is seen to just above the waist, turned three-quarters right; the light falls from the left front, so that the averted righthand side of the face is also partly lit. Over curling half-length hair he wears a black velvet beret, encircled by a gold chain at the brim. Over a pleated white shirt lies a gold chain that disappears behind the squarecut top edge of his doublet; over the latter he wears a black coat with brown revers and gold buttons and braiding. His left hand is tucked inside the coat.

3. Observations and technical information

Working conditions

Examined on 1 November 1971 (B.H., E.v.d.W.) in good artificial light, in the frame and inside a climate-controlled plexiglass box that prevented measurement of the panel. An X-ray film of the whole of the head was available; an X-ray print of the head less the lower part was available subsequently. Re-examined in the gallery in April 1984 (E.v.d.W.) and November 1985 (J.B., E.v.d.W.).

Support

DESCRIPTION: Oak panel, grain vertical, *c.* 62.5 × 50 cm, not including the edges — visible from the front — of a rebated framework of four battens enclosing the original panel which has a mating rebating. Thickness *c.* 1 cm, to judge from that of the battens. Three planks, with the lefthand join running just through the hair, the righthand one through the wrist.
SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

Ground

DESCRIPTION: A fairly light yellow-brown is exposed here and there, e.g. in the cuff along the wrist and in a light area in the shirt inside the neckchain. Elsewhere this also shows through in many places.
SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

Paint layer

CONDITION: Good. Craquelure: the flesh areas have a fine and mainly horizontal pattern of cracks.
DESCRIPTION: The background shows, in the lighter areas, a cloudy grey that, where it is thinly applied, allows the ground to show through. To left and right along the beret, the head and parts of the clothing the grey paint is thicker and opaque along the contours, indicating local corrections; one such correction has resulted in a partially quite abrupt lefthand edge to the shirt-collar. To the left along the hair and right along the beret there are traces in the relief of a slightly different lay-in. The darker parts are done in a dark brown that is translucent or opaque depending on the thickness.

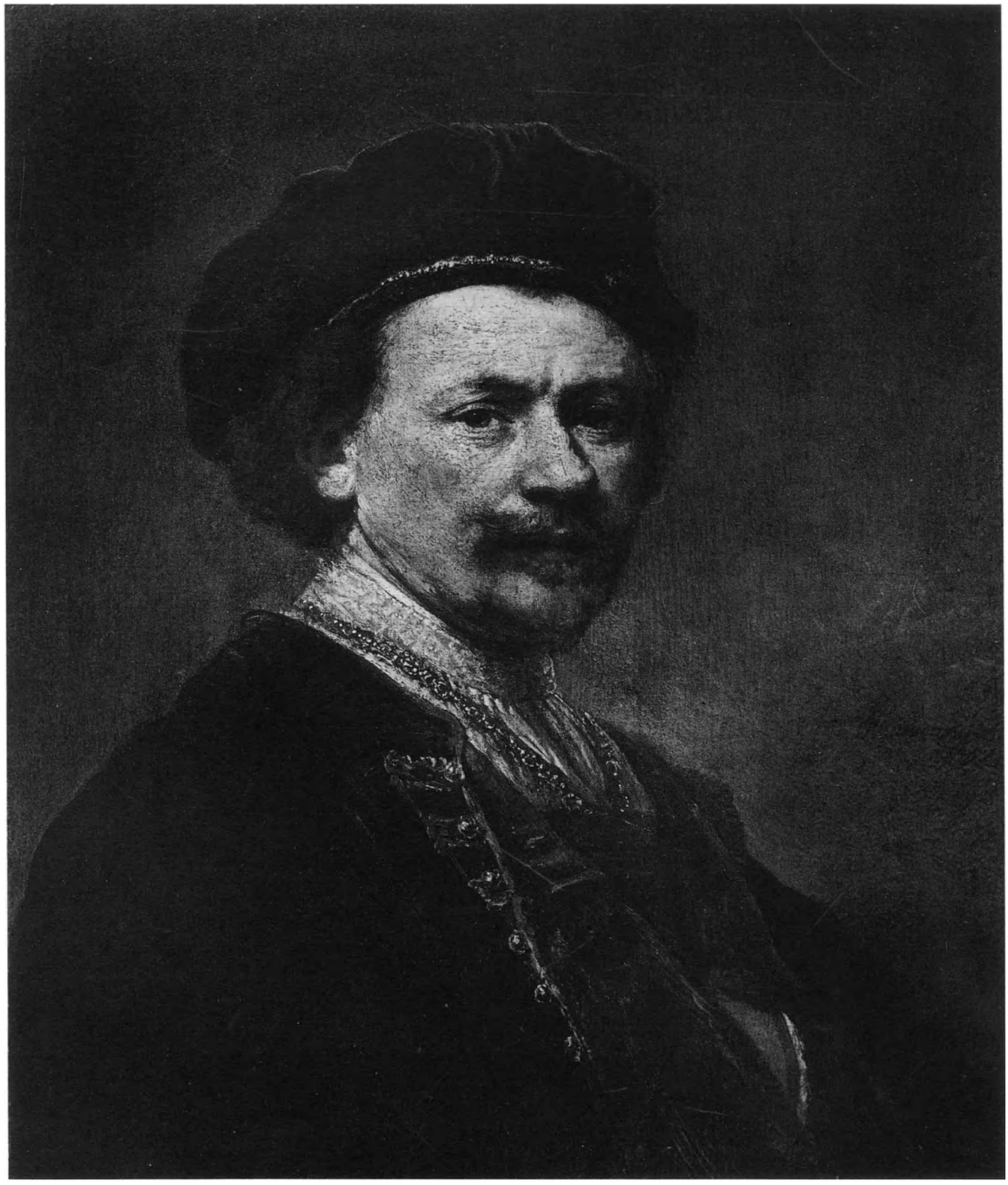
In the lit parts the head is executed with fairly apparent brushstrokes in opaque light flesh colour that lies as it were in large islets amid the thinner browns of the shadows and hair. The transition between light and dark passages is sometimes quite abrupt, for instance on the left below the ear and along the temple. On the right, in the forehead and cheek, a more gradual transition is achieved though here, too, the opaque flesh-coloured paint sometimes ends sharply. There is a remarkable variety of tints in the flesh colour — yellowish in the nose and below the eye, a thin, scrubbed-out strong pink high up in the cheek (in which an underlying yellowish tint and traces of red can be seen), and a greenish grey in the area of stubble.

The wrinkles in the forehead and between the eyebrows are suggested effectively in blended grey. The yellowish flesh colour above the bridge of the nose ends against this thinner grey with a few diagonal strokes; lower down the strokes run downwards to the right, with more impasto. At the tip of the nose the colour tends more to a brownish pink. The dark brown shadow bordering the ridge of the nose on the right forms a strange protuberance at the tip. The wing of the nose on the left shows a shadow done in flat and slightly translucent red-brown that towards the right, in the direction of the tip, merges into intermingled strokes of brownish and greyish paint; the nostril and darkest shadow are in a brownish black. On the left, below the wing of the nose, there are small strokes of an orangish flesh colour that become more yellow to the left and leave exposed the thinner greenish grey used to indicate the crease in the cheek. The same greenish grey dominates the area of stubble, and recurs in the tuft of beard beneath the lower lip. The whole of the chin forms, with the mouth, a ruddy area showing a varied handling of paint; in the top lip brushstrokes follow the shape, though on top of them there is a muddy red-brownish grey one or two small strokes of which occur again in the moustache, as well as in the lefthand corner of the mouth and here and there in the bottom lip. The highest light in the latter is marked by a number of diagonal strokes of a bright red. A thinly-applied red with some opaque pink dominates in the chin; traces of greenish grey paint can occasionally be glimpsed through this. The contours of chin and underchin are shown with a fairly coarse brushwork in a somewhat dingy dark brown. Below and along the underchin this contour continues to the right in a thin, ruddy brown and describes a strange bulge as if indicating a beard; it is however reddish in colour. It is bounded to the right by the thicker grey used in the background for making corrections, and at the bottom by a thin grey. One can get the impression (confirmed by the X-ray) that the righthand part of the chin initially had a rather wider contour that curves in part more sharply to the left due to a later correction but still stands exposed at the bottom.

The eye on the left is dealt with fairly thoroughly. The iris and pupil are not precisely outlined, and the pupil — done partly in a thick black — leaves some semitranslucent brown exposed along the edge. By the upper edge of the pupil there is a small, light grey catchlight, opposite which a lighter grey crescent has been placed in the dark grey iris. The relatively small lit part of the white of the eye on the right is bordered by a large opaque grey-brown shadow cast by the upper eyelid. A heavy brown-grey line forms the edge to the upper lid, and terminates on the left in a number of dots and small lines meeting at a point. The lower lid consists of touches of pink that on the right give slight indication of the corner of the eye and on which to the right is placed a flat patch of grey-white; to the left similar touches of white, partly suggesting the rim of moisture, continue a little way round the iris. The shadow in the eye-socket has a blended brown over a confused pattern of strokes of brown and flesh colour. The upper limit of the top eyelid is shown as a long stroke of red-brown. In the eyebrow, a reserve for which has been left in the flesh colour, some dark brown lies over a translucent brown.

The righthand eye area is, apart from the eyebrow, opaque. Merging blacks show the pupil, the lefthand border of the iris and the lower edge of the eye, and a row of tiny white dots suggest the rim of moisture. The iris has, on the left, a thin opaque grey that blends into the black of the pupil; minute dots of grey give a catchlight. The white of the eye consists of rather confusedly-applied browns and greys. The shadow of the eye-socket is formed by a rather coarsish grey-brown in which some patches of brown-red indicate the socket, merging to the right into a rather lighter patch above the eyelid, which is bordered by a thin, dark and somewhat awkward line. The eyebrow, set in a reserve, is a yellowish-brown area that runs through into the shadow as a dark brown band. Dark parts of

Fig. 1. Panel *c.* 62.5 × 50 cm (reproduced after W. Bode and C. Hofstede de Groot, *Rembrandt* III, Paris 1899)



this shadow area are done in a fairly thick and opaque darker brown, of the kind used in the shadow by the righthand corner of the eye.

The hair is, on the left, executed mostly in a translucent brown with some darker internal detail; along the temple alone the paint is applied flatly and almost black. The shadowed part of the ear is painted in a similar way; the lit part has yellow and pink tints applied with brushstrokes that suggest the shape, and a few dabs of red. The hair on the right is done in an opaque black with, at the outline, strokes of an opaque brown that suggest the curls with occasional yellowish grey to give the sheen of light. A thin brown is used for the hint of hair above the forehead, which has a reserve left for it in the flesh colour. The neck is painted with long strokes in yellow and light brown, with red in the deepest fold of skin along the underchin.

The beret is in a thick black paint that has a knobbly appearance at the surface; strokes of grey along and beside the upper edge and along the chain suggest the sheen of light on the velvet. The chain comprises tiny clumps of yellow and white paint. The black of the coat is painted far more fluently than that of the beret, with generally apparent, long brushstrokes. The contour of the collar consists of a line of black that terminates above the shoulder on the left. The braiding is in ochre yellow applied wet-in-wet with the black, with rapid brushwork; the buttons are treated similarly, and have thick catchlights. The revers of the coat is done with fairly haphazard brushstrokes broadening out towards the bottom mostly in translucent browns; towards the top some opaque yellowish-grey is used for the sheen. The doublet and sleeve on the right are painted in the same way; the visible part of the hand is in a flat, thin grey-brown, bounded on the right by a single stroke of grey along the whole length of which a zone of the ground is exposed (perhaps meant to indicate a cuff).

In the lit part of the shirt strokes of a broken grey and white render a woven pattern of lozenge shapes. A space is left in reserve in the quite thick paint for the neckchain; here, small strokes and dots of ochre yellow, yellow and white lie over a brown. In the shadows, a greenish grey impasto is placed over a thin brown, while within the chain a light area is formed by the ground being left exposed.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

X-Rays

In the film studied at the time and the print available later the lit parts of the head show up in a pattern of small brushstrokes that have little immediate connexion with the modelling of form. The grey sheens of light in the beret can be followed quite easily, as can the corrections in the background along the left and right contours of the beret and on the right by the neck and shoulder.

A lightish band along the cheek on the right, penetrating into a broader dark reserve, corresponds to the thick paint along the presentday contour and obviously has to do with a correction to an initially wider-set form. A remarkable feature — though not unexpected given the colours used — is that below the moustache the face shows up mostly dark, with only a few strokes appearing light below the lefthand part of the mouth.

In the radiograph the lefthand end of the shirt collar is rather indistinct (a vague light band in one X-ray does not appear in the other, and must be due to some extraneous factor); the rather steep, straight boundary seen at the paint surface is evidently due to a superimposed extension of the background, which does not however (as it does elsewhere) show up light. The contour of the black coat, too, has undergone some correction on the left.

The dark reserve left for the hair on the left extends considerably further into the temple than it does at the paint surface; evidently the flesh colour has here been supplemented with non-radioabsorbent paint.

The part of the shirt inside the neckchain, described above as exposed ground, appears accordingly dark.

Signature

In the right background at shoulder level, in a dark brown-grey <*Rembrandt f / 163* (8?)>. The vestiges of the final digit, probably an 8, are very close to the descender of the *f*. The shape of the letters is, so far as these are clearly visible, inarticulate and so wide compared to those in authentic Rembrandt signatures that the authenticity of the inscription seems extremely doubtful.

Varnish

A slightly yellowed layer of varnish.

4. Comments

The attribution of the painting to Rembrandt has never been doubted by early and more recent authors, including Bauch[1] and Gerson[2], nor was it by Van Gelder who mentioned a print that gave Govaert Flinck as the artist[3]. Subsequently, Gerson expressly confirmed Rembrandt's authorship[4], and Schwartz[5] and Tümpel[6] accepted it. This is quite understandable, given the generally rembrandtesque appearance of the work; this applies in particular to the convincing plasticity achieved in some parts of the head such as the eye area on the left. On closer examination the painting does however have features that do not fit in with Rembrandt's work. Since the signature — insofar as we observed this — does not in itself give an impression of being autograph, acceptance or rejection of the attribution can rest only on an assessment of the style and execution.

In the whole of the face the manner of painting is very elaborate. As is usual with Rembrandt's portraits from the 1630s, the lit part has been done using fine touches (evident in the X-ray image as well) that have however been used in a way that shows a surprisingly free connection with the modelling of the form. There are a number of abrupt transitions, quite noticeable here and never seen in the same way in Rembrandt, from the light flesh colour to darker tints — for instance on the left along the hair and against the cast shadow of the ear and (less markedly) on the right on the forehead and cheekbone. There is the flat and sharply-edged black — intrusive, and probably meant as a cast shadow — that shows the hair on the left along the temple. The application of paint, too, has further features uncommon for Rembrandt, and even a detail like the eye on the left, which is one of the most effective passages in its convincing chiaroscuro, reveals differences when examined closely: a lack of clarity in the modelling of both corners of the eye, the excessively wide shadow that the upper eyelid casts on the white of the eye, and the marked dark strokes indicating its upper border. Similar unusual features are found in the shadow side of the face: the eye area on the right is dealt with in a particularly complicated way without however achieving a definite structure. Apart from this, the projection on the righthand edge of the tip of the nose is a

misdrawing, while that on the underside of the chin — probably the result of a correction to the form, and later perhaps seen as a tuft of beard but not executed as such — is enigmatic. Certain features of the colouring are also unusual for Rembrandt, in particular the relatively strong contrast between yellowish flesh colour, the strong pink on the cheek (which is besides placed higher than it usually is in Rembrandt's portraits), the ruddy tone of the whole chin area, and the greenish grey that plays a large role in the stubble along the jaw.

Formal corrections in the background, which are responsible for the contour of the whole figure on the left and right, have been done rather nonchalantly, in mostly opaque but sometimes less opaque paint, and apparently at various stages of the work. This fits in with the manner of working evident in the whole background, where the tonal values and brushstroke are rather arbitrary and where a significant contrast between light and dark — which Rembrandt's backgrounds normally have — is almost entirely missing; a vague dark area at the lower right is not clearly a cast shadow on the rear wall, and does little to help give an effect of depth. The painting of the hair, usually cursory with Rembrandt though with a clear suggestion of the curls, is here rather confused besides having against the temple the daring flat, black area already referred to.

That the clothing is depicted broadly does not in itself conflict with Rembrandt's habits; but the angularity and linearity that mark its form do. A lack of convexity is apparent in the shirt-collar, which on the left is coarsely bounded by the paint of the background due to a formal correction, and the coat, which does not run round the shoulder; it is also seen in the way the entirely flat wrist is covered (in a line with barely any curve) by the coat and the way the sleeve lies against the same wrist. In Rembrandt's work motifs like this are usually accompanied by a lively interplay of contours that suggest the convexities of the clothing, as in the Paris *Self-portrait in a cap* of 1633 (no. A 72), where the execution is at least equally sketchlike, in the etched self-portrait of 1638 (B. 20) and in the London painted one of 1640 (no. A 139). Typical of the scant heed the artist has paid to plastic differentiation in the dress is also the use of the exposed ground as an even light tone, seen here in the cuff and the shirt inside the neckchain in a way unknown in Rembrandt's work. The deft, angular and flattish painting of the whole of the clothing has an undeniably personal stamp, but its character differs unmistakeably from that of Rembrandt and moreover to some extent contradicts the careful manner of painting in the face aimed predominantly at a suggestion of plasticity. The painter's individual temperament is typified firstly by an idiosyncratic brushstroke, showing a great measure of autonomy especially in the costume but also in the head, failing to follow the form and sometimes giving a remarkably abrupt effect, and secondly by a highly personal sense of colour, which without any strong differences in tonal value results in subtle juxtapositions of warmer and cooler tints, both in the clothing and in the remarkably varied flesh colour.

If one interprets the individual nature of the painting in this way, it seems obvious to think of a Rembrandt pupil as its author. The work would then belong among the same group of portraits of Rembrandt done by pupils as those in Berlin (no. C 56), in the Wallace Collection (no. C 96) and in a private collection (no. C 92). That the sitter is Rembrandt himself is not open to doubt; the likeness of this face to the one we know from painted and etched self-portraits is wholly convincing. One has here a ground for giving an approximate date to the painting; the face we see in no. C 97 is most closely reminiscent of the London *Self-portrait* of 1640, in the somewhat taut skin over the cheekbone — which compared to the fuller faces of 1633 and 1634 can be seen as evidence of ageing — and in the slightly pensive expression. One could very well imagine that the author of no. C 97 knew the London painting — the angle chosen, the lighting and even the colour-scheme based on black, grey and brown are very similar; one quite understands how in his 1968 book Gerson[2], working from an assumption of authenticity, reproduced the painting as falling in the early part of the period 1640–49 (although in the relevant entry he gives the date as *c.* 1638). Where the dress and pose of the sitter's left hand are concerned, the etched *Self-portrait* of 1638 (B. 20) has the most motifs in common with no. C 97 — a shirt with a lozenge pattern, a braided coat (of somewhat different cut), and a hand tucked inside the coat. If one seeks to look on these resemblances to dated works as a connexion between prototype and copy, the dates of the prototype naturally provide only a *terminus post quem*. However, the fact that the manner of painting reveals in particular the impression that Rembrandt's habits in the later 1630s made on the author of this work, combined with the signs of ageing in Rembrandt's face that we have mentioned, make a date around or soon after 1640 likely. For the time being there is no question of dendrochronology helping to clear up the matter of dating — the edges of the panel are enclosed in a glued frame that makes investigation impossible. Unfortunately the inscription which gives the date as 163(8?) does not — being unreliable — give any trustworthy guidance.

In working out who the author of the painting was, the reference to Flinck on the 18th-century print reported by Van Gelder provides no help; it was apparently done after a copy that in the 18th century (wrongly) carried the name of Flinck (see *6. Graphic reproductions*, 1 and *7. Copies*, 1; fig. 2). The

Fig. 2. Copy 1. Panel 63 × 47 cm. Odessa, Museum of Occidental and Oriental Art



Pasadena work shows no resemblance to Flinck's rather woolly manner of painting, as found in, for example, his *Self-portrait* in London or his *Bust of an old man* in Dresden, both from 1639 (Sumowski *Gemälde* II, nos. 666 and 668). It can however be included in a group of works that on the grounds of their characteristic treatment can be attributed to Carel Fabritius, who must have worked in Rembrandt's studio around 1641/43. This is evidenced by a number of similarities between the Pasadena painting and a portrait belonging to this group plus a comparable and somewhat later work that bears Fabritius's signature. The most direct similarities are between no. C 97 and the *Portrait of a man* in the collection of the Duke of Westminster usually attributed to Rembrandt (no. C 106). Besides the structure of the figure, which in both cases is based on Rembrandt's *Portrait of Herman Doomer* of 1640 in New York (no. A 140), the resemblances are both in the idiosyncratic brushwork and in the handling of light and shade in the flesh areas. In the head in both paintings the singularly ragged brushstroke, which is obviously the most visible in the thick, sometimes yellow and sometimes warm pink paint of the lit areas, takes only partial account of the form being portrayed. It has a definite tendency to run diagonally (in both instances, in the nearer cheek), helps to form the boundary of the jaw in a rather coarse way, and comes to an abrupt end as a patch at the wing of the nose, where the opaque paint exposes a somewhat translucent brown that indicates the shadowed underside and in which the dark paint of the nostril is placed. The consistency of the opaque light paint, and the way this then provides a strong light under the wing of the nose that merges into the faintly indicated crease of the wing and into the confused image of the moustache, are very alike in both works and also, *mutatis mutandis*, in the signed *Bust of a young man (self-portrait?)* in Rotterdam (Sumowski *Gemälde* II, no. 603). In the lastnamed the handling of paint involves a freer and shorter brushstroke; but making allowance for this the function of the brushwork, the way it applies accents and — without describing the plastic form exactly — gives a strong suggestion of a varying intensity of light, can be termed identical. The similarities are most evident around the mouth in all three cases; but in the eye area too, where in the Rotterdam painting the eye-sockets are more in shadow, the rendering of form produced by ragged touches of varying thickness is much the same. The degree of coarseness forms one pointer to the chronological order in which the paintings were done, and in which the Rotterdam work is unmistakeably the last and that in Pasadena the earliest. The way in which, in the latter, the rendering of body and hand is reduced to quite flat and obliquely-set areas appears again in the probably only slightly later Westminster man's portrait, where the outline of the cloak revers and cursory indication of the collar and tasselled bandstrings is even more taut, and where only the hand is given more definition. The latter may have to do with the fact that this work — unlike the other two — was a commissioned portrait; perhaps this is also why the background is dealt with more carefully, as a three-dimensional element, than in the Pasadena painting where there is no attempt at a clear distribution of light and shade dictated by the fall of light. Besides the similarity of execution, the three paintings also offer a certain resemblance in the formal principle underlying the structure of the head: from the chin the shape continues upwards relatively broad, and the eyes are set remarkably wide apart — proportions that must be seen more as a feature of style than as the accurate recording of a facial trait.

Once one accepts the connexion in which the Pasadena *Bust of Rembrandt* has been placed here, then the deviations from Rembrandt's approach to form that we have described — in rather summarily rendered passages, in the quite strong colour contrasts within the flesh colour, and in the remarkably flatly-done clothing and hand — are

recognizable symptoms of a personal style, that of Carel Fabritius, where the light not so much models the form (as it does in Rembrandt's work from around 1640) as lends the surface being depicted a colouristic value and thus a wholly new pictorial autonomy. The Pasadena painting offers an early manifestation of this individuality. One may suppose that it was done *c.* 1641, after Rembrandt's 1640 *Self-portrait* and soon after Fabritius entered Rembrandt's workshop, and before he painted the man's portrait in the coll. Duke of Westminster in (probably) 1642.

5. Documents and sources

None.

6. Graphic reproductions

1. Engraving by J.B. Le Sueur (probably active Paris, later part of 18th century) inscribed: *G. Flinck pinx. — J.B. Le Sueur sculp. / Portrait de Rembrandt / Du Cabinet de Mr. le Comte de Baudoin / 6.* Reproduces the bust portrait in reverse in an oval, and is definitely done not after no. C 97 but after the first copy described below. The previous five numbered prints, from the series of *Têtes d'après Rembrandt* all after works in Dresden attributed to Rembrandt, are by Christian Gottfried Schultze (1749–1819), and are dated 1769 or '70; one of them carries the publisher's address of Chereau fils, Paris, and the others that of Dyck or Duck, Leipzig.

7. Copies

1. Panel, oval 63 × 47 cm. Odessa, Museum of Occidental and Oriental Art, inv. no. 3 Zj. 292 (fig. 2). Probably came into the possession of Catherine II of Russia in 1781 with other paintings from the collection of the Comte de Baudouin (cf. *6. Graphic reproductions*, 1 and V. Loewinson-Lessing in: *Rembrandt Harmensz van Rijn. Paintings from Soviet Museums*, Leningrad [*c.* 1971], p.9). Transferred to a Moscow museum in 1862 (as School of Rembrandt), and in 1949 to the museum at Odessa. Shows the figure on the same scale as the original in an oval, with a strong accent on the folds in the shirt collar and a beret standing slightly taller. These differences from the original recur in the print by Le Sueur described above, which was undoubtedly made after this copy.
2. Canvas, oval 62.1 × 51.3 cm. Whereabouts unknown. Made after that described under 1. above, prior to the sale of the coll. Comte de Baudouin to Catherine II of Russia, and after her death sold in Paris together with other copies, 4ff May 1797 (Lugt 5587), no. 43: 'Idem [D'après Rembrandt]. Deux portraits; l'un Arminius, chef de secte, portant une robe noire avec rabat blanc, il est coëffé d'un chapeau rond à haute forme [cf. the *Portrait of Jeremias de Decker*, Br. 320]; l'autre, Rembrandt dans sa jeunesse, la tête couverte d'un bonnet plat, & vêtu d'un manteau à gros boutons: hauteur 23 pouces, sur 19 de large [= 62.1 × 51.3 cm]. T. de forme ovale'. The sale catalogue gives as the reason for the copies being made 'la perte de la précieuse collection'.
3. Panel 61.5 × 51 cm, dated 1635. Present whereabouts unknown; previously coll. Grimaldi (Cadiz), sales Amsterdam 4 December 1912, no. 57 (17 000 guilders, bought in) and Berlin 5 May 1914, no. 62.
4. Panel 64.6 × 51.7 cm. Dated 1634. Whereabouts unknown. Coll. Mrs H.O. Havemeyer, sale New York 10 April 1930, no. 102.

8. Provenance

- Coll. Earl of Portarlington, sale London (Christie's) 28 June 1879, no. 69 (£1312.10s. to A. Levy).
- Coll. Albert Levy, sale London (Christie's) 3 May 1884, no. 56 (£1890). Handwritten note in the RKD copy of the catalogue: '24" × 19" on panel. Some doubt about its authenticity. Vosmaer appears never to have heard of it'.
- Dealer Colnaghi, London.
- Coll. Arthur Pemberton Heywood Lonsdale, Shavington, Market Drayton (Shropshire) before 1890. Coll. H. Heywood-Lonsdale. Coll. Arthur Heywood-Lonsdale, on loan to the Walker Art Gallery, Liverpool; sale London (Christie's) 27 June 1969, no. 70.

9. Summary

Although the handling of chiaroscuro, especially in the head, reminds one of Rembrandt's work from around 1640, the execution points to a different hand. The brushstroke in the head is quite elaborate, yet with here and there abrupt effects, and broad and flat (using areas of ground left exposed) in the clothing. The contour of the figure shows numerous rather nonchalantly-done corrections, and the background has only a slight effect of depth. The work appears, together with a number of portraits, to belong to a group of paintings that because of similarities in execution can certainly be ascribed to a Rembrandt pupil, and because of similarities in pictorial temperament with signed works by Carel Fabritius can be attributed to the latter. It precedes the commissioned portraits in this group, and should probably be dated *c.* 1641.

REFERENCES

1 Bauch 313.
2 Gerson 229.
3 J.G. van Gelder, 'The Rembrandt exhibition at Edinburgh', *Burl. Mag.* 92 (1950), pp. 327–329, esp. 328.
4 H. Gerson, 'Dutch and Flemish painting in the Norton Simon Museum of Art', *The Connoisseur* 193 (1976/77), pp. 162–171, esp. 164–165.
5 Schwartz 1984, p. 193.
6 Tümpel 1986, cat. no. 166.

C 98 Bust of a man with a plumed cap

THE HAGUE, KONINKLIJK KABINET VAN SCHILDERIJEN, MAURITSHUIS, CAT. NO. 149

HDG 545; BR. 24; BAUCH 311; GERSON 189

1. Summarized opinion

A well preserved work that must have been produced around the mid-1630s by an unknown artist in Rembrandt's immediate circle. It may be seen as a self-portrait.

2. Description of subject

Bust of a man with the face three-quarters and the body fully to the right; he looks towards the viewer over his right shoulder. He wears a wide cap with a slashed brim adorned with three feathers. In the lobe of his right ear, which is partly visible behind curling hair, he wears an earring with a horn-shaped pendant. The upper edge of a gorget is covered by a neckscarf, and the bottom by a dark cloak with gold embroidery along the top edge; a tassel hangs down from a wider part of this decoration, behind the shoulder.

The light falls from the left onto the man's head and shoulder; the brim of the cap throws a shadow over his forehead and eyes, and his figures casts a shadow, to the lower right, onto the wall that forms the background. The bottom lefthand corner is also in shadow.

3. Observations and technical information

Working conditions

Examined in October 1973 (S.H.L., P.v.Th.) in good artificial light, with the aid of an ultraviolet lamp. Radiographs covering the whole painting were available.

Support

DESCRIPTION: Oak panel, grain vertical, 63 (± 0.1) × 47 (± 0.1) cm. Comprises two planks, the lefthand one 26.3 cm wide and the righthand 20.7 cm. Thickness *c.* 0.6 cm. The back is rather roughly worked, with irregular and very vague bevelling along all four sides. On either side of the join, reaching to the bevelling at the top and bottom, can be seen a band with a total width of about 5 cm where the wood is lighter than the remainder, which has been stained dark. This indicates that at some time a strip of canvas, since removed, was stuck on to strengthen the panel; a band showing up light in the X-rays at this point has already been attributed by De Vries, Tóth-Ubbens and Froentjes[1] to the adhesive used for this.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: Dendrochronology (Prof. Dr J. Bauch and Prof. Dr D. Eckstein, Hamburg) showed for the lefthand plank 124 annual rings heartwood and 4 rings sapwood (+ 1 counted), and for the righthand plank 120 rings heartwood. Mean curve 140 annual rings (+ 29 counted on the heartwood side) and 4 rings sapwood (+ 1 counted). Not yet dated.

Ground

DESCRIPTION: A light yellow-brown shows through in large parts of the painting — the background, cap, feathers, shadow areas of the head and clothing — and is exposed at many places along the outline of the figure.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: According to De Vries, Tóth-Ubbens and Froentjes (op. cit., p.115), a chalk ground; these authors do not say whether the white lead found at some points belongs to the ground – it could also be part of the *primuersel.*

Paint layer

CONDITION: Very good; under UV light a few insignificant retouches can be seen here and there along the join and in the background, the pupil of the eye on the left, the cheek on that side, the nose and at the top of the decorative border of the cloak. Craquelure: scarcely any, apart from wide, irregular cracks in the hair and cap.

DESCRIPTION: This work is generally fluently and broadly painted with pronounced impasto only in the highlights. The background is done with clearly apparent brushstrokes running in various directions, with a thin grey that lightens in tint as it approaches the contour of the figure; alongside the cap the strokes follow its outline. This relatively light grey is, on the left level with the neck, set down with wide, diagonal strokes over the darker and more evenly applied grey of the area of shadow behind the sitter's back. A similar dark grey is used for the cast shadow on the right, though there it is, as is plain from the X-rays, placed on top of the lighter grey of the background. The cap is painted in subdued and translucent purple-brown, worked up with grey; the contours and shadows are marked deftly and firmly with strokes of black and dark grey. The topmost plume is rendered using closely-adjacent strokes of grey, among which something of the ground still shows through; small strokes of brown are placed over the contour, making its compact form a little more relaxed. The middle feather is drawn with long and short strokes of a practically black paint, with the ground visible between them; it is heightened a little along the bottom with a greenish grey. The bottom feather, too, is shown with rapidly applied long strokes; those to the extreme right are placed over the grey of the background.

The shadows on the forehead and righthand side of the face are rendered in a translucent grey. By the eye-socket a streak of a more opaque grey lies across the face contour, making the outline unsharp and helping to create the plastic convexity of the cheekbone. The contour of the cheek and chin on this side is marked by a wide, bow-shaped brushstroke in dark grey. The outlines of the eye on the right, too, are drawn very directly with a few strokes of brown and dark grey. The lefthand eye is done more thoroughly and carefully, with the borders of the eyelid built up from quite short strokes that taken together form longer lines; a ruddy brown is used in the corner of this eye. The white of the eye is shown in a muddy grey, with the iris and pupil in black; alongside this the yellow-brown of the ground shows through in the iris, and in the upper eyelid. The eye-socket is carefully modelled with strokes of a thin, smoothly-brushed light grey used for the reflexions of light. The eyebrow above it is made up of thin strokes of black placed parallel to each other. The lit parts of the face are built up from merging strokes of yellow-white and, especially, reddish flesh tints that in the curve of the cheek by the nose, in the fold below this and along the bottom of the wing of the nose become a ruddy brown. The modelling of the nose has broad brushstrokes; the bridge of the nose, by the forehead, is extended with a separate stroke. Above the wing of the nose and below the corner of the mouth the paint is applied with a dabbing touch, while the jaw has clear, long brushstrokes; in the latter the flesh tints are mixed with a little grey. The nostril and the wide mouthline between the slightly open, reddish brown and pink lips are shown with bold strokes of a greyish black; the moustache is done with fairly straight, stiff strokes of ochre yellow and grey, which on the left merge somewhat with the flesh tints. The colour of the hair varies from dark grey in the shadows to browns in the half-shadow and a yellowish brown in the lit areas, where lively brushwork suggests the waves. At the lower left small curls are drawn over the grey of the background. The ear is rendered vaguely in reddish flesh tints, and the earring and its pendant stand out clearly and have crisp and thickly applied catchlights in yellow-white.

The scarf is painted with long thick strokes, the colour alternating between ochre yellow and grey, with here and there the ground faintly visible between them; in the shadows the folds are indicated with curving strokes of black. The gorget is in a very dark grey, and the ground again shows through between the nonchalently placed brushstrokes; the rivets have grey edges of light and fat white highlights, with a broad catchlight in white and yellow-white at the top, and merge into a blue-grey at the edges. The cloak is grey-black, and done with brushwork that is still to some extent discernible. This passage is enlivened

Fig. 1. Panel 63 × 47 cm



Fig. 2. X-Ray

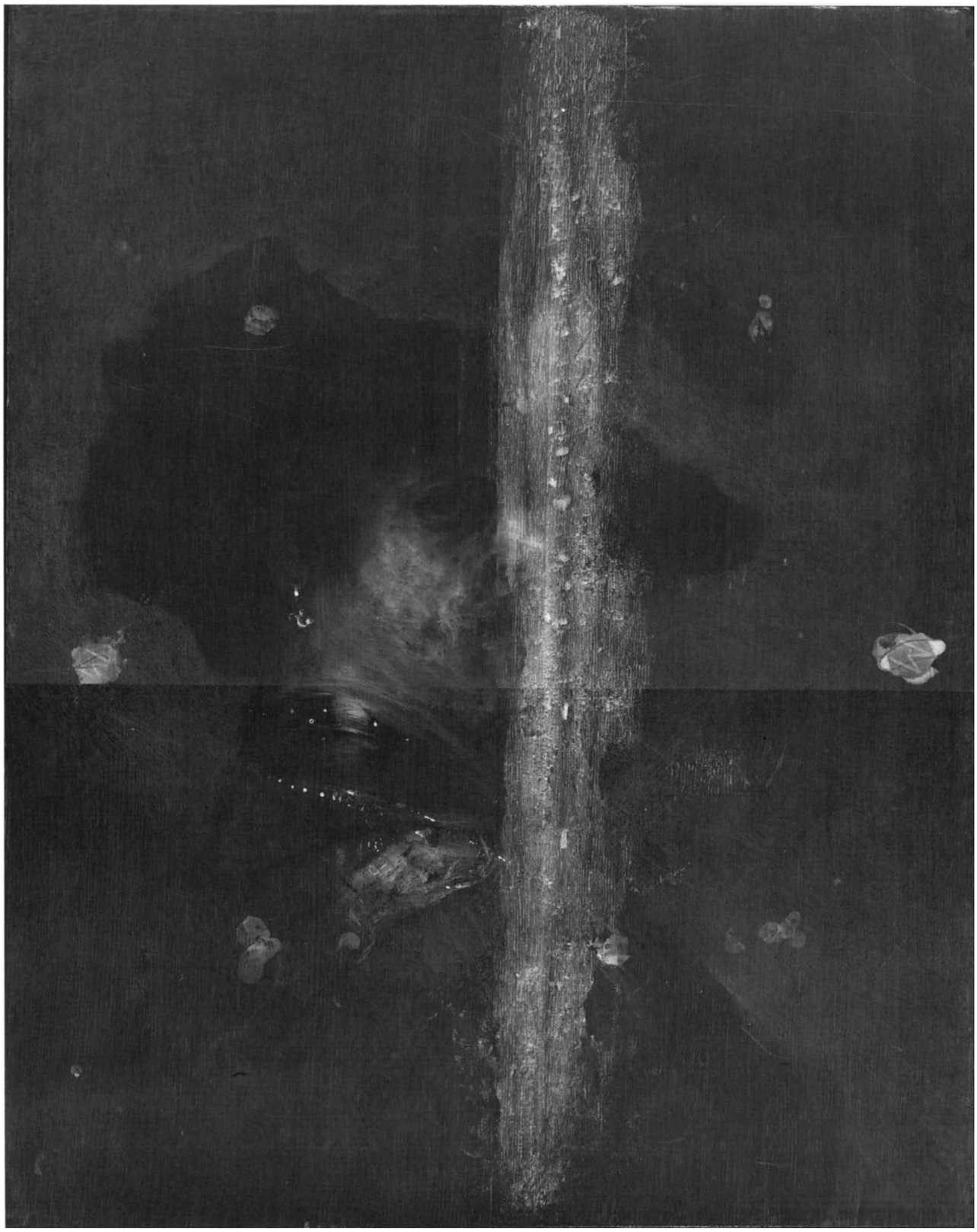
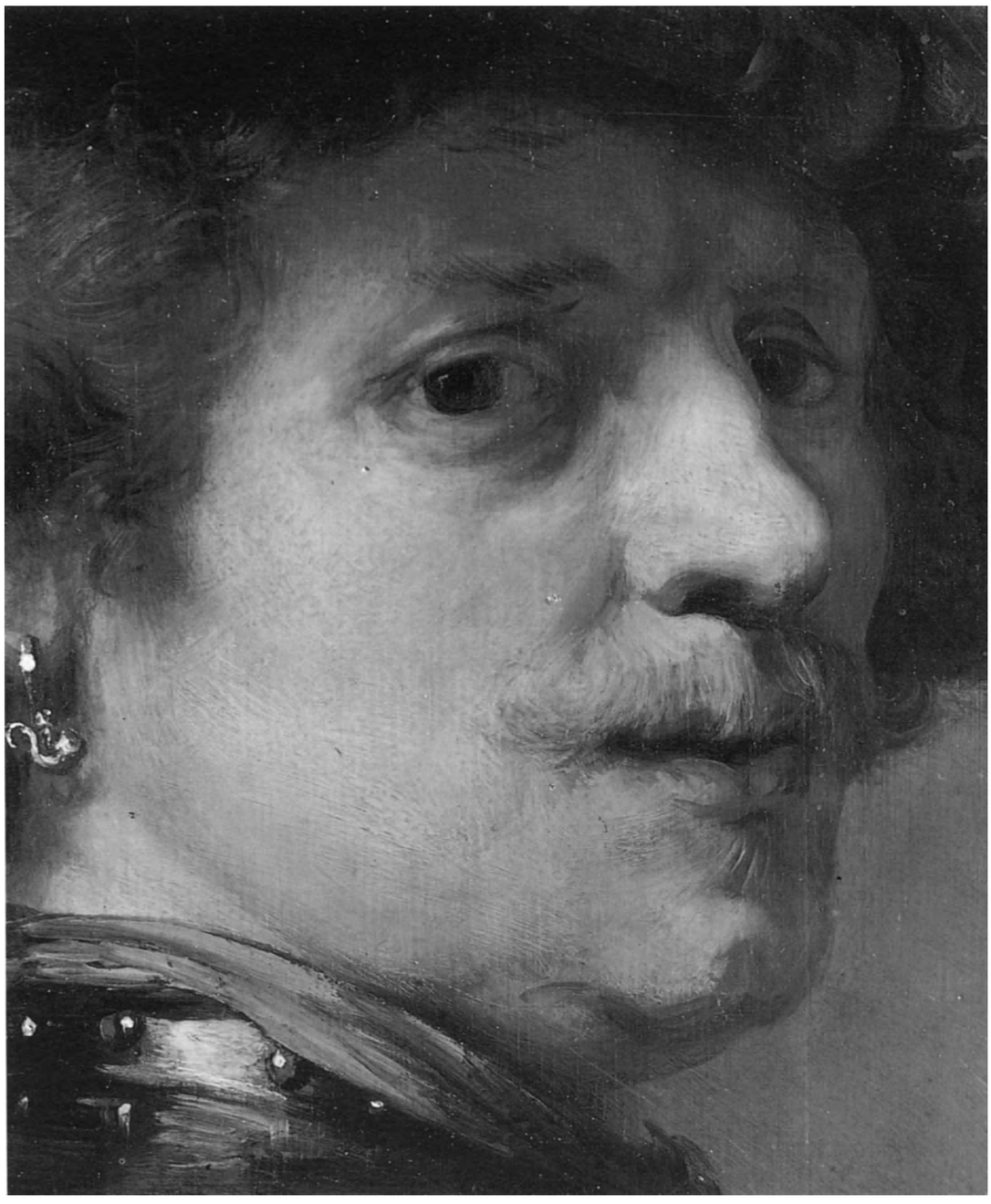


Fig. 3. Detail (1 : 1)



especially by the upper border of the cloak, where the material in the light is shown in dark grey, worked up with ochre colour and highlights in yellow-white, and in the shadow has grey, a reddish grey-brown and some ochre; the tassel hanging behind the shoulder is rendered with unorganized strokes and streaks of grey and brown.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: Beneath the lit parts of the face and the gorget De Vries, Tóth-Ubbens and Froentjes (op.cit., p.115) found Cologne earth, bone black and brown ochre; these pigments may belong to an underpainting. Cologne earth and ochres are also the most prominent among the pigments found in the cap and hair. Yellow and red ochres were encountered in the background, mixed with bone black and white lead. The flesh tints consist of a mixture of white lead and red and yellow ochre, occasionally covered by a crimson-coloured lake pigment. Lead tin yellow was used in the earring and gorget. In the white lead used in the neckscarf and gorget these authors found traces of copper, silver and tin.

X-Rays

The cohesion of the radiographic image is seriously impaired by the band showing up light to either side of the join in the panel, caused by the adhesive used on the back at that point (see *Support*). The brushstroke image in the lit parts of the face more

or less matches what one would expect from the paint surface — broad, short strokes follow the curve of the cheekbone higher up, while further down long ones follow the shape of the jaw. An interesting observation is that the plumes in the cap are distinguished from the background by the pattern of brushstrokes, but hardly at all by a different radioabsorbency.

Where the decoration on the cloak widens, broad brushstrokes show up very light, bearing no relation to the picture seen today. To the left of these, and level with them, there is a vivid dark line where one might expect the lower edge of the gorget to be. To judge by the infrared reflectogram published by De Vries, Tóth-Ubbens and Froentjes (op. cit., p.117 fig. 86) the gorget was indeed originally fully visible at the sitter's back. The image of brushstrokes on the shoulder and at the upper arm, finally, is more lively than that seen at the surface today. All these facts make it probable that changes were made to the costume, and that the cloak with its decorated border did not initially form part of it. The brushstrokes appearing light at the shoulder may perhaps belong to a scarf or bandoleer that caught the most light at this point and whose course can still be seen in the widened part of the decorated border of the cloak and in the dangling tassel. The path taken by this bandoleer can be clearly made out in the IR reflectogram just mentioned. The shadow cast by the figure onto the wall on the right does not appear as a reserve, and will thus have been applied subsequently over the lighter grey of the background.

At the top and bottom right and bottom left there are traces of wax seals on the back of the panel.

Signature

In the cast shadow on the right, in dark grey <*Rembrandt. f:*>. Written rapidly with an increasingly dry brush over the paint of the background after this had dried. The letters are not placed on any clear horizontal. The shape of the firmly drawn letters does not echo the slightly rounded shape one is used to seeing in Rembrandt's lettering; this is most evident in the *R*. The discrepancy in arrangement and form is such that it is hard to believe the signature authentic.

Varnish

No special remarks.

4. Comments

The manner of painting in this work has until recently prompted no doubt in the literature as to Rembrandt's authorship; both Schwartz[2] and Tümpel[3] expressed some uncertainty about the attribution. There has, however, been a long-standing difference of opinion as to its date. Hofstede de Groot[4] gave this as around 1634, and Bredius too put it in or before 1635[5]; the painting has accordingly been dated in successive editions of the Mauritshuis catalogue[6] as 1634/35. Bauch[7], on the other hand, thought the date of production was around 1637/39, and De Vries, Tóth-Ubbens and Froentjes (op. cit., p. 115) put it as about 1637. Gerson[8] offered no opinion on the dating. Discussion has also included the question of whether the painting must be seen as a self-portrait (of Rembrandt, of course); De Stuers[9] was the first to put this idea forward, in 1874, and it found wide support. Glück[10] however voiced doubts, which were echoed by Bauch and Gerson. De Vries, Tóth-Ubbens and Froentjes came back to the idea of its being a self-portrait because of 'the set of the eyes, the glance and the facial expression as a whole'. The questions of the manner of painting in connexion with authorship and of the identity of the subject are of course very closely linked, but as we shall explain below an exploration of each leads to the conclusion that the painting does not come from Rembrandt's hand and can be seen as a self-portrait by an as yet unidentified pupil.

Much as the manner of painting has points of similarity with that of Rembrandt around the mid-1630s — in the brisk execution of the plumed cap, the lighting and even, here and there, the handling of paint —, a comparison shows clear differences as well. Most obvious of these is the use of long, flowing and slightly flat brushstrokes in the bridge of the nose, the adjoining shadowed cheek and the chin, which do not result in the chiaroscuro modelling typical of Rembrandt. One result of this way of working is that tonal differences are achieved not so much by merging shades as by jumps in tone between juxtaposed fields. This already produces to some extent a linear appearance, which is accentuated by using lines in a way quite unrepresentative of Rembrandt. This is quite clearly the case in the eye drawn with the brush on the further side of the face, and along the chin and the eyelid on the left. The hatching treatment given to the lefthand eyebrow and the tuft of beard again betrays a liking for the linear device that one does not find in Rembrandt. In the latter's work one is struck every time by the extent to which linear elements are integrated so completely into the texture that they play a part in the suggestion of plasticity.

The bravura in the brushwork and the use of linear elements go hand-in-hand with a lighting that lacks the atmospheric quality that is characteristic of Rembrandt's approach. This stems from using rather sharp contours — along the righthand side of the face, for instance, but also within the face, such as at the nose and mouth. Similarly, the way the earring and pendant stand out sharply against their surroundings instead of (as in, for example Rembrandt's 1634 *Self-portrait with helmet* in Kassel, no. A 97) being clearly related to the fall of light, reveals the same approach centred more on line and contrast than on light and atmosphere.

The over-fluent brushwork that marks the face is seen again in the gorget and neckscarf, which lack suggestive power. The body, to which on the evidence of the X-rays and IR photographs changes have been made, can hardly be called successful in its structure. The way it is turned is not really convincing, to a great extent because of the path taken by the gold-embroidered edge of the cloak and hanging tassel, which do not help to give a suggestion of bulk; while the tassel seems to dangle

down behind the shoulder, the edge of the cloak does not follow the line needed to give the shoulder its perspective. The way this edge runs over the gorget to the left likewise militates against a convincing plasticity. One jarring note is the absence of a join in the gorget (of either the hinge or the closure) of the kind that is invariably indicated more or less distinctly in Rembrandt's depictions of a gorget. As Mr B. Kist of the Rijksmuseum has commented to us, this — taken together with the seemingly illogical line of the top edge of the gorget beneath the neckscarf — made him doubt whether the painter had ever in fact seen such an item of armour. The weaknesses in structure just described, and the departures from Rembrandt's manner of painting, are difficult to account for other than as evidence that here one is seeing a work not by him but by a follower.

This conclusion is strengthened by what can be said about the sitter. One can with a fair degree of certainty tell from the pose that it is a self-portrait; this had already long been a standard formula for artists' portraits in general and self-portraits in particular (see: H.J. Raupp, *Untersuchungen zu Künstlerbildnis und Künstlerdarstellung in den Niederlanden im 17Jahrhundert*, Hildesheim — Zürich — New York 1984, pp. 181ff, esp. 208ff). It was used in self-portraits by, for instance, Isaac Claesz. van Swanenburg in 1568 (Leiden, De Lakenhal), Otto van Veen in 1584 (Paris, Louvre), Nicolaes Elias in 1627 (Louvre) and, of course, in various instances by Van Dyck and artists influenced by him; but never by Rembrandt or — other than in the present picture — his followers. This pose can be rationally explained, as the image seen by a painter who is standing in front of his easel and looking at the mirror over his left shoulder. The face portrayed here differs clearly from that of Rembrandt, and may be recognized as that of another model. In the structure of the face, the longish nose with a pronounced ridge-bone, the deepset eyes set close together with eyebrows drawn slightly together, in the quite long chin with a cleft in the middle and even in the growth of blond moustache and tuft of beard, the sitter shows a decisive resemblance to the figure seen in another painting attributable to a follower, the *Bust of a man with a plumed baret and gorget* in Detroit (Br. 192; fig. 4), which was already omitted by Gerson from his Rembrandt work of 1968 and thus by implication not accepted as autograph. This latter painting was also earlier looked on as a Rembrandt self-portrait, but as Slive convincingly demonstrated it certainly shows someone else (S. Slive, 'Man wearing a plumed baret and gorget: a recent acquisition', *Bulletin of the Detroit Institute of Arts* 54, 1975, pp. 5–13).

For the time being it is impossible to suggest an attribution for the painting in The Hague. It is tempting to think of the same hand as painted the Detroit *Bust of a man in a plumed baret and gorget*, but the similarity between the two is limited to the subject and the sitter's facial features. Against this there are distinct differences in approach and execution, though both works exhibit a clearly rembrandtesque manner of painting. The fact that the same model was twice painted by different Rembrandtlike hands does suggest, however, that this was done in Rembrandt's workshop. Obviously both of them are *tronies*, workshop products that — perhaps under the master's name: the signature on the Hague work (which does not seem to be autograph) might also show this — would be sold at a relatively low price. In both cases the picture is meant to depict not an 'officer' (as the painting's usual title would have it), but on the evidence of the plumes and gorget — cf. Vol. I, p. 223 and Vol. II, p. 838 — a young man reminding the viewer of the *Vanitas* of human life. What meaning can be attached to the horn-shaped ear-ornament is unclear.

The tendency, evident especially in the work in The Hague, to use rather fluid, flat brushstrokes is seen fairly often in the output of Rembrandt's workshop in the middle 1630s. On this point there is a certain similarity with works such as the *Bust of a boy* dated 1633 in a private collection (no. C 62) or the New York *Portrait of a 70-year-old woman* dated 1635 (no. C 112), though this is not to say they are attributable to the same hand. The dating of works like this reinforce the impression that no. C 98, too, must be placed in the mid-1630s.

5. Documents and sources

Note made by Sir Joshua Reynolds when he visited the collection of the Stadholder Willem V in The Hague in 1781: 'A portrait of a young man by Rembrandt, dressed in a black cap and feathers, the upper part of the face overshadowed : for colouring and force nothing can exceed it' (*The works of Sir Joshua Reynolds, Knight ...* by Edmond Malone, 4th edn, London 1809, p. 346).

6. Graphic reproductions

1. Etching by Johannes Pieter de Frey (Amsterdam 1770–Paris 1834), reproduces the original in reverse. Inscribed: *Rembrandt pinx/J. de Frey fecit aqua/forte 1795.*
2. Engraving by Alexis Chataigner (Nantes 1772–Paris 1817), same direction as the painting. Inscribed: *Des.né par S. Leroy. – Gravé par Chataigner. / Portrait d'homme.* (Filhol, *Galérie du Musée Napoléon* II, Paris 1804, no. 131).
3. Soft-ground etching by Philippe Louis Debucourt (Paris 1755–1832), same direction as the painting. Inscribed: *Dessiné et Gravé par P.L. Debucourt. / Étude d'après Rembrandt, / Tirée du Musée Napoléon.*
4. Etching by Philibert Boutrois (active in Paris 1775–1814), same direction as the painting. Inscribed: *Rembrandt pinx. – Boutrois Sc.*
5. Engraving by Francesco Rosaspina (Monte Scùdolo, Rimini 1762–Bologna 1841), same direction as the painting and with a broad, flat, illusionistically rendered surround. Inscribed: *Rembrandt pinx. – Fragonard del. – François Rosaspina Sculp. / Portrait No. IV.*

Fig. 4. Rembrandt school, *Bust of a man with a plumed baret and gorget*, detail. Detroit, The Detroit Institute of Arts



7. Copies

A number of copies are mentioned in De Vries, Tóth-Ubbens and Froentjes, op. cit., p. 119.

8. Provenance

– Coll. Govert van Slingelandt (1694–1767), Receiver General of Taxes for Holland and West Friesland, The Hague. Described by Hoet in 1752 (Hoet II, p. 404): 'Een Mans Kop levens grooten, door Rembrant van Ryn, h. 1 v. 11 d. br. 1 v. 6 d. [= 60.2 × 47.1 cm]'. – After Van Slingelandt's death on 2 November 1767, intended for the sale to be held in The Hague, under the terms of his will, on 18 May 1768 (Lugt 1683), no. 10: 'La Tête d'un homme, de grandeur naturelle, par Rembrant. B. Hau. 23 Pou. Lar. 18 Pou [=60.1 × 47 cm]'. However bought before 1 March by the Stadholder Willem V with the entire collection, for 50 000 guilders (see information supplied by B.W.F. van Riemsdijk in: *O.H.* 10, 1892, p.219ff). Described in the Stadholder's collection by Terwesten in 1770: 'Een Mans-Pourtrait, levens groote, zynde een

Fig. 5. Detail with signature (1 : 1)



Borst-stuk, ongemeen schoon, kragtig en natuurlyk geschildert, door denzelven [= Rembrant van Rhyn]; op paneel. Hoogte 1 V. 11 D. Breete 1 V. 6 D.'(Terw. p.709). (A man's portrait, lifesize, being a bust, uncommon fine, vigourously and naturally painted, by the same).
– Confiscated by the French in 1795, and from then until 1815 in the Louvre; back in The Hague from 1815.

9. Summary

Because of its idiosyncratic stylistic features, centred in the role played by linear elements in the modelling and detail of the face, it is impossible to maintain the attribution of no. C 98 to Rembrandt himself, though the painting was undoubtedly done in his immediate circle. A comparison with the Detroit *Bust of a man in a plumed baret and gorget* (Br. 192) also makes it clear that both paintings show the same sitter, whose features differ substantially from those of Rembrandt. From the pose of the subject of no. C 98 it may be assumed that this is a self-portrait of an as yet unidentified Rembrandt pupil.

REFERENCES

1 De Vries, Tóth-Ubbens and Froentjes, pp. 114–19.
2 Schwartz 1984, p. 380.
3 Tümpel 1986, cat.no. 165.
4 HdG 545.
5 Br. 24.
6 1895, 1935 and 1977 editions.
7 Bauch 311.
8 Gerson 189.
9 V. de Stuers, *Notice historique et descriptive des tableaux et des sculptures exposés dans le Musée Royal de La Haye*, The Hague 1874, p. 124 no. 118.
10 G. Glück 'Rembrandts Selbstbildnisse aus dem Jahre 1652', *Aus drei Jahrhunderten Europäischer Malerei*, Vienna 1933, pp. 294–312, esp. 296.

C 99 Bust of a man wearing a cap and gold chain

SÃO PAULO, MUSEU DE ARTE DE SÃO PAULO ASSIS CHATEAUBRIAND, INV. NO. 190/1949

HDG 582; BR. 26; BAUCH 172; GERSON 188

1. Summarized opinion

A reasonably well preserved 17th-century work that may have been produced in Rembrandt's circle. The panel must originally have been rectangular.

2. Description of subject

The sitter is seen to just above the waist, the body three-quarters right and the head turned slightly towards the viewer on whom the gaze is fixed. He wears a black cap with a green brocade headband, and has a thin moustache, a tuft of beard below the bottom lip, and a chinstrap beard. A dark brown coat with a fur collar is worn over a pleated white shirt and greenish decorated doublet; the top edge of the shirt appears to fall over the fur collar. The ends of the collar are linked by a cord or thin chain, and a heavy gold neckchain hangs over the coat. The light, falling from the left, produces a vague cast shadow on the weakly-lit wall to the right. Parts of an oval painted framing can be seen at the bottom.

3. Observations and technical information

Working conditions

Examined in March 1972 (B.H., P.v.Th.) in good daylight and out of the frame. Two X-ray films together covering the whole of the painting, and one of the head, were received later.

Support

DESCRIPTION: Oak panel with an arched top, grain vertical, 59.8 × 44.9 cm excluding unpainted battens that run round the entire edge. Single plank. Back cradled; because of the cradling it is not easy to see how the surrounding battens are attached — probably the panel is let into a backing panel that projects at the top and bottom, and the side battens are attached separately. The fact that the painting shows parts of a painted oval framing at the bottom is strong evidence that the panel was originally larger than it is today and rectangular. This is borne out by a print dated 1747 (see *6. Graphic reproductions*, 1) and by a copy (see *7. Copies*, 1).
SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

Ground

DESCRIPTION: A greyish-brown underlying layer, probably belonging to an underpainting, can be seen in the hair on the left and in the brushstrokes of the background that form the transition to the cast shadow on the extreme right.
SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

Paint layer

CONDITION: Generally good. Along the rounded top edge there are long brushstrokes running parallel with it that may be connected with the change in the panel format, and are thus possibly not authentic. There is a quite deep scratch in the eye on the left. A few retouches are found elsewhere, mostly in the collar on the left and around the chin. Craquelure: none observed.
DESCRIPTION: The regular, straight grain of the panel is apparent everywhere in the paint layer, which offers a virtually continuous surface with considerable relief at the contours and folds of the clothing, and in the neckchain.

The background paint, in a relatively cool grey, is painted thickest and lightest in tone behind the shoulder on the left, with the short brushstrokes for the most part following the shoulder contour. Upwards, the paint becomes thinner and darker, and the strokes are longer and run in various directions. To the right alongside the head the paint is somewhat lighter, and beneath it something of an underlying layer shows through among the brushstrokes forming the transition to the cast shadow on the far right (see *Ground* above). The oval at the bottom, done in black with long, curving strokes, has a vague border.

The face is painted, in the light, with clearly visible, mainly short but occasionally longer strokes that often follow an erratic course and show little relationship to the facial structure; they are broadest at the upper left in the forehead, running in a curve along the hair that projects from beneath the cap. The flesh tints have a tendency to brown, with a rather greyish tint on the jaw. In the shadows, the tint is predominantly brown. While the paint is applied rather more thickly at the place of the highest light on the left of the forehead and on the upper half of the nose than in the surrounding areas, the latter too are quite thickly done both in the light and in the shadows, so that the paintstrokes form a smooth and continuous surface.

The eye on the left is executed rather insensitively. The brown iris has a dark outline, and a lighter crescent shape at the bottom right; opposite this, at the top left, there is a thin off-white stroke intended as a catchlight, but despite this the eye has a flattish appearance. The righthand corner of the eye consists of a spot of vermilion red, and the same colour appears in the other corner and to the left on the eyelid. The outline of the upper lid is done remarkably coarsely in brown; the lines run across to the right into the brown of the shaded eye-socket, which is partly lightened by a lighter brown. The eyebrow, built up from small and rather arbitrarily-placed dark-grey strokes, also continues into the shadow of the eye-socket.

The eye on the right, drawn mainly with brown lines and given a rather stronger catchlight, is intersected on the left in an unsatisfactory way by the broad, brown cast shadow from the nose and is further merged into the adjoining shadows on the righthand side of the face, which are done in murky browns and have little suggestion of plasticity.

The distribution of light and shade on the coarsely brushed nose does not create a believable modelling; the highest light is set on and beside the upper part of the bridge with diagonal strokes. The large nostril on the left is in black; a dark paint with some dark red is used in the adjoining shadows on the right. The lips of the poorly modelled mouth present a red with some greenish brown in the shadow. Towards the right the top lip runs much further into the shadow than does the bottom one, which is interrupted by an opaque light brown that extends downwards into the shadow. There is scant suggestion in the beard along the chinline, done in an almost black paint.

The ear on the left is indicated broadly in the brownish flesh colour, with a little pink. The hair is flat and formless, painted in brown and grey. A few touches of an ochre colour are placed on the black cap; the headband is a greyish green with glancing strokes of ochre yellow, with a few catchlights in white.

The manner of painting in the face continues into the unclear modelling of the neck. The white shirt collar is painted with a certain deftness, but terminates in an indistinct fashion on the right and left, and remarkably lies partly over the fur collar, which is not clearly suggested either as a material or as a component of the man's clothing and which seems to disappear beneath the greenish doublet (the latter decorated with rather slovenly-applied ochre-coloured motifs). The brown coat has two rows of obliquely-placed brushstrokes over the shoulder, and on the right has a high-standing collar (that is missing on the left). The cord or thin chain hanging in a curve across the shirt is attached to the high collar on the right, while on the left it vanishes into nothingness. The heavy chain lying on the chest is formed with clumps of paint that give hardly any definite shape.
SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

X-Rays

The background, which for the most part shows up lightish in the radiographic image, has a dark reserve for the cap and for the righthand contours of the figure, including in the latter the upstanding collar of the jacket (which is also visible at the paint surface). On the left one can see the present white shirt collar,

Fig. 1. Panel 59.8 × 44.9 cm (reproduced after W. Bode and C. Hofstede de Groot, *Rembrandt* III, Paris 1899)



but also — at the position of the presentday fur collar and chain — traces of an entirely different costume, in more or less broad and roughly vertical strokes that partly interfere with the image of the collar. Similar strokes running diagonally down to the left appear rather more weakly in a curve over the shoulder; adjoining this, just below the hair, a patch shows up light and matches an area of thicker background paint that can be seen at the surface. As will be seen from the interpretation given below under *4. Comments*, one has to assume that the painting originally showed a different costume at this point, with a high collar with sheens of light and with no shirt collar, fur collar or chain.

In the head the coarse brushstrokes, sometimes long and at the upper lefthand part of the forehead strangely curving, can be readily recognized; the lightest image is that of strokes to the left on the forehead and halfway down the nose, and of the highlight on the tip. The lower border of the paint that shows up light along the jaw on the left is remarkably sharp-edged.

The cradle and a wax seal ('Galerie Sedelmeyer Paris') are clearly seen.

Signature

In the right background, level with the shoulder in dark brown <*Rembrandt*>. The *t* is scarcely visible. The uncharacteristic and perfunctory script make it plainly unauthentic.

Varnish

No special remarks.

4. Comments

To assess this painting one has first to consider a variety of evidence concerning its physical history. In the first place, the panel has not survived in its original format. The spandrels of an oval framing painted in black at the bottom already suggest that there was a similar framing at the top and that the panel was originally rectangular. This suspicion is confirmed by prints made after the painting in the 18th century (see *6. Graphic reproductions*) and by a painted copy (see *7. Copies*, 1; fig. 2). Secondly, the painting must at some time have been altered in the appearance of the man's costume. In its present state there is a high-standing collar to the right that evidently belongs to the coat and for which there was, as the X-ray shows, a reserve left in the paint of the background; there is however no corresponding collar on the left, where the spatial relationship between the parts of the costume now visible — shirt-collar, fur collar and chain — is far from successful. Both from the prints just mentioned and from fairly recent reproductions[1] one finds that the costume has had its present appearance for some long time past, but that in the state depicted there was no upstanding collar on the right. One probably has to assume that the latter was painted-over a long time ago and was revealed during a relatively recent cleaning, and that this brought the original design to light again. The X-rays however reveal that on the left the top layer of paint hides a version of the costume that is entirely different from the present one (which already existed in the 18th century). The traces that are hard to interpret as a shape can, with the help of a copy known to us only from a photograph, be interpreted as showing that on the left too there was (now overpainted) a high coat collar made of a glossy material; the latter serves to explain the light traces seen in the radiograph as sheens of light not only on the collar but also on a band over the nearer shoulder (brushstrokes from this can still be detected at the paint surface). This high coat collar penetrates, just to the right below the ear, into the jawline — hence the sharp border to the flesh area in the X-ray — where it is now incorporated into part of the (wholly un-17th-century!) chinstrap beard, which is entirely missing in the copy and was probably added only when the costume was being altered. This must have happened at all events before 1747, the date of the earliest known reproduction, but how much earlier than that it is impossible to say. The paintwork now seen does not give an incontrovertible impression of being different from that in the rest of the painting, so one has to allow for the possibility of the artist himself having changed the costume and added the beard along the chin. But it is then difficult to explain how a (probably much later) copyist could have reproduced the original state, unless he was working from a different version of the painting in its initial state.

Working on the basis of the un-overpainted passages, the head in particular, it must be said that though rembrandtesque in the way it tackles the

Fig. 2. Copy 1. Panel. Whereabouts unknown



subject, the painting does not from the viewpoint of execution in any way match the characteristics of Rembrandt's way of working in the 1630s, and that in finesse and firmness the treatment overall falls well short. There is a marked contrast with Rembrandt's pictorial approach to a bust portrait like this — invariably relating the application of paint in one way or another to the fall of light — in the fact that the paint layer is a single, continuous mass and that the relief serves only to accentuate certain contours, mainly in the clothing. The brushstroke, generally easy to follow since a thick paint has been used, is coarse and shows hardly any connexion with the form being rendered. The execution of the eyes is particularly weak; the form is not convincingly defined, and the total picture is confused. The transitions from light to dark lack subtlety, and the numerous brown shadows themselves are so murky that here in particular there is no three-dimensional quality whatsoever. Not only in the head, but in the costume, chains and background as well there is no trace of a suggestion of plasticity or depth being created by means of the chiaroscuro. The whole treatment is consequently so foreign to Rembrandt's way of working that an attribution to him has to be rejected.

The painting's authenticity has been doubted before. Waagen[2] already found it 'too tame for him [i.e. Rembrandt]', and Gerson[3] was not fully convinced about the Rembrandt attribution; Schwartz did not include it in his book in 1984. Müller Hofstede[4] was reminded of Govaert Flinck and, as Gerson reports, Benesch also ascribed the painting to that artist as later did Sumowski[5] and Tümpel[6]. There are however insufficient grounds for doing so; there is no sign at all of the sensitive and varied, occasionally translucent handling of paint that one is used to seeing in similar bust portraits on panel from his hand, such as that in Leningrad dated 1637 (Von Moltke *Flinck*, no. 263; Sumowski *Gemälde* II, no. 664). One cannot discount the possibility of the painting coming from Rembrandt's circle, though it is unlikely that it was done by a direct pupil. To judge from its appearance, a date in the 17th century is however quite acceptable.

The resemblance to Rembrandt's facial features is not convincing; yet to judge from a print from 1747 — which moreover gives the date of the painting as 1632 — the work was already being seen in the mid-18th century as portraying Rembrandt. Bauch[7] was the first to voice doubts on this score.

5. Documents and sources

None.

6. Graphic reproductions

1. Mezzotint by Pieter van Bleeck (active The Hague 1723–1764 in England), inscribed: *Rembrant Van Ryn. Pinxt. 1632– PVB* (in monogram) *1747./ Rembrant Van Ryn* (Charrington 32). Reproduces the painting in reverse, with an oval framing which has a wide border at the bottom and at right and left is intersected by a black frame that also continues below the oval. The clothing does not have an upstanding collar on either side of the head.
2. Engraving by an artist named Murray, inscribed: *Rembrant pinxt. — Murray sculp./ Published by Harrison & Co. Aug. 1794.* Oval picture area; the figure shown in reverse, again without any upstanding collar.
3. Engraving by Johann Georg Hertel II (active 2nd half of the 18th century in Augsburg). The figure shown in reverse, again without any upstanding collar.

Hofstede de Groot[8] mentions an engraving by Zildraam, who cannot be identified.

7. Copies

1. Rectangular panel, whereabouts unknown (fig. 2). The figure is in a painted oval that is incomplete to left and right. The coat, with no fur trimming, has a high-standing collar on both sides of the neck.
2. Drawing, brush and grey ink, oval 10.7 × 9.5 cm. Sale Berlin (Boerner-Graupe) 12 May 1930, no. 41 as Ferdinand Bol (Sumowski *Drawings* I, p. 99 no. 9). Possibly made after one of the prints listed under *6. Graphic reproductions*.

8. Provenance

- Coll. Lord Palmerston, Broadlands.
- Coll. Lord Mount Temple, Broadlands.
- Coll. The Earl of Caledon, London (Cat. exhibition of the British Institution, London 1829, no. 173).
- Dealer Charles Sedelmeyer, Paris 1892 (*Catalogue of 300 paintings*, Paris 1898, no. 130).
- Coll. Baron Hermann von Königswarter (Vienna), sale Berlin 20 November 1906, no. 72 (180 000 marks to Gutmann).
- Coll. Rudolf Ritter von Gutmann; coll. Baron Max von Gutmann, Vienna.

9. Summary

The aberrant and coarse handling of paint, the rather unconvincing rendering of form and shadows, and the absence of an understanding of Rembrandt's lighting rule out an attribution to the master himself; it may however be produced in his circle. The panel must originally have been somewhat larger and rectangular. The costume must at some time before 1747 have been altered, and quite recently have been restored to its initial state to the right of the head.

REFERENCES

1 W. Bode and C. Hofstede de Groot, *Rembrandt* II, Paris 1899, no. 172; W.R. Valentiner, *Rembrandt. Des Meisters Gemälde*, Stuttgart 1909 (Kl. d. K.), p. 142; Br. 26.
2 G.F. Waagen, *Galleries and cabinets of art in Great Britain* IV, London 1857, p. 150.
3 Br.-Gerson 26.
4 Quoted in: 'Die Rembrandt-Forschung im Lichte der Ausstellungen des Jahres 1956', *Kunstchronik* 10 (1957), pp. 117–153, esp. 124.
5 Sumowski *Gemälde* II, no. 671.
6 Tümpel 1986, no. A 67.
7 Bauch 172.
8 HdG 582.

C 100 Man with dishevelled hair

PREVIOUSLY NEW YORK, ACQUAVELLA GALLERIES

HDG 415; BR. 205; BAUCH 167; GERSON 173

1. Summarized opinion

A well preserved painting that the manner of painting and partly also use of colour set well apart from the work of Rembrandt. It was probably produced either in Rembrandt's circle or outside this but still in the 17th century.

2. Description of subject

Bust of a man seen with the body turned slightly to the right and the head towards the left, where his gaze is also directed. His face is heavily wrinkled, and he has curly hair, a moustache and a beard. A purplish coat is worn over a pleated white shirt open over the chest. Strong light falls from the left onto the figure and the flat wall that serves as a background.

3. Observations and technical information

Working conditions

Examined in October 1971 (B.H., E.v.d.W.) in good artificial light and out of the frame. Radiographs prepared by the Metropolitan Museum, New York, were studied there but were later no longer available.

Support

DESCRIPTION: Panel (oak, to judge from the grain that shows through the paint) let into a second panel, 66.6 × 52.6 cm; grain vertical. Three planks, with joins at 13 cm from the lefthand edge and 12.8 cm from the right. There are a few indentations in the panel to the left of centre, at about 10 cm from the bottom.
SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

Ground

DESCRIPTION: A yellowish brown can be seen in strokes from a hard brush in the background and at many places in the shadows of the face.
SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

Paint layer

CONDITION: Good.
DESCRIPTION: The painting is marked by a very pronounced brushstroke everywhere. In the background this is short and varies in direction; in the dark passages a hard brush has made the yellow-brown ground visible here and there, while in the light areas the paint surface is continuous. In the lit forehead almost random strokes of thick paint have been placed one on top of the other. Over this heavy accents have been placed, in almost black lines, for the wrinkles and folds of skin. In the eye areas the shapes are defined by lines of black that occasionally merge into a reddish brown and red-brown and, at the lower edge, into red. In the lit parts of the face there is a striking variety of brownish and pinkish flesh tints. Shapeless thick clumps of pink paint are placed in the lit cheek to give the highest lights. Around the nose and mouth the bold brushwork gives way to much thinner and more hesitantly placed strokes. In the shadows, which are made up of greys, browns and black, the paint is generally more thinly applied and the ground can be seen at many points. Occasionally there are thick, separated strokes on top of the thin paint. The whole shadow area has a muddy appearance. The hair is painted with bold, undulating strokes in cool greys, with lights done in warmer tints and some pink. In the beard the painter has used small lines and strokes running in various directions, only partly giving an impression of hair.

The white shirt is executed in long strokes with, at the upper left, a bold zigzag movement using thick paint; the shadows in the folds are a dull grey. The coat is painted in a purplish brown-grey with sinuous strokes that follow the folds, with a zigzag movement here and there. Along the edge, to the left of the shirt, there are very thin lines of dark paint run over the broad brushstrokes, with double lines lying crosswise over these again. They seem meant to depict a turned-back revers with buttonholes, but it runs off into nothingness at the top. The background is in a dark brown on the left; to the right this merges into a warm grey, and at the area of transition the mixture of colours gives a purplish effect.

The lighting creates strong contrasts; the lit shoulder on the left and the lefthand side of the face stand out sharply against the dark background at that point, while the shadow side of the head and the shoulder deep in shadow on the right are likewise contrasted with a light area of background. Many passages are painted wet-in-wet so that they penetrate each other; this is seen at the boundaries between the clothing and background, hair and background, beard and shirt and shirt and coat. The signature, too, was placed on the still-wet paint of the background.
SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

X-Rays

The radiographic image matches what one expects from the paint surface, and the broad brushwork shows up distinctly.

Signature

On the right above the shoulder <*Rembrandt. f / 1635*> in brown paint set wet-in-wet on the background. The letters and figures are thin and hesitantly written; the inscription cannot therefore be seen as authentic, and was already doubted by Gerson[1].

Varnish

No special remarks.

4. Comments

The very pronounced manner of painting gives this painting an individual stamp, but it has to be said that its features are not typical of or even similar to Rembrandt's work from around 1635. Even if one allows a wide margin for varying approach and treatment at a given point in Rembrandt's development, one is bound to see that any really convincing kinship with the rest of his work is lacking — and with it the basis for an attribution to him. The painting has attracted little attention in the literature, and Gerson, for instance, did not see it in the original[1]. Schwartz[2] rejected the attribution, and Tümpel did not include the work in his 1986 book.

If one tries to pinpoint the unbridgeable difference from work by Rembrandt, it can be found in an execution that everywhere seems brilliant, and yet is not in fact convincing. The handling of paint in the lit parts of the face is meretriciously powerful, and where the transition to the shadow side of the head has to be coped with the artist has not managed to achieve any suggestion of plasticity. The primitive way the outlines of the eyelids and the wrinkles are set down over the flesh tints with mostly black lines has to be termed untypical of Rembrandt. We know how he dealt with a wrinkled face from paintings from various years, such as the New York *Man in oriental dress* of 1632 (no. A 48), the Chatsworth *Man in oriental costume* datable in 1639

Fig. 1. Panel 66.6 × 52.6 cm



(no. A 128) or the London *Portrait of an 83-year-old woman* of 1634 (no. A 104). In all these paintings allowance was made from the very first lay-in for the shadow effect in the wrinkles, and only here and there were linear accents added later on. Moreover, none of these paintings shows the thick accents in dirty brown or grey that can be seen in the shadows in the present work; Rembrandt, in such passages, achieved far greater homogeneity. The way differing colours are used in the lit areas is unknown from other paintings by Rembrandt or from his circle. Partly because of this the chiaroscuro effect lacks the atmospheric quality we find in Rembrandt. The painter no doubt knew some Rembrandt works from the early 1630s such as the New York *Man in oriental dress*, but had neither a real insight into the means employed nor the ability to make a balanced and effective use of them. In this respect no. C 100 bears the same relationship to Rembrandt's prototype as does the Kassel *Bust of an old man* (no. C 53). That painting, likewise marked by an over-brilliant brushwork and an exaggerated variety of colours, must have been done before the end of the 17th century, we assume outside Rembrandt's immediate following; the same may be true of no. C 100. Compared to the Kassel painting it is however again somewhat different in nature — coarser (less artistic, one might say) in the manner of painting, and more chaotic though less variegated in colour-scheme. It must be seen as not impossible that a manner of painting like this was used in Rembrandt's own circle, and unless any scientific evidence indicates otherwise a dating in the 1630s cannot be ruled out. The character of the brushwork would certainly not contradict this, and nor would the use of a yellowish ground. The wet-in-wet signature and date might in the latter case have been applied in Rembrandt's workshop, and in fact give an accurate indication of the date of production. If the painting was done later then the inscription would point to an imitation that — just as one must assume for the Kassel work — was meant to pass for an original.

Among the rembrandtesque *tronies* of bearded men the painting stands out through a singular pathos brought about by the turn and slight tilt of the head against the body, and by the chiaroscuro effect. This suggests that — as sometimes seems to be the case with *tronies* (see Vol. I, p. 44 and no. C 25) — the subject was borrowed from a wider context, in this instance a scene in the style of Rembrandt's etching of *Joseph's coat brought to Jacob* (B. 38) of *c.* 1633, which contains the figure of a standing brother with similar dishevelled hair and open-necked shirt.

5. Documents and sources

None.

6. Graphic reproductions

None.

7. Copies

None.

8. Provenance

- According to HdG[3] in coll. Auguiot, sale Paris 1 March 1875 (3200 francs); we did not find it in the catalogue.
- Coll. Prince Anatole Demidoff, sale San Donato near Florence, 15 March 1880, no. 1035.
- Dealer Charles Sedelmeyer, Paris (*Catalogue of 300 paintings*, 1898, no. 127).
- Coll. Leopold Goldschmidt, Paris (1898).
- Dealer Thomas Agnew & Sons, London.
- Coll. R.W. Hudson, London.
- Coll. F.O. Matthiessen, New York.
- Dealer E. Fischhof, New York.
- Coll. W.B. Leeds, New York (*c.* 1909).
- Sale London (Sotheby's) 24 March 1965, no. 54.
- Dealer Acquavella, New York (*c.* 1970).

9. Summary

Although the subject-matter, lighting and even the handling of paint show unmistakeable similarities with the work of Rembrandt, the attribution to him cannot be maintained. The reasons for this lie in the superficial brilliance of execution, in both brushstroke and colour-scheme. This does not show a proper insight into Rembrandt's use of pictorial means; the result is an insensitive and especially unatmospheric painting that in its rather exuberant manner of painting is remotely reminiscent of the Kassel *Bust of an old man* (no. C 53). Possibly no. C 100 comes from Rembrandt's workshop; it could however just as well have been done outside his circle, though still in the 17th century.

REFERENCES

1 Br.-Gerson 205.
2 Schwartz 1984, p. 380.
3 HdG 415.

C 101 Bust of a man in oriental dress

AMSTERDAM, RIJKSMUSEUM, INV. NO. A 3340

HDG 353; BR. 206; BAUCH 163; GERSON 170

Fig. 1. Panel 71.9 × 54.6 cm



Fig. 2. X-Ray



1. Summarized opinion

A well preserved painting done in Rembrandt's manner but with an execution so different from his that it cannot be accepted as an authentic work. In all probability it was produced in his workshop in or around 1635 by an assistant whose hand may be recognized in one other picture of a similar subject.

2. Description of subject

The sitter is seen to just above the waist, turned three-quarters right, against a partly-lit wall in the plaster of which there are occasional patches of brickwork to be seen. He is bearded, and wears a large turban encircled by a gold chain with a jewel ornament; a plume hangs down from the righthand side of the turban, and a tail of the latter lies over the further shoulder. A brown cloak draped over the shoulder is held at the front by a chain and has a dangling ornament on the left; beneath it can be seen a dark brown undergarment. The light falls from the left onto the head and shoulders, leaving the trunk in shadow; the head throws a shadow on the wall to the extreme right.

3. Observations and technical information

Working conditions

Examined on 6 March 1970 (J.B., B.H.) in good daylight and out of the frame; six X-ray films, together covering the whole of the painting, were received later.

Support

DESCRIPTION: Oak panel, grain vertical, 71.9 × 54.6 cm. Thickness *c.* 0.7 to 1 cm. Single plank. Back bevelled along all four edges, rather more widely at the thicker lefthand side than on the right.
SCIENTIFIC DATA: Dendrochronology (Prof. Dr J. Bauch and Prof. Dr D. Eckstein, Hamburg) showed 276 annual rings heartwood and 8 sapwood (+ 2 counted) at the top edge, and 307 annual rings heartwood and 6 sapwood (+ 4 counted) at the bottom. Mean curve 308 rings heartwood and 8 sapwood (+ 3 counted). The youngest heartwood ring was dated at 1610. In view of the age of the tree a felling date of 1625 or later is likely. The panel came from the same tree as that of the Braunschweig *Landscape with a thunderstorm*, which carries no date but can probably be put at around 1640 (no. A 137)[1].

Ground

DESCRIPTION: Brownish yellow, as can be clearly seen halfway up on the right in the background where it shows through, and in the half-shadows of the turban and along the outline of the beard on the right where it is exposed.
SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

Paint layer

CONDITION: Generally good. There are local restorations, e.g. in the cloak on the right and in the right background level with the jewel hanging from the turban. Craquelure: cracks are to be seen only here and there, very fine in the thickest white paint in the turban, some shrinkage-type cracks at the extreme top of the background, and small fissures in the brown paint of the shoulder on the left. The latter reveal a lighter brown that may belong to an earlier version of the clothing (see *X-Rays* below).
DESCRIPTION: In the lit parts the face is done in a brownish yellow flesh colour that tends to orange, on which lines and brushstrokes further define the shape. Wrinkles and folds in the skin are indicated mainly in brown, and the shadow in the eye-socket on the left in a fairly flat and opaque greyish brown that continues into the wrinkles in the eyepouch and the frown-lines. In the lit passages there is an occasional use of flesh tints with some red — for instance in the wing of the nose on the left — and some white for the highest lights. On the nose these highlights are set down with individual small flicks of paint, and fail to give the suggestion of a glisten of light that was obviously intended. The shadows are dominated by a brownish grey and brown, merging into dark brown along the shadow side of and below the nose.

The drawing of the eyes, mostly with brown lines, does little to help create a suggestion of plasticity. The flat and somewhat murky white of the eye on the left scarcely suggests its convex shape, and a crescent-shaped stroke of the same colour penetrates the brown iris from below. Both pupils are oval in shape, that on the right being smaller than the other and placed noticeably askew. The eyebrows are painted with confused strokes in greys and some brown; the other areas of hair in the head and beard show the same disorganised application of paint, a muddy brown in the shadow and mostly grey in the light. In the sidewhiskers on the right, especially, the result is a patchy and structureless passage. The use of muddy colours continues in the neck, painted in the shadow with a dirty grey-brown that makes an unattractive contrast with the flat dark brown of the undergarment.

The cloak, the contours of which on either side of the figure billow rather flabbily, is in dark grey with some black in the shadow, while in the light it is brown with an incoherent pattern of numerous highlights applied with small streaks and dabs of white and yellow. The very bulky white turban is painted with long brushstrokes and fine lines of brown and grey that render the folds with striking precision. The chain, in the light, is as it were modelled in relief with thick gold-yellow and white-yellow paint. The light brown of the underlying ground can be seen in the shadow part of the turban, mainly close to the chain.

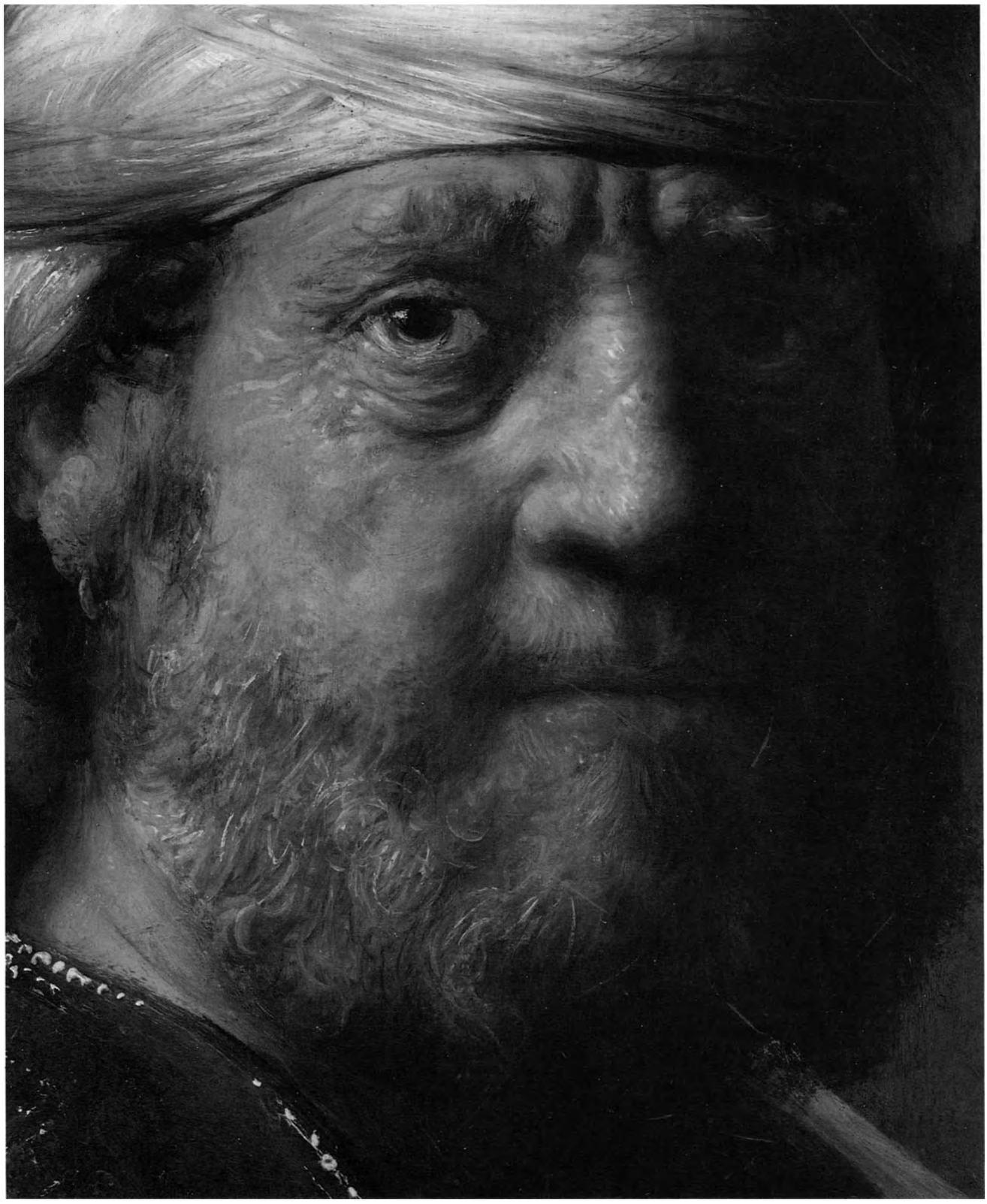
The cast shadow on the right background is done in an opaque dark brown-grey, at some points with bold, straight strokes and along the edge with zigzag strokes. These are continued (though not with the same rhythm) upwards, where the lit part of the background begins and where opaque brown-grey is used, lying rather patchily along the contour of the head. Horizontal and vertical stripes in grey seem to suggest brickwork. A far darker and quite thinly-painted area of grey-brown, with no clear brushstroke, starts abruptly at the level of the eyes. The dangling plume of the turban stands out even darker against this. The dark background continues round the head until it finally, by the shoulder on the left, becomes a somewhat lighter brown.
SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

X-Rays

In general, apart from the alterations to the dress and jewellery described below, the radiographic image matches what one expects from the paint surface. In the background the light patch on the right by the outline of the shoulder shows up with quite distinct brushwork; the cast shadow below it appears dark for the most part, and evidently occupies a reserve though this is a little smaller in the X-rays than the shadow in the final execution, where the darker paint of the cast shadow clearly extends some way beyond the edge of the reserve. The folds of the turban can be made out quite distinctly, especially at the front. In the head it is noticeable that — in line with the composition of the brownish paint used there — there are relatively few areas showing up light. The lightest image comes from an accent on the bridge of the nose and a crescent-shaped accent along the iris in the lefthand eye, while the areas above the lefthand eyebrow and along the nose and into the beard are somewhat light. The X-ray image offers a strange patchiness, with only occasionally clear traces of the brushstrokes. The deep frown-lines do not seem to occupy a reserve.

Just below the jewel hanging from the cloak one can see a string of pearls (also detectable in relief at the paint surface) that runs to the left over the shoulder and to the right across the chest. At the shoulder there is, between this string of pearls and

Fig. 3. Detail (1 : 1)



the edge of the present zone of shadow, the extremely light trace of an area of short, firm brushstrokes, as if it was initially intended to depict something like white fur. During the changes that were evidently made to the costume the lefthand contour was altered somewhat: the indentation in the outline where the earlier string of pearls ran has been partly eliminated. Probably together with this change, the dark, vee-necked shirt replaced a shirt that shows up light in the X-ray, bordered by two curves to the right of the present dangling jewel; the chain hanging over this more or less coincides with the lower limit of the earlier shirt, seen vaguely in the X-ray.

Signature

In the right background level with the chin, in greyish brown paint <*Rembrandt. ft./1635.*>. The letters, sloping sharply to the right, are finely brushed and in their somewhat over-elegant shaping differ from authentic Rembrandt signatures; there must therefore be serious doubts as to the genuineness of the inscription, which does not appear to have been added subsequently.

Varnish

No special remarks.

4. Comments

In many respects no. C 101 has a pronounced rembrandtesque appearance, not only in the lighting where the strongest light falls on the turban leaving the bottom part of the figure sunk in shadow, but also in the kind of clothing and ornaments. The gradation of light in the background, too, contributes to the rembrandtesque feel of the work. There has consequently never been any doubt as to its authenticity, even in recent publications by such authors as Gerson[2], Schwartz[3] and Tümpel[4]. The execution however differs in many ways from what one would expect from Rembrandt in the mid-1630s. Alongside an almost excessively illusionistic treatment of the turban there is, in the head, a handling of chiaroscuro that especially in the shadow passages produces a singularly flat effect. This comes about mainly through the turbid, opaque shadow tints, where Rembrandt was able to create a richer luminosity by using translucent paints and by letting the ground show through. Exaggerated accents like, in particular, the crescent-shaped light mark in the eye on the left do not help create a convincing effect. In the lower part of the figure and in the background, too, the contrasts between light and shade lack any really convincing plasticity or effect of depth. Other than in the meticulously-done turban the brushwork is relatively incoherent, and in the cloak is even so confused that no impression at all is given of the material. The sinuous contours never have the distinctive line that they take in Rembrandt's busts (either portraits or imaginary figures), and thus contribute little to giving the forms a succinct character. The colours, finally, are muddy in places and used in uncharacteristic combinations. Comparison with Rembrandt works with a similar subject-matter — the New York *Man in oriental costume* of 1632 (no. A 48), the Munich *Bust of a man in oriental dress* of 1633 (no. A 73), the Prague *Scholar* of 1634 (no. A 95), the Chatsworth *Man in oriental costume* of *c.* 1639 (no. A 128) or the figure of Belshazzar in the London *Belshazzar's feast* of *c.* 1635 (no. A 110) — makes it clear how different and more effective his handling of the motif is. On top of this, the brushwork seen in the X-ray cannot be called characteristic of Rembrandt.

Fig. 4. Detail with signature (1 : 1)



The dendrochronology results show that this certainly is a work from Rembrandt's immediate circle — the panel comes from the same tree as that used for the Braunschweig *Landscape with a thunderstorm* (no. A 137), which can probably be dated around 1640. It may thus be assumed that even if no. C 101 does not come from 1635 — as the non-autograph inscription says — this is not all that far off the true date, especially since the tree from which the wood came was probably felled in 1625 or somewhat later.

In view of the fact that 'Turkish *tronies*' done *after* Rembrandt were already mentioned in 1637 and 1639 (Strauss *Doc.*, 1637/4, 1639/9) one might be inclined to see in no. C 101 a contemporaneous copy after a lost original; arguments against this are, however, the changes that the X-rays show to have been made during the execution to the costume and jewellery, together with the slack and un-Rembrandtlike quality of the contours of the cloak. The likelihood that no. C 101 is a copy has to be termed very slim indeed; it was more probably done by a pupil or assistant. Von Moltke[5] has already pointed out the indeed unmistakeable similarity between this painting, which he still regarded as a Rembrandt, and a *Half-length figure of an oriental* in Liverpool (fig. 5) that is attributed unconvincingly to Govaert Flinck and that Von Moltke and Sumowski have dated (probably too late) as around 1642 (Sumowski *Gemälde* II, no. 677). The same hand was probably responsible for both these paintings.

It may be noted, in connexion with the penchant for oriental types (on which we deal more fully in the comments on no. A 48), that during these same years and besides the paintings already mentioned, a number of etchings of 'orientals' (B. 286–290) were produced in Rembrandt's workshop, including three copied in 1635 from prototypes from a series of etchings by Jan Lievens.

Fig. 5. Rembrandt school, *Half-length figure of an oriental*, canvas 81.5 × 67.3 cm. Liverpool, Walker Art Gallery



5. Documents and sources

None.

6. Graphic reproductions

1. Mezzotint by P. Louw (1720 – Amsterdam shortly before 1800) (Charrington 101) inscribed: *Rembrand pinx.—P. Louw fec. / 't Origineele Schildery is in de Collectie van de Heer Ketelaar. / te Amsterdam by P. Fouquet Junior.* Reproduces the picture in reverse.

7. Copies

1. Drawing in black chalk 27 × 20 cm, sale Leipzig 13 November 1924, no. 238 (with illus.) as by Salomon Koninck. A not very successful reproduction drawn in an academic manner, apparently to be dated after 1700.

8. Provenance

– Dealer Huybert Ketelaar, Amsterdam *c.* 1760 (see *6. Graphic reproductions*). The painting does not appear in the Ketelaar sale on 19 June 1776 (Lugt 2564).
– Lord Barnard, Raby Castle, Durham.
– Amsterdam art trade (1922).
– Coll. Mr and Mrs Kessler-Hülsmann, gift to the Rijksmuseum 1940.

9. Summary

Although it can in many respects be termed rembrandtesque, no. C 101 differs too much in execution to be attributed to the artist himself. Partly on the grounds of the dendrochronology findings, the painting may be considered a studio piece and the date that appears on it (1635) may be an accurate indication. The same assistant's hand can be recognized in a *Half-length figure of an oriental* in Liverpool.

REFERENCES

1 Cf. Bauch, Eckstein, Meier-Siem, pp. 488, 491 and esp. 492–493. See however *New findings 1987*.
2 Gerson 170; Br.-Gerson 206.
3 Schwartz 1984, fig. 221.
4 Tümpel 1986, cat. no. 136.
5 Von Moltke *Flinck*, p. 25 and no. 183.

C 102 Bust of a rabbi

HAMPTON COURT PALACE, H.M. QUEEN ELIZABETH II

HdG 387; BR. 207; BAUCH 166; GERSON 172

Fig. 1. Panel 72.5 × 62.1 cm

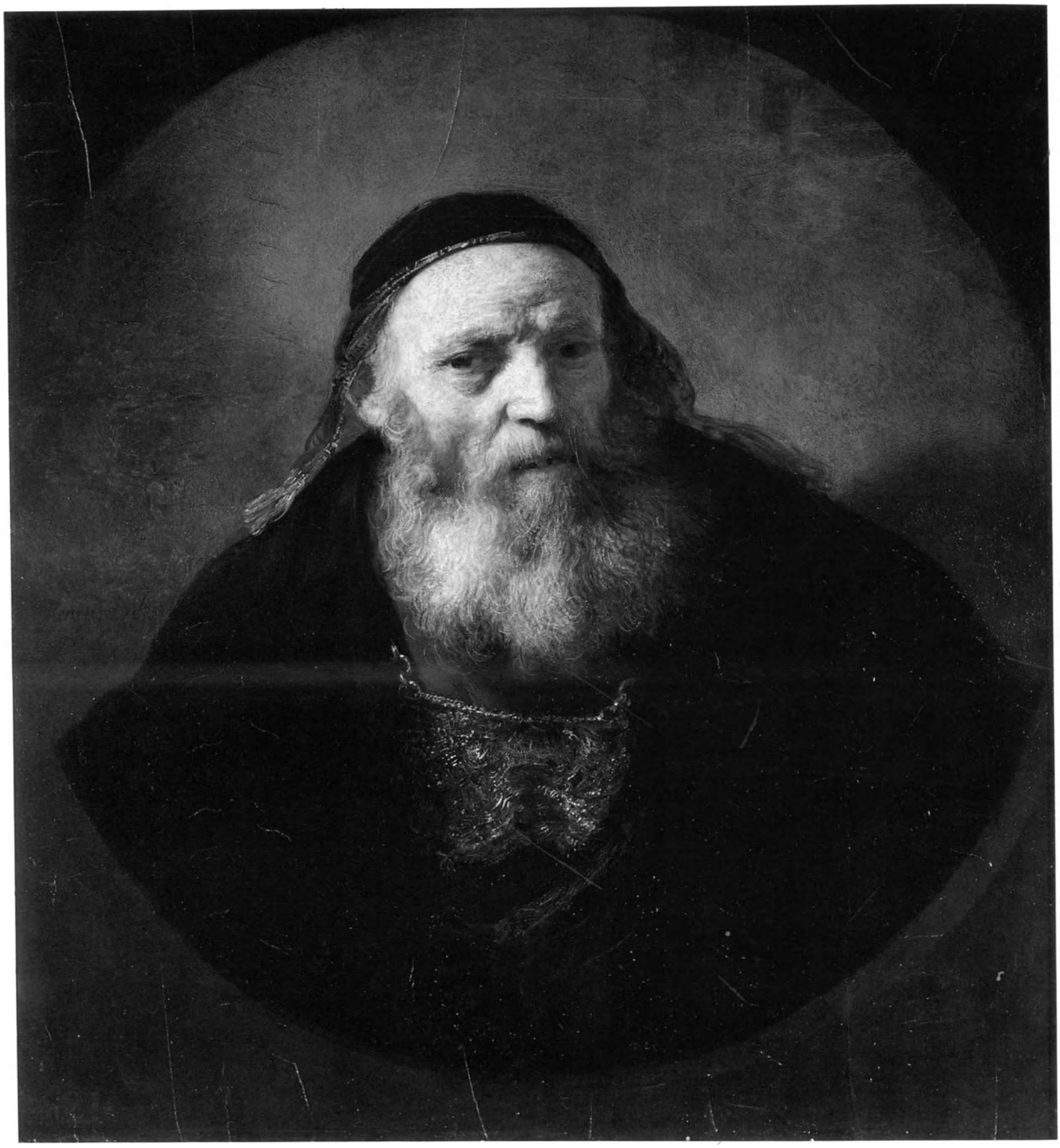


Fig. 2. X-Ray



1. Summarized opinion

A well preserved work that was probably painted in Rembrandt's workshop, in or about 1635.

2. Description of subject

A bearded old man is seen to the waist in an oval framing, the body almost square-on and the head turned a little to the right and somewhat sunk into the high, rounded line of the shoulders. He wears a black skullcap with a gold-coloured edge-band the fringed tails of which hang down on either side. A black cloak draped over the shoulders reveals at the front a large and elaborately worked pectoral ornament hanging on chain-links, and beneath this there is a dark grey garment a diagonal fold or edge of which can be seen. The light falls from the left, and the figure casts a shadow onto the rear wall on the right.

3. Observations and technical information

Working conditions

Examined on 27 August 1971 (J.B., S.H.L.) in good daylight and out of the frame. Again on 26 November 1987 (E.v.d.W.). An X-ray print of the head and adjacent areas was received from the Courtauld Institute of Art, London.

Support

DESCRIPTION: Panel (see further under *Scientific data* below), grain vertical, 72.5 × 62.1 cm. Thickness 2.7 (0.1) cm. The front is not completely even, but shows very slight vertical folding. The back (fig. 3) is bevelled over a width of about 5 cm on all four sides; in the righthand half there was in 1971 still a rectangular iron attachment let into a shaped recess — the remains of a handle or other fitting, showing that the panel once served as a door (for a cupboard?); all that now remains is the recess. There are various severe and quite long vertical cracks, mostly penetrating right through and running slightly oblique; three vertical, ladder-like rows of numerous short, horizontal and slightly curved cracks run through the background and lefthand shoulder, on the right of the beard, and at the lower right.
SCIENTIFIC DATA: A letter dated 20 May 1958 from the Department of Scientific and Industrial Research's Forest Product Research Laboratory, Aylesbury, Bucks. to Oliver Millar, Deputy Surveyor of the Queen's Pictures, identifies the wood on the basis of a specimen as a species of *Cordia*, presumably *Cordia gerascanthus* from the West Indies and South American tropics, known in Jamaica as 'Spanish elm' and in Venezuela as *canalete*, and says 'The lines of lateral checks or striations are such as often develop during the drying of cross-grained, refractory hardwoods'. For similar cracks see no. C 113, Br. 109 and Br. 185.

Ground

DESCRIPTION: A very light, almost ivory-coloured brown is visible here and there, mainly in scratchmarks at the lower right part of the beard and in brushmarks in the left background.
SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

Paint layer

CONDITION: Good, apart from at the cracks in the panel already described, which have affected the paint layer. Craquelure: occasional fine cracking, which is hard to see.
DESCRIPTION: The oval framing is done in a fairly flat brown-grey, with a somewhat lighter bands along the top and bottom of the righthand side that represent (not entirely successfully) a lit rebate. Above and to the right of the head the background is painted in a quite thick grey with brushstrokes — some straight, some curving — that are perhaps meant to show a plastered wall; along the head and the cast shadow at the lower right they follow the contours. At the upper righthand spandrel the background paint continues at some places just beneath the paint of the framing. To the left the paint is rather thinner and blotchy, with a visible brushstroke; on the extreme left the grey is darker, thinner and flatter.

The lit parts of the face are executed with firm strokes in rather thickly-laid pale flesh colours, with a marked relief that appears to result from a stippling action of the brush. There is some thinner pink on the cheek and a brown-grey in the shadow of the eye-pouch, the fold in the cheek by the nose and the wrinkles on the forehead. The brushstrokes follow the curves below and above the eye, but run along the ridge of the nose obliquely towards the lower right. Similar strokes give a rather vague indication of the edges of the lefthand eye, with some pink along the lower edge and, on the left, some white for the moisture; within this the iris and pupil (scarcely distinguishable one from the other) lie as a somewhat blotchy dark patch in the white of the eye, the latter a grey that is lighter on the left and darker on the right. The eyebrow shows a few diagonal strokes of white over a grey that is quite light on the left, darker and brownish on the right.

In the shadow side of the face the opaque yellowish-brown paint is for the most part applied thickly and covered with a grey glaze that is also found in shadow parts of the lit half of the face. Fine, curving strokes are used in the eye-pouch and, in grey, to indicate the eye itself.

Below the dark area containing the nostril and the cast shadow from the nose, the lit parts of the moustache — like those of the beard — are executed with curved strokes of dark to very light greys; in the lower right part of the beard there are curving scratchmarks made in the wet paint and exposing the light ground. To the right, in the shadow, the paint is less thick and applied more flatly in a darker grey. The mouth is rendered with a few strokes of pink for the lower lip with cool and warm glazes that extend into the beard. Black accents mark the opening, among which a touch of dull grey represents a tooth. The ear is rendered rather cursorily, with a few touches of pink.

The skullcap is painted in black with a grey sheen; the outline, which is composed of almost straight strokes, has been done wet-in-wet with the background paint. The edge-band has touches of, for the most part, a brown-yellow impasto placed over the black, with a little blue-grey and light yellow; the dangling tail on the left has a great deal of light yellow and some blue-green with small effective highlights, that on the right grey and brown-yellow placed partly over the background with long strokes. The cloak, like the cap, is done in black, with a slight shade of grey left of the beard showing a sheen of light on the cloth; the relief shows underlying firm strokes, some zigzag, which relate tot the folds of the cloak. The pectoral is painted with somewhat confused strokes and spots of brown-yellow and white over a layer of dark grey, with a few scratchmarks. The area between the panels of the open cloak is in a relatively thin dark grey, intersected by a diagonal band of vaguely brushed ochre yellow (the purpose of which is unclear).
SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

X-Rays

In general the radiographic image in the print available matches what one would expect from the paint surface. The vertical bands, which appear lighter in the background than elsewhere, undoubtedly have to do with the uneven thickness of the ground, a result of the slight folding in the surface of the panel. The reserve left for the figure in the paint of the background occasionally fails to coincide with its present contour. On the right, where the lowest part of the tail dangling from the skullcap curves out to the right, the paint of it has been placed on a fully completed background. To the left, on the contrary, the reserve for the shoulder by the dangling tail was too generous, and the background alongside the latter has evidently been filled in with non-radioabsorbent paint; the X-ray does not show, either, the triangle of background seen between the tail of

the cap, the ear and the contour of the shoulder. Remarkable — though in line with what the paint surface shows — is the degree of contrast between the stubble by the lit cheek (which virtually does not show up light at all) and the immediately adjacent lefthand part of the beard which, together with parts of the forehead and nose, exhibits the greatest radioabsorbency.

Signature

On the left alongside the shoulder in a fairly dark grey *<Rembrandt. / f.1635>*. The letters and figures are obviously uncertain in their placing, and in the date in particular unusually widely spaced. The form shows sometimes clear discrepancies from that in authentic Rembrandt signatures; the *b*, for instance, has a curve extending far to the right in the upper part of the shaft, and the *a* is much wider and rounder than in known Rembrandt signatures. The inscription does not impress one as being authentic.

Varnish

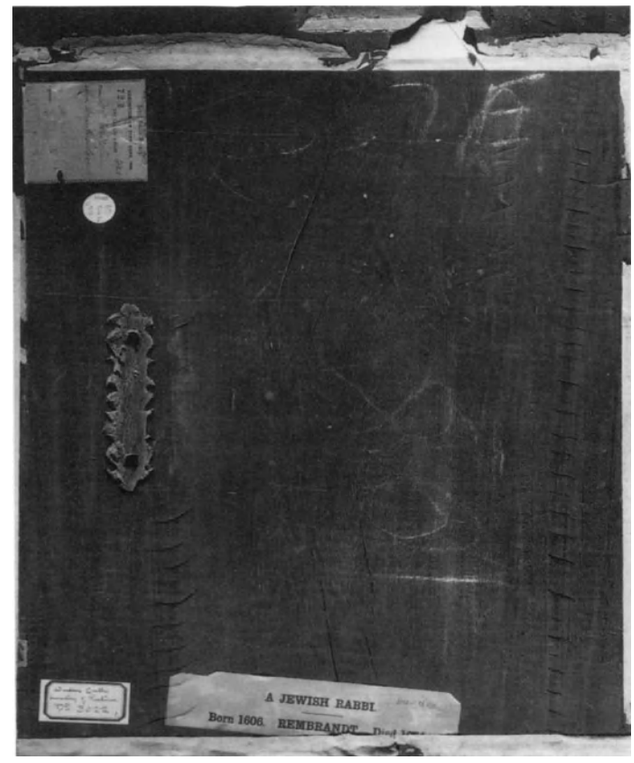
No special remarks.

4. Comments

The painting is typified by a generally quite thick application of paint, fairly flat in the costume, with firm brushstrokes in the face and broad ones in the background. This variety of brushwork does not however lead to a convincing effect of depth, especially since the softly curving contours lack the rhythmic power (in part the outcome of swelling outlines meeting at a point) that is characteristic of Rembrandt. This, added to the peculiar paint relief in the face which almost negates an effective modelling and a certain dullness of the whole colour-scheme, makes an attribution to the master himself unacceptable. The signature and 1635 date do not, by themselves, make a reliable impression. The attribution was generally accepted in the literature until 1968. Gerson[1] called the attribution to Rembrandt doubtful, White[2] definitely rejected it and classified the painting under 'style of Rembrandt', Schwartz (1984) and Tümpel (1986) omitted it altogether.

The differences from Rembrandt's own style just described do not contradict the idea that the picture comes from his workshop. In several respects, the manner of painting has features that are sufficiently rembrandtesque to make one assume it did. This is true, for example, of the crisp and varied application of highlights in the headdress, the rendering of separate hairs in the beard by means of glancing touches of grey, and the free handling of paint in, especially, the pectoral and background. The painter does however also show a distinctly personal style both in his manner of painting and in his composition. The way he places undulating contours with a free brushstroke against the background and similar strokes in the background where it borders the figure and the cast shadow, is as typical of his painting style as is the use of glazes in the shadows and half-shadows in the face. The composition is marked by a predilection for squat proportions in the face as well as in the body, and the undulating

Fig. 3. Back of panel (1971)



outlines underscore the figure's width in a way that is reminiscent of Rembrandt's Munich *Bust of a man in oriental dress* of 1633 (no. A 73). In this respect an *Oriental* in Liverpool, currently (but unconvincingly) attributed to Flinck (Von Moltke *Flinck*, no. 183; Sumowski *Gemälde* II, no. 677; see no. C 101 fig. 5) bears some resemblance to the Hampton Court picture, without however being attributable to the same hand. For the time being, there is no pupil's name that can be put forward as the artist responsible for no. C 102. There is no reason to suppose, as White[2] does on the basis of the number of copies in existence, that the painting (which he in fact called 'a later imitation') was based on a lost original by Rembrandt.

As to the picture's date, the year of 1635 seen in the inscription may well give reliable information. This would tally with the resemblance just mentioned with the Munich *Man in oriental dress* of 1633 and also with certain similarities — particularly in the large amount of black and the yellowish tint in the face — with the London *Belshazzar's feast* (no. A 110) datable as 1635. The painting must have enjoyed a certain reputation; there are quite a number of copies of it in existence (see *7. Copies*). It would be interesting to know whether they include any made in Venice; the painting must have been there a good while before 1762 (see *8. Provenance*) and may, just as much as Rembrandt's etchings of old

men (cf. F.W. Robinson in: *N.K.J.* 18, 1967, pp. 173–176), have influenced Venetian artists including G.B. Tiepolo.

The panel on which the picture is painted is remarkable in that, to judge from the metal attachment of very rustic type that could until recently be seen on the back (fig. 3), it was originally used as a door. It is moreover made from a wood probably imported from the South American tropics and possibly salvaged from sugar chests (as suggested to us by Professor Dr H. Olbrich of the Zucker-Museum, Technische Universität Berlin, in a letter dated 12 October 1987). Neither of these facts argues for or against an attribution to Rembrandt or his school; a number of paintings by him or from his circle are done on similar exotic kinds of wood, and some of them show traces that could point to earlier use for a different purpose (see J. Bauch and D. Eckstein in: *Wood science and technology* 15, 1981, pp. 254–255, where several panels of an exotic wood species are described though none of *Cordia*).

5. Documents and sources

None.

6. Graphic reproductions

None.

7. Copies

White[2] lists seven copies, including:
1. Panel, oval 70 × 60 cm, Aachen, Suermondt-Ludwig-Museum, no. GK 140 as: Gerbrand van den Eeckhout. Probably identical with a painting in an anonymous sale at Amsterdam, 17 July 1782 (Lugt 3453), no. 86: 'Een ander dito [Rein. (Rembrandt van)] op Paneel, hoog 29 breed 23 duim [= 74.5 × 59.1 cm]. Een oude Mans Pourtrait Levensgroote, halverlyf te zien met een gryze Baard, zyn hoofd is gedekt door een zwart Kalotje, en dito kleeding; dit Schildery is in een fraaije uitvoerige, krachtige en in een uitmuntende smaak behandeld' (Another ditto ... Portrait of an old man lifesize, seen half-length with a grey beard, his head covered with a black cap, and ditto clothing; this painting is treated in a fine thorough, powerful and excellent taste) (20 guilders 1 stuyver, bought in). Coll. Jacob de Vos Jbzn, sale Amsterdam 22–23 May 1883, no. 148 as: Gerbrand van den Eeckhout.

To these may be added:
2. Panel 62 × 47 cm, Warsaw, Muzeum Narodowe (inv. no. 185996). *Catalogue of paintings. Foreign schools* II, Warsaw 1970, no. 1040. From the collection of K. Branicki, Paris; deposited in 1939; the gallery at Wilanów.

8. Provenance

*– Possibly identical with: 'Altro [quadro] con Testa di vecchio ... con soaza dorata', described in the estate of the painter Giovanni Antonio Pellegrini (1675–1741), bought in its entirety from his widow by Joseph Smith, English Consul in Venice (see F. Vivian in: *Burl. Mag.* 104 (1962), pp. 330–333).
*– Coll. Joseph Smith, Venice; sold by him with other Flemish and Dutch paintings in 1762 to George III of England. Described in a list of these paintings copied around 1815 as no. 24: 'Rembrandt. An old Man on board 2–4½ 2–1 [= 73.5 × 64.4 cm] (A. Blunt and E. Croft-Murray, *Venetian drawings of the XVII & XVIII centuries ... at Windsor Castle*, London 1957, p. 20). Since then in the Royal Collections.

9. Summary

The aberrant execution of the painting rules out an attribution to Rembrandt. Together with the Rembrandt-like subject-matter, the manner of painting makes it likely that it was done in his circle or workshop. It most resembles Rembrandt's work from 1633/35; the latter year appears in the inscription, which cannot however be looked on as an authentic Rembrandt signature.

REFERENCES

1 Gerson 172.
2 C. White, *The Dutch pictures in the Collection of Her Majesty the Queen*, Cambridge-London 1982, pp. liii, 111.

C 103 **Bust of a young woman** (commonly called the artist's wife)

WASHINGTON, D.C., THE NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART
WIDENER COLLECTION, NO. 667

HDG 615; BR. 96; BAUCH 488; GERSON 174

1. Summarized opinion

A generally well preserved work that was probably painted in Rembrandt's workshop about 1640.

2. Description of subject

The woman is seen almost to the waist, with the body turned in profile towards the right and the head towards the viewer and bent forward. Over her head she wears a gathered veil that falls down over both shoulders. Above a black overgarment there is a pleated and stitched shirt, and between the front panels can be seen a greyish undergarment. A gold chain hangs over the shoulders, and there is a pearl on a ribbon in the hair by the one visible ear. The light falls from the left, and the figure stands out against a very dark background.

3. Observations and technical information

Working conditions

Examined on 7 April 1970 (J.B., S.H.L.) in good daylight and artificial light, out of the frame, with the aid of an X-ray film covering the head and shoulders, a copyfilm of which was received later. Examined again, after restoration, on 16 December 1976 (S.H.L.), 1 December 1977 (P.v.Th.), and in March 1983 and February 1987 (E.v.d.W.).

Support

DESCRIPTION: Poplarwood panel, grain vertical, 62.2 × 48.9 cm (± 0.1 cm) including an L-shaped added section 2.1 cm wide along the lefthand side and bottom, made from a single piece of poplarwood. The thickness has been reduced to about 0.6 cm, and the back cradled.
SCIENTIFIC DATA: For confirmation of the belief that the panel is made of poplarwood, we are indebted to Prof. Dr H. Gottwald, Hamburg, as published by Bauch and Eckstein[1].

Ground

DESCRIPTION: Not seen.
SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

Paint layer

CONDITION: Generally good. There is a diagonal dent in the surface at the upper part of the shirt collar, and damages along the edges mainly at the left and bottom. Craquelure: thin and mostly vertical cracks are seen in the face and shirt collar, and an irregular network of tiny cracks in the shadow side of the face.
DESCRIPTION: In general the paint surface makes (partly because of the nature of the support) a very smooth impression; there is a little relief in the somewhat thickly painted parts of the shirt collar, the chain and the edge of the ornamentation on the wall, as well as — to a lesser degree — in the lit flesh areas.

The background is a smoothly painted, almost uniform dark grey that becomes nearly black towards the top and is a little lighter to the right of the body contour. (No difference was noticed between the paint on the L-shaped piece of wood and that on the rest of the panel, though the addition of the former must have taken place at some later time — see *X-Rays*.)

The lit part of the head is set down in a pale flesh colour over which has been laid — using a broad brushstroke running from top left to bottom right — a pinkish white on the upper part of the cheek, the nose and the upper lip. Lower down on the cheek the paint is a hazily-applied pink.

The shadow area is done in opaque greys, with a little red below the eye, and takes on a brownish-grey tint lower down. The eye is drawn in this in greys, and the (over-large) iris is in very dark grey outlined in black, with a black pupil.

The lit of the lefthand eye is edged with brown lines and is a grey-white in the lit part, while the shadow part has an opaque brownish tint. The latter continues into the shadow of the eye-socket, where a little black shows through. The lower edge of the eye is formed by an indistinct and fairly broad stroke in pink with some white that towards the right runs out, thinner but wider, into the Y-shaped pinkish-red corner of the eye. The iris, done in a flat grey, is outlined thinly in black. The grey of the white of the eye to the right of this has a darker area along the edge of the iris. To the right of the corner of the eye there is a patch of thin, flat white adjoined by the thin, flat grey of the shadow of the eye-pouch from which, towards the left, run thin strings of flesh-coloured paint.

The ridge of the nose has white highlights, and a flesh-coloured light is placed on the tip. There is some pink on the wing. The nostril is indicated by a stroke of brown in which there is a small line of black, and to the right below this some white next to a brown-grey area rendering the underside of the nose. The indentation in the middle of the upper lip has a brown stroke set in some pink. To the left of this, below the nostril, a black is seen showing through. The mouth-line consists of strokes of fairly thick black; the upper lip is in red with some light pink on the left. The lefthand corner of the mouth is in brown, with black showing through.

The hair is shown with a thin reddish brown, with small thin strokes of somewhat thicker, lighter paint. The veil, rendered summarily in the shadow in browns and bordered on the right by an outline in black, is in the lit part enlivened with dark grey ornamentation (appearing greenish) and small highlights of yellow that are in part marked by a pronounced rhythm.

The shirt is shown indistinctly with strokes of broken white and brown with yellowish-grey ornamentation; in the shadow there are browns and black. Fine highlights mark broadly the sawtooth upper edge and stitching. The chain is painted rather shapelessly in thin and thick golden ochre colours, on top of the almost black clothing; the latter is shown, by lines of grey, as hanging open to the front.
SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

X-Rays

The radiographic image, marred by the cradle and numerous stopped wormholes that show up light, generally coincides with what one expects from the paint surface. The long and broad brushstrokes already described in the upper part of the cheek are clearly apparent.

The neck and shirt appear light to the left over a larger area that one would expect from the paint surface — the indication of shadow has here evidently been placed on top of a light lay-in. To the right of the figure the background shows up lighter than one might expect, and there is no reserve left for the veil at this point.

The L-shaped addition to the panel appears so much darker than the background elsewhere, notably in the bottom righthand corner, that one has to assume that its ground and paint differ from those on the rectangular panel: it was therefore added at some later date.

Signature

None.

Varnish

A thick layer of yellowed varnish still present in 1970 was removed in 1976.

4. Comments

A judgment on the painting depends very much on what one believes its date of production to be. Until now authors, virtually all of whom accepted the work as authentic, have put it in the earlier 1630s; Tümpel[2] dated it expressly as *c.* 1634. Schwartz[3] was the only one to voice doubt about the attribution. If

Fig. 1. Panel 62.2 × 48.9 cm



Fig. 2. X-Ray

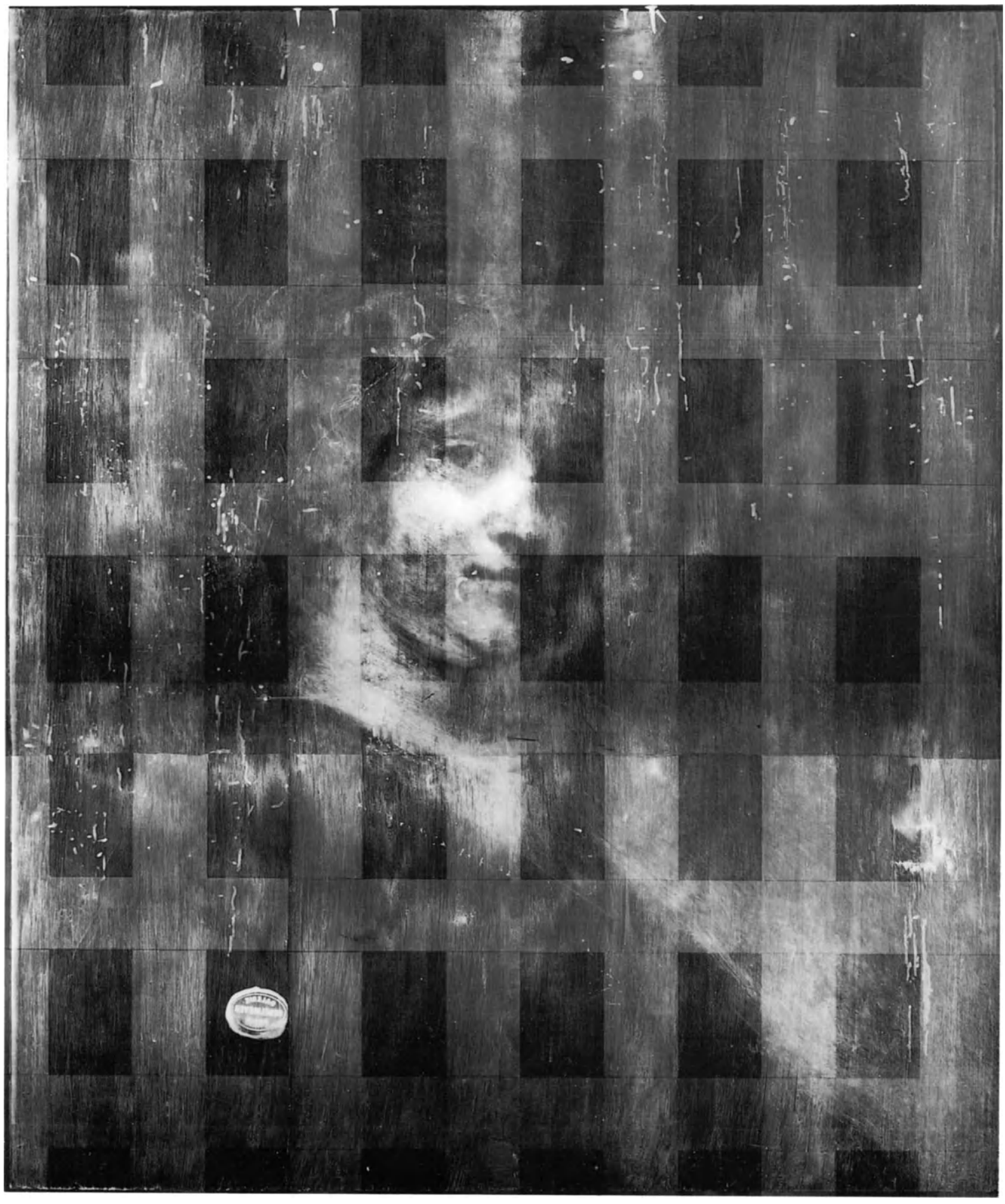


Fig. 3. Detail (1 : 1)



one stays with the usual dating, then this doubt is amply justified. The Washington painting bears no resemblance to the *tronies* of 1633/34, with their brushwork careful in the face and free elsewhere and a tendency to provocative contrasts of colour, and in the technique employed (a wide use of glaze over a

broadly-brushed lay-in in the lit part of the head) it differs — as the X-rays, too, demonstrate — quite substantially from them. The usual dating (probably prompted by the idea that one is here seeing Saskia shortly after her marriage) is however certainly wrong, and does no justice to the rembrandtesque qualities that the painting certainly has. These however become evident only when it is compared with considerably later work by Rembrandt such as the Amsterdam *Portrait of a young woman (Maria Trip?)* of 1639 (no. A 131) and, especially, the Dresden *Saskia as Flora* of 1641 (no. A 142). In these works the heads are marked no longer by a paint layer built up carefully from small strokes placed side-by-side and over one another, but rather by a certain broadness of application and the subsequent use of partly transparent layers. The Dresden painting in particular, though not offering the long, broad, light strokes in the lit cheek that characterize the Washington work, does in the quite wide brushstrokes in flesh areas (plainly apparent in the X-rays as well) bear some resemblance to no. C 103 and makes it reasonable to think that the latter reflects Rembrandt's way of working around 1640. In other respects, too, there are similarities with the Dresden painting in motif and treatment. The veil over the hair, with its ornamentation done with subdued colours and pronounced brushstrokes, is like the translucent shawl worn over one shoulder by the young woman in the Dresden work, and the way the edge of the shirt is suggested with fine highlights is like the corresponding feature on the right in the *Saskia*. The use of poplarwood in Rembrandt's workshop was not unusual in those years — see, besides the examples listed by Bauch and Eckstein[1], nos. A 128 and B 11. (The enlargement of the panel with an L-shaped piece must be of later date, see *X-Rays*.) Some support for a dating around 1640 may perhaps be found in a pearl hanging from a bow by the ear, a motif that is fairly common in portraits after 1640 or so.

While this change in date makes the rembrandtesque character of the work quite acceptable, there remains the question of whether Rembrandt's own hand played any part in it. Closer comparison with the Dresden *Saskia as Flora* does not point to this: despite the similarities in motif, and to a certain extent in treatment, the effect in terms of characterizing form and depth is too much poorer in the present work. This applies not only to the rather weak rendering of the clothing but also to the face, where though in both light and shadow there is a differentiation in colour, it fails to create much suggestion of plasticity, and where the lifeless eyes and nose are set down as rather diagrammatic features. The result differs quite markedly, in volume and texture, from what Rembrandt could produce. One can believe this somewhat weak and over-subtle style to have had its origin in Rembrandt's workshop around 1641, especially since a motif such as the shirt edge decorated with a lozenge pattern appears in another workshop piece from this period, the *Bust of Rembrandt* in Pasadena (no. C 97) attributable to Carel Fabritius. Most typical for the style of the author of the present work is perhaps the way the decoration on the veil and the translucent locks of hair are characterized using a fairly free brushwork that seems to stem from a work such as the Dresden *Dead bittern held high by a hunter* (no. A 133), probably from 1639.

The rather nondescript facial features do not provide much reason for the generally accepted identification of the young woman as Saskia van Uylenburgh. In the 18th century the picture was called 'The Dutch lady' (see *6. Graphic reproductions*). Louttit[4], in her analysis of the costume depicted, included the veil among the accessories characterizing shepherdesses in line with the pastoral fashion in Holland during the second quarter of the 17th century. In view of what we know of this fashion (see, for instance, Vol. II, p. 501 fig. 5), this must be regarded as hardly probable.

One of the present authors (E.v.d.W.) believes for a number of reasons that the Rembrandt attribution can be maintained. He gives less weight to the differences in execution, just described, with the Dresden *Saskia as Flora* than to a number of similarities of various kinds to other autograph works produced around 1640. The painting is certainly unusual, but thought has to be given to the fact that from the later 1630s on Rembrandt's production of paintings time and again includes nonce-works that cannot, as with previous works, be compared point-by-point with others from the same or the preceding period. The defence of no. C 103 rests on features relating to the kind of brushwork, the lighting and spatial effect and singularities in the formal character.

Where the brushwork is concerned, it is in particular the veil and collar that provide support; the brushstroke is decided, with a penchant for strokes with a firm start and finish. Typical of these brushstrokes, and of Rembrandt's style, is that the strokes are wider than the material being rendered requires, with occasionally — as at the edge of the veil — a subtle linear treatment, at places where the brush is again wielded with great sureness of touch. The relationship between the paint and the illusion being aimed at is such that the paint is clearly apparent with all its chance features though with a clear, rhythmic application, while at the same time there are subtleties achieved in the rendering — e.g. in depicting the veil folded back over the forehead, or the sawtooth edge of the collar pressed down and folding over below the chin. From one passage to the next — hair, cloth, the metal of the chain, and the skin — the brushwork is matched to the depiction of the material, yet without sacrificing to this any of its

own essential being. The seemingly unusual brushstrokes in the lit part of the cheek, visible in relief and running with the fall of light, are in fact not unique in this form — a comparable treatment is to be found in the girl seen in the *Night watch* (no. A 146). This set of characteristics for the brushwork can be applied to various of Rembrandt's works of quite different kinds — to details in a landscape such as the *Landscape with a stone bridge* in Amsterdam (no. A 136), as well as in still-life passages like the accessories in the Berlin *Anslo* portrait (no. A 143), the Amsterdam *Two dead peacocks and a girl* (no. A 134), the Dresden *Dead bittern held high by a hunter* (no. A 133) or certain parts of the *Night watch*.

Where the lighting is concerned the quality is hard to describe accurately; the wealth of effects and sureness with which they are obtained are impressive. Not only are the force and credibility of the fall of light on the face and collar most convincing, but the relationship between the subtlety of the suggested reflexion of light on the chin and the righthand outline of the collar, and the casual ease with which this suggestion is achieved, are typical of Rembrandt. Uncommon as a task for the artist is the rendering of the light on the veil and at the same time the creation of the suggestion that the light is passing through the veil and falling on the hair and part of the cheek and collar. The veil seems in a number of ways to be the main focus of the painting; at all events it plays a major role in suggesting depth. This interpretation could serve to explain the notable simplification of the head. In this respect, comparison with the *Dead bittern* is irresistible: there too one finds prominent a rich and subtly lit veil-like form in the outspread wing on the left, seeming to reach out to the front of the picture, as opposed to the simplified rendering of the figure which is mostly in shadow. The present work also shares with the *Dead bittern* the singular organization of the costume, built up from simple triangles, by the bottom edge of the painting. The folded-back edge of the veil and tilted-over sawtooth edge of the collar, mentioned earlier, are moreover in their effect and execution similar to subtle and spatially effective solutions employed in the *Night watch* — notably in the sashes of Banning Cocq and Ruytenburg.

In addition to the arguments rehearsed above, this author believes that it is precisely the exceptional nature of the solution essayed in this *tronie* in terms of placing, tilt and lighting of the head that says that this is not the work of one of Rembrandt's workshop companions, but a concept of his own unreflected in any of the studio work known to us.

5. Documents and sources

None.

6. Graphic reproductions

1. Mezzotint by Richard Read (London *c.* 1745– about 1800), inscribed: *Rembrandt pinx. — Bryer excudit.— Read sculp./ THE DUTCH LADY./ Publish'd as the Act directs Oct^r 1^st 1776, by H. Bryer, Cornhill.* (Charrington 150,IV). Reproduces the picture faithfully and in the same direction, in a heavy, flat oval frame.

7. Copies

1. Canvas 56.6 × 43.5 cm, Basle, Oeffentliche Kunstsammlung Basel, inv. no. 1088 (Prof. J.J. Bachofen-Burckhardt-Stiftung, 1920). Shows the same figure in a somewhat narrower frame, and tilted a little to the left so that the head is not bent forward but practically upright; this is the result of a later trimming, as can be seen from the direction of the threads of the canvas running diagonal to the present framing. The execution gives the impression of a relatively early 18th-century date.

8. Provenance

Not, as assumed by Hofstede de Groot[5], in the coll. Gaignat sale, Paris 14–22 February 1769 (Lugt 1734), where an oval painting was described under no. 10 (according to the sketch by Gabriel de Saint Aubin in a copy of the sale catalogue, see *Catalogues de ventes et livrets de salons illustrés par Gabriel de Saint Aubin*, ed. E. Dacier, VI, Paris 1921, this cannot be identified with any painting attributed to Rembrandt); nor was it in the coll. De Calonne sale, Paris 21–30 April 1788 (Lugt 4304), where another oval painting was described under no. 41 (identifiable with Br. 634 now at Leeuwarden) together with an *Old man with long white beard* (identifiable with Br. 184); nor yet again in coll. Choiseul-Praslin, sale Paris 18–25 February 1793 (Lugt 5005), where another painting was described under no. 38 (see entry no. C 61).
– Coll. Bouchier Cleeve, London.
– Coll. William Wells (Redleaf), sale London (Christie's) 12–13 May 1848, no. 67 (first day) as: 'A Young Lady, styled "The Artist's Wife" ' (£65. 2s. to Davenport; probably bought in); sale London 10 and 12 May 1890, no. 93, (first day) (£1690. 10s. to Colnaghi).
– Coll. H. Bingham Mildmay, sale London 24 June 1893, no. 58 (£2800. 7s. to C. Wertheimer).
– Dealer C. Sedelmeyer, Paris (*Catalogue of 100 paintings* ..., Paris, I, 1894, no. 31).
– Coll. P.A.B. Widener, Philadelphia (cat. 1908, no. 241). Donated to the museum in 1942.

9. Summary

Contrary to what has so far been generally assumed, the manner of painting in this work reflects that of Rembrandt paintings from around 1640. The Dresden *Saskia as Flora* of 1641 (no. A 142) in particular offers similarities in both motif and treatment. The plasticity and three-dimensional effect achieved there are however so much stronger than the rather flat appearance of no. C 103 that this cannot be attributed to Rembrandt. It must have been done about 1640 by a pupil in his workshop. One of the authors (E.v.d.W.) however defends the traditional Rembrandt attribution for a variety of reasons.

There are insufficient grounds for the identification of the sitter as Saskia van Uylenburgh that has been common since the 19th century.

REFERENCES

1 J. Bauch and D. Eckstein, 'Woodbiological investigations on panels of Rembrandt paintings', *Wood Science and Technology* 15 (1981), pp. 251–263, esp. 254.
2 Tümpel 1986, cat. no. 183.
3 Schwartz 1984, fig. 204 and p. 380.
4 M. Louttit, 'The romantic dress of Saskia van Ulenborch: its pastoral and theatrical associations', *Burl. Mag.* 115 (1973), pp. 317–326, esp. 325.
5 HdG 615.

C 104 Portrait of a man in a slouched hat and bandoleer (possibly companion-piece to no. C 105)

U.S.A., PRIVATE COLLECTION

HDG 730; BR. 201; BAUCH 375; GERSON 180

1. Summarized opinion

A poorly preserved work from Rembrandt's workshop, evidently from the same hand as no. C 72 (and thus also nos. C 73 and C 82) and possibly a companion-piece to no. C 105. It has been transferred from panel to canvas, and was probably originally rather larger and rectangular in shape.

2. Description of subject

Bust, with the body turned well to the right and the head and gaze towards the viewer. The sitter wears a very wide-brimmed hat, a flat pleated collar with a lace border, a cloak draped over a black doublet of a shiny, nappy material and a bandoleer — interwoven with gold thread — running down from his right shoulder. The light falls from the left, and the figure casts a shadow on the rear wall.

3. Observations and technical information

Working conditions

Examined on 7 June 1972 (J.B., S.H.L.), the painting in the frame and behind perspex, and under artificial light. Examined again in May 1983 under good lighting and out of the frame, with the help of nine X-ray films together covering the whole painting.

Support

DESCRIPTION: Transferred from an oval panel to a rectangular canvas, 78.5 × 65.7 cm (the painted oval is *c.* 77.5 × 65 cm. Traces of a vertical fracture in the paint surface are visible at about 22 cm from the righthand side, running just through the righhand end of the collar, and seem to point more to a join than to a crack; this would mean that the original panel comprised two planks. According to information received from the owner, the transfer was done in 1929.
SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

Ground

DESCRIPTION: A light yellow-brown is exposed or shows through in the ends of the pleats of the collar, and shows through in thin areas of the shadow side of the head, in the hair and in the background.
SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

Paint layer

CONDITION: The paint surface has suffered generally from overcleaning and a certain amount of flattening. In the face the shadows, eyes and eyebrows especially have been worn and restored, though there are restorations in the lit cheek as well. In the background one sees local retouches (e.g. along part of the join), and the cast shadow on the right presents more extensive restorations done in a blotchy dark grey. The darkest parts of the background are in a worn and retouched dark grey. The black of the clothing is very thin, and only the grey of the sheen of light on the sleeve is still in good condition. The lit part of the collar is by far the best preserved passage in the painting. Craquelure: fine, regular cracking typical of a painting on panel is seen in the white of the collar and in the thick paint in parts of the face. A pattern interfering with this has the look of a canvas craquelure.
DESCRIPTION: The background at the cast shadow on the right is painted in a thin dark grey with the ground showing through. The adjacent lighter area is done with a visible brushstroke in a rather thicker grey. The reserve left for the righthand end of the hat-brim is far more generous along the top than the space the brim occupies in the final execution; both above and below the brim on the right the grey of the background runs over the black of it.

The pictorial cohesion of the face must in general have suffered greatly through the wearing and restoration. The lit parts of the head are relatively the easiest to assess, even though there are discoloured retouches at many places and transitions such as that between the cheek and nose-crease seem to have been strengthened with some thin brown. So far as one can tell the flesh coloured paint is applied relatively flatly, thickest on the cheekbone and nose where some of the brushwork can be seen; the strokes can also be followed in the transitions like that to the grey along the underside of the chin and jawline. Some pink is used on the wing of the nose, with a ruddy brown by the nostril. On the left the brown borders of the eyelid appear to be remnants of the original paint, while on the right the corresponding features are in a grey that is hard to judge. Between the nose and mouth there is a zone where a good deal of ground can be seen through translucent browns. Yellowish and dark-grey brushstrokes on top of this render the moustache, and the upper lip is likewise set over translucent brown in a thin red. Some of the ground is seen at the centre of the lower lip, with a hazy pink to either side. The mouth-line is placed on top of this with strokes of dark paint. The lip beard again has translucent browns and some cloudy greys. The hair on the left is painted in thin grey-brown with a few heavy strokes of an opaque brown; here, too, there are numerous restorations. In one or two areas, such as the lefthand edge of the moustache and the cast shadow this throws on the skin and part of the mouth, the effect and quality of the original execution can still be detected to some extent. A striking feature is a horizontal highlight running to the left from the tip of the nose.

The collar in the light is painted in long strokes of white that thicken at the ends, with a thinner light grey visible between them. Further down, just above the lower edge, one sees a squiggly line of black. In the end of the pleats animated brushstrokes of black and grey are placed wet-in-wet against the white; occasionally the ground lies exposed among them. The lowest tips of the lace are formed with dabs of white lying partly over the black and partly over the ground. The greys in the shadow part have suffered, and a rapidly done underpainting can be detected in the relief. The bandoleer is executed with strokes of a thin ochre-yellow over black, with light yellow spots for the highlights. The costume is painted in thin black, with broad strokes of a thicker grey with some spots of black in the sheen of light on the sleeve, indicating the naps.
SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

X-Rays

The radiographic image is dominated by broad brushstrokes showing up light, that may be interpreted as an intermediate layer applied in the area of the face and collar as part of the transfer procedure in order to maintain the luminosity in these areas. The radioabsorbent parts of the head are, as a result of this, only poorly legible. The more thickly painted parts of the collar can however be read, and the lit part especially is clearly visualised. Elsewhere in the X-ray one notices the autograph retouch used to reduce the hat-brim to its present size. Also striking is the amount of paint that shows up light in the centre and lefthand part of the hat-brim; these areas have to be connected with the tonal changes in the tipped-up brim, but then have a surprising level of radioabsorbency.

Signature

In the right background by the bottom tip of the collar, in dark brown <*Rembrandt f. 1635*>. The letters and figures show obvious local retouching. Because of their rather uncertain positioning and slope down to the right, the inscription does not give an autograph impression. The script seems to resemble that on the Boston *Portrait of a man* (no. C 72) whose manner of painting is also like that in the present work.

Varnish

A layer of varnish somewhat hampers observation.

Fig. 1. Transferred to canvas 77.5 × 65 cm (reproduced after W. Bode and C. Hofstede de Groot, *Rembrandt* II, Paris 1897)



4. Comments

The portrait, originally on panel, has suffered severely not only through flattening when it was transferred to canvas in 1929 but also from wearing. This naturally makes assessment less than easy, but enough can be seen of the execution to give an idea of the original character of the paint surface. In the literature the Rembrandt attribution has until recently been generally accepted, including by Gerson[1] (working from a photograph) and Schwartz[2]; only Tümpel[3] saw it as a workshop piece. Even in its present state the work gives every reason for this latter judgment. The execution of the head in particular is, even allowing for the wear and retouches, notable for a rather schematic and largely linear indication of the eyes, a clumsy rendering of nose and nostrils and an indeterminate contour to the cheek on the right. It thus falls too far short of the sound plastic structure seen in, for instance, the *Portrait of Dirck Jansz. Pesser* in Los Angeles dated 1634 (no. A 102). Even the relatively well preserved collar, sketched broadly with unmistakeable fluency — and, to judge from the X-ray, great directness — lacks in the lace along the edge the balance between painterly formula and clarity of construction that one is used to seeing in Rembrandt's own work (see Vol. II, pp. 63ff). The distribution of light and dark in the background, finally, is rather ineffective in suggesting space around the figure, since the cast shadow level with the collar is joined directly to the figure in a way that — for understandable reasons — one never finds in Rembrandt himself.

Each of these jarring features can be recognized, in very simliar form, in another male portrait from Rembrandt's workshop — that in Boston, dated 1634 (no. C 72). In the head there one notices particularly that the nose not only shows a similar distortion but also has a similar horizontal highlight by the tip as that in the present work, which prompted John Smith[4] to call the sitter 'remarkable for having the bridge of his nose broken'. The resemblances are such that one can safely assume that the present work is by the same studio assistant as painted that of the man in Boston (no. C 72) and thus, one may suppose, of the associated woman's portrait (no. C 73), and of the related *Portrait of a woman* in Edinburgh (no. C 82). Unfortunately this assistant must so far remain nameless. The unity of the group of portraits ascribed to him is to some extent confirmed if one takes it that the signatures on the present work and the man's portrait in Boston are from the same hand (see Introduction, Chapter III, p. 56).

One must question whether the present format is the original one, a question that also has its importance in relation to the fact (unusual for both Rembrandt and his school) of the detail in the shiny sleeve being taken right up to the edge of the oval picture area. One sees something of the kind in the 1634 *Portrait of Philips Lucasz.* in London (no. A 115), where the now oval panel must originally have been rectangular and in that state showed certainly one and possibly two hands. The latter is the case with the 1635 *Portrait of Antonie Coopal* (no. C 108) attributable to a studio assistant, the dimensions of which (83.7 × 67 cm) practically match the hypothetical size of the *Philips Lucasz.* before it was reduced (*c.* 85 × 65 cm). Serious consideration has to be given to the possiblity of the panel of the present work, too, having been rectangular and of about this size; all one knows for sure is that it was described by Smith[4] in 1836 as an oval of about the presentday dimensions, and the transfer to canvas in 1929 will naturally have obliterated any trace of a reduction in size. If the painting can be correctly identified with a portrait that was sold in London in 1765 (see *8. Provenance*) it would then probably have been rectangular and have measured about 82.3 × 69.5 cm. Further evidence that it was originally larger can be deduced from Valentiner's[5] belief that this painting had a woman's portrait in Cleveland (no. C 105) as its pendant. A comparison of the two paintings from the viewpoint of manner of painting is not really conclusive, inter alia because of their poor condition. The woman's portrait however shows vestiges of a cuff and its panel has the same unusually wide oval shape as the present work, and shows clear later sawmarks, and this may show them to have originally formed a pair. It must be said that this conclusion invalidates the supposition mentioned above of the pedigree of no. C 104; the 1765 sale had no companion-piece for the man's portrait, and it can hardly be assumed that two pendants were reduced to the same unusually wide shape when in different hands.

The sitter's identity is unknown; the bandoleer worn over the right shoulder indicates a military function.

5. Documents and sources

None.

6. Graphic reproductions

None.

7. Copies

None.

8. Provenance

– Said to have been in the coll. Honoré III de Carignan, Prince de Monaco, Duc de Valentinois, sale London (Prestage) 26–28 February 1765 (Lugt 1428), first day no. 63: 'A Portrait of a Nobleman. Height 2 Feet 8 Inch by Width 2 Feet 3 Inch [=

82.3 × 69.6 cm]' (£13.2s.od)[6]. The identification of this painting with no. C 104 remains doubtful; the present work would not have had to have been sawn down in 1765, but the supposed companion-piece (no. C 105) which received same treatment was not in this sale. It is hard to believe that the two paintings were with different owners when they were cut down in the same way.
- Coll. Comte de Pourtalès, Paris[4]; not mentioned in his sale, London 19–20 May 1826.
- Dealer John Smith, London, by whom sold in 1825 for 200 guineas[4], probably to Lord Ashburton.
- Coll. Lord Ashburton, The Grange, Hampshire and Bath House, London. Sold en bloc with his collection in 1907[6].
- Dealer A. Sulley & Co., London 1908–1910.
- Dealer C. Sedelmeyer, Paris (*Catalogue of One Hundred Paintings* XI, 1911, no. 29).
- Coll. Carl von Hollitscher, Berlin (W. Bode and M.J. Friedländer, *Die Gemälde-Sammlung des Herrn C.v.Hollitscher*, Berlin 1912, no. 59).
- Coll. Camillo Castiglione, Vienna, sale Amsterdam 17–20 November 1925, no. 71 (214 000 guilders to Duveen).
- Coll. Lord Duveen of Millbank, London; Duveen Brothers, Inc., New York until 1959.

9. Summary

In this poorly preserved painting, which has been transferred from panel to canvas, various passages that can still be reasonably well assessed (mainly the lit parts of the head and the collar) point to its author being not Rembrandt himself but one of his workshop assistants. A number of features are so akin to those seen in the 1634 *Portrait of a man* in Boston (no. C 72) that this work can be attributed to the same hand. It thus belongs, together with the Boston man's portrait and, we assume, its companion-piece (no. C 73) and a related woman's portrait in Edinburgh (no. C 82), to the work of an unidentified assistant who worked in Rembrandt's studio in 1634/35.

The work may be assumed to have been originally rectangular and larger. The present format prompts the belief that the *Portrait of a woman* in Cleveland (no. C 105) formed a pair with it.

REFERENCES

1 Gerson 180; Br.-Gerson 201.
2 Schwartz 1984, fig. 164.
3 Tümpel 1986, cat. no. A 88.
4 J. Smith, *A catalogue raisonné of the works of the most eminent Dutch, Flemish and French painters . . .* VII, London 1836, no. 304.
5 W.R. Valentiner, *Rembrandt paintings in America*, New York 1931, under no. 56.
6 HdG 730.

C 105 **Portrait of a woman** (possibly companion-piece to no. C 104)

CLEVELAND, OHIO, THE CLEVELAND MUSEUM OF ART
THE ELISABETH SEVERANCE PRENTISS COLLECTION, NO. 44.90

HDG 846; BR. 350; BAUCH 485; GERSON 181

1. Summarized opinion

A poorly preserved work from Rembrandt's workshop, possibly a companion-piece to no. C 104 and conceivably from the same hand as that and other related paintings. Like no. C 104 it was probably originally rather larger and rectangular in shape.

2. Description of subject

Bust, with the body and head turned a little to the left and the gaze almost straight ahead. The sitter wears a diadem cap over hair that stands out to each side, a flat, double-layered lace collar and black clothing. She has a four-row pearl choker round her neck and jewels in her hair, on her ears and at the centre front of the collar.

3. Observations and technical information

Working conditions

Examined on 11 September 1972 (S.H.L., E.v.d.W.) in daylight and artificial light during restoration, with the aid of a microscope and three X-ray films covering the head plus the top edge, and the bottom left and bottom right quadrants; over-contrasty, reduced-size negatives of these were received later. Examined again in October 1977 (B.H.), March 1983 (E.v.d.W.) and February 1988 (E.v.d.W.).

Support

DESCRIPTION: Oak panel, grain vertical, oval 78.8 × 65.3 cm. Maximum thickness *c.* 1.25 cm. Single plank. To judge from the grain, which shows a figured vertical band in the centre with a regular vertical pattern to either side, this is a radial board sawn almost through the centre of the treetrunk. The back has straight-edged bevelling, with a width of 2.8 cm at the top, 1 cm at the bottom and 4 cm at the left and right. This gives the impression (which will be confirmed by the description of the paint layer) of the panel having originally been rectangular, and of more having been lost in the heightwise direction than widthwise when it was sawn, and more at the bottom than at the top.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: According to a conservation report by Richard Buck, Intermuseum Laboratory, Oberlin (22 June 1972) 'a single member of a ring porous hardwood, probably a white oak type. The cut passes close to the diameter of the log'.

Ground

DESCRIPTION: A light yellow-brown is exposed on the right in the neck along the collar, and shows through in thin parts of the head and background.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: In the report by Richard Buck mentioned under *Support,* SCIENTIFIC DATA, the ground is described as a white 'filling the pores in the wood surface and leaving a very thin, continuous coating probably less than 0.2 mm thick. The white material was analyzed and recognized as chalk (calcium carbonate) and the medium is estimated to be animal glue'. No mention is made of the usual yellowish '*primuersel*' that one might expect with this painting, given the fact that the ground appears yellowish in thin places.

Paint layer

CONDITION: Large parts of the face and hair, and of the background as well, have suffered severely from overcleaning. There is wear even in the thickest parts — in the forehead the crests of the paint relief have been levelled. The result, especially in the eye and shadow parts of the head, is a lack of pictorial cohesion. It is hard to tell how far old inpaintings have produced the presentday appearance — recent retouches have turned disturbingly white. Craquelure: some vertical cracks run in a vertical band through the centre, and are connected with the structure of the panel. Otherwise there is practically no craquelure to be seen.

DESCRIPTION: On the left the background is done with a lively brushstroke in a slightly translucent dark brown that along the contour of the sleeve and part of the collar thickens into a very dark, almost opaque grey brown; the latter covers over part of the collar that, according to the X-rays, was laid-in wider. Above and to the right of the head grey is used with broad strokes, terminating level with the neck and merging into a thinner brown-grey with much of the ground showing through. The paintstrokes are interrupted abruptly by the present border of the panel; at the upper right the crumbly edge of the paint adds to the impression that the panel was sawn after it had been painted.

The lit parts of the head show mostly distinct (though badly worn) brushstrokes, most with a modelling function. The same is true of the area of reflected light along the jawline on the right, done opaquely in cool tints. In the eyebrows, the thin areas round the eyes and the shadowed cheek the paint is badly worn, sometimes so much that the wood of the panel is exposed. This greatly impairs the pictorial cohesion. In the eyes the ground can be seen in the iris and above the pupil; the more thickly painted parts of the eyelids and eye-sockets are bordered vaguely by shapeless, translucent areas of shadow. Both inner corners of the eyes have a light pink catchlight. By the more thickly painted ridge of the nose, on which there is a long highlight and a round white one above the tip, the shadow is in a translucent brown among which a worn dark brown almost merging with the brown shadow cast by the nose indicates the nostril. The mouth is painted with loosely applied strokes of pink, with the vaguely-bordered mouth-line lying partly over this in strokes of brown and black. The hair-line has animated brushstrokes in a flesh colour, and the hair is painted in translucent browns (now badly worn) with a few opaque strokes on the left.

The relatively well preserved collar is set down with broad strokes of white running in various directions; along the righthand contour in particular this very freely applied white lies partly over the background. At various points one can see the relief of the coarse brushwork of an underpainting that is also visible in the X-ray, here and there continuing beneath the black of the clothing. Long wide strokes in the wet paint mark the right-angled edges of an underlying collar. The shadow cast by the chin is partly in brown (to some extent on top of the white) and partly in bold light-grey brushstrokes above which, along the edge, the ground lies exposed. The effect of two superimposed layers of collar is suggested by a difference in the thickness of the white paint, the indication of the pattern of the lower lobes of laces is given in black and that of the upper layer in (somewhat worn) light brown, and the indication of the cast shadows of the upper layer on the lower is in a warm light brown. The rendering of the pattern itself is rather chaotic, and only vaguely resembles a recognizable lace structure.

The costume is executed with a very lively brushstroke in black, with strokes of grey and a very light grey giving the internal detail and sheens of light. A number of shapes are seen in relief among the black: in the centre of the dress there is a complex form that can be read, in the X-ray as well, as a bow, and at the lower right towards the edge there is the lace edge of a cuff in thick grey, with flicks of black to indicate the interstices.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

X-Rays

The sometimes (especially at the upper right) crumbly edge of the ground that is apparant in the hollows of the grain confirms the impression of the panel having been sawn down, certainly after having been grounded and probably after it was painted.

The opaque grey in the background above and to the right of

Fig. 1. Panel 78.8 × 65.3 cm



Fig. 2. X-Ray



the head shows up clearly in a pattern of broad brushstrokes placed partly along the contour. Along the sleeve on the left, too, the background is seen as quite light brushstrokes.

The collar, which has no reserve for the brooch, is seen to be underpainted with broad and sometimes coarse brushstrokes in a paint containing white lead; the radiographic image of this is largely invisible due to the image of the far more thickly applied white used to complete the collar. It is still seen in the cast shadow under the chin (which for the most part is in a reserve left in the upper layer of white and seems to overlap this only at the edges), and in a number of excursions along the bottom where the black of the clothing has plainly been placed over the underpainting of the collar. The autograph retouches already apparent at the paint surface that incorporated a strip of the collar into the background on the left are confirmed by the course of the radioabsorbent underpainting, which here extends higher than does the presentday collar. On the right too the contour of the collar against the background is determined partly by this underpainting, corrected here and there by the paint of the background.

The lefthand contour of the face seems to have followed a more marked line at the level of the eye-socket, such that the position of the eye must have been more in keeping with the plastic structure of the head. At this point some of the flesh colour must be covered over by the darker paint of the hair on the left.

In the costume there are various brushstrokes showing up lightish, partly connected with the grey of the internal detail that is today visible at the surface including the curling edge of a lace cuff, partly (in the righthand half) taking a rather chaotic course, but partly also related to forms now visible only in relief — a bow at the front of the dress (of the kind that in women's portraits from the 1630s is repeated found attached to a high-set belt) and, to the right of centre.

Signature

In the right background above the shoulder, in dark brown *<Rembrandt. f. / 1635>*. All the letters and figures have been gone over to a varying degree, and the authenticity of the inscription can no longer be judged.

Varnish

No special remarks.

4. Comments

The painting's poor state of preservation, in the head especially, makes assessment difficult. Rembrandt's authorship has been generally accepted in the literature, including by Gerson[1], Schwartz[2] and Tümpel[3]. Nonetheless, attribution does present quite a problem.

The lace collar, one of the best preserved passages, differs in two respects — the underpainting and the final result — from all we know of this item in Rembrandt. In his autograph works we have indeed sometimes (though by no means always) found a light underpainting beneath pleated collars, either of the flat type (as in no. A 56, for example) or the wheel-ruff type (see, for instance, nos. A 82, A 99, A 103 and A 104); but never under lace collars. The crude manner in which it is here set beneath a lace collar reminds one most of a similar underpainting in the Leningrad *Portrait of a young man* of 1634 (no. C 78), which can be seen as a workshop piece. The way the collar has been worked up also makes one think of studio production. The way the effect of a double-layered collar is given using varying colouring for the interstices does follow the principle found in Rembrandt's own work; but measured against the extent to which Rembrandt succeeds, in a painterly way, in creating the suggestion of an orderly pattern of lace on a sinuous and changing surface (see Vol. II, pp. 63ff), the rendering of the pattern here is confused and lacking in a convincing spatial perspective to match the lie of the lace on the shoulders. The rather flat effect of the lobes outlined with black and the undisciplined strokes representing the interstices are, for instance, reminiscent of (though without being identical with) the way lace collars are done in the woman's portraits — attributable to one and the same hand — in Boston (no. C 73) and Edinburgh (no. C 82), though in those one does not see the strong light underpainting nor the sometimes rather crude brushwork used to set the collar in no. C 105 against the background.

Strictly speaking the fact that the collar may be ascribed to someone in the studio does not rule out Rembrandt himself having been responsible for the head; we believe we have once met a situation of this kind, in the London *Portrait of Philips Lucasz.* (no. A 115). The Cleveland painting does not however give any reason to suppose this to be the case here. Though the execution of the head is hard to judge because of its badly worn state, the distortion produced by the unhappy shaping (too large) and placing (too far to the left) of the lefthand eye — made no better by a correction to the contour of the eye-socket — cannot be placed at Rembrandt's door. (With him, there is rather a tendency to set the further eye in a half of the face that is too wide.)

Unfortunately little remains to be said about the manner of painting. One knows that when the painting was still in the Städelsches Kunstinstitut in Frankfurt-am-Main 'it had been damaged and restored before 1877; in that year Angilbert Goebel (1821–1882) in Frankfurt removed the overpaint and reported he found no original pigment underneath the previously restored eyes along with other paint losses in the face', as Wolfgang Stechow wrote[4] on the basis of the files of the Städelsches Kunstinstitut. After the 1877 cleaning the painting was not exhibited again in Frankfurt because of its unsatisfactory condition[5], and in 1882 it was sold. Stechow continued, 'In 1973 the painting was cleaned and examined at the Intermuseum Laboratory at Oberlin College under the direction of Richard Buck. Most of the overpaint was removed (it was found that the distinction between the original pigment and later additions was quite clear in many areas). The losses in the eyes were definitely overstated by Goebel although damage was fairly extensive. Scattered areas of abrasion in the face, hair and

Fig. 3. Detail (1 : 1)

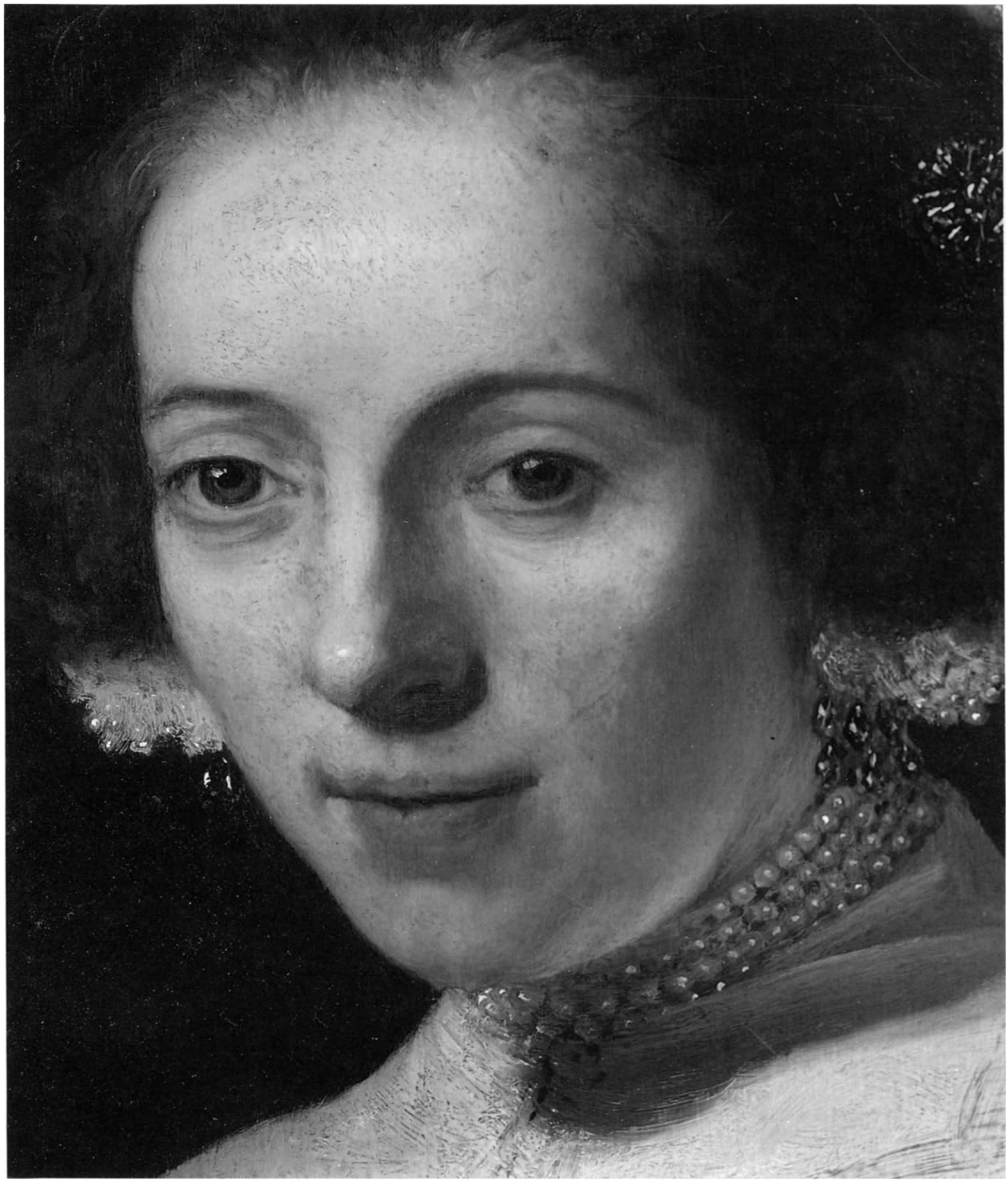


Fig. 4. Detail (1 : 1)



background were restored as coherently as possible; some earlier repaint in the lace, dress and rosette was left intact.'[4]

The descriptions of the panel and paint layer, and the radiographs, show that the painting presents the physical marks of sawing and traces that point to a larger composition. One may assume the panel to have originally been rectangular, and that the composition contained one hand — where one now sees only a part of the cuff — and perhaps even two. Given the more or less even overall thickness of the panel one can take it that the bevelling had about

the same width on all four sides, i.e. at least as wide as the 4 cm remaining on the left and right; the original rectangle would have measured at least *c.* 83 × 65.3 cm. One finds similar circumstances with the 1635 *Portrait of Philips Lucasz.* in London (no. A 115); there too the edges show signs of having been sawn off, and part of a hand and a cuff have been painted out. In the present work the reduction resulted in an oval of unusually broad proportions (1.2:1 against the usual 1.35:1 or, occasionally, 1.25:1).

The painting shares these uncommon proportions with a man's portrait in private ownership, which has been transferred to canvas and is virtually the same size (no. C 104). Valentiner's[6] suggestion that the two paintings might be companion-pieces is consequently very appealing. Since the man's portrait — the state of which likewise leaves much to be desired — can be attributed to the same hand as the female portraits in Boston and Edinburgh, together with the associated man's portrait in Boston (no. C 72), one must not rule out the possibility that the present work too is by the same artist. It has to be noted that the panel is a single plank — a radial board — while the man's portrait was probably, on the evidence of traces in the paint surface of a vertical join (that could however also be interpreted as a crack), on a two-piece panel.

5. Documents and sources

The back of the panel carries three wax seals: one has armorial bearings, probably those of the Capodilista family; parted per pale with on the left (heraldic dexter) two bendlets in filet, on the right (heraldic sinister) a hart rampant; the second has the letters I.D.P. in gothic capitals; the third carries the text [Ac]cademia delle [B]elle [Ar]ti.

6. Graphic reproductions

None.

7. Copies

None.

8. Provenance

According to Hofstede de Groot[7] identical with an oval woman's portrait in the coll. Frédéric Kalkbrenner, sale Paris 14 January 1850, no. 22. Stechow[4] noted that this sale was held in Orléans and that the painting described there cannot be identical with no. C 105 which from 1847 to 1882 was in Frankfurt.
*- Possibly coll. Capodilista, as Stechow[4] presumably deduced from the family arms on one of the wax seals described above (see *5. Documents and sources*). These do not however match those of the Capodilista family of Padua (as he says), but of a family of the same name in Venice (which are or, with a hart rampant).
*- Coll. Barbini-Breganze, Venice (cat. 1847, no. 204)[4].
- Städelsches Kunstinstitut, Frankfurt-am-Main, inv. no. 927; sale Paris 5 May 1882, no. 30 (8100 francs to Sedelmeyer).
- Dealer C. Sedelmeyer (*Catalogue of 300 paintings...*, Paris 1898, no. 125.
- Coll. Karl von der Heydt, Berlin (from before 1898 until after 1908).
- Dealer M. Knoedler & Co., New York.
- Mrs Elisabeth Severance Prentiss, Cleveland, 1919; bequest to the museum, 1944.

9. Summary

In this poorly preserved painting a few still reasonably assessable passages — mainly the lace collar — point to the authorship not of Rembrandt himself but rather to that of a workshop assistant. Conceivably the same artist produced the pair of portraits in Boston (nos. C 72 and C 73), a woman's portrait in Edinburgh (no. C 82) and a man's portrait in private ownership (no. C 104). It shares with the lastnamed the unusually broad shape of an oval panel, and the two works are possibly companion-pieces. To judge from traces of sawing, this work was once larger and rectangular; during the reduction in size the composition lost a hand, and today only part of a cuff is visible.

REFERENCES

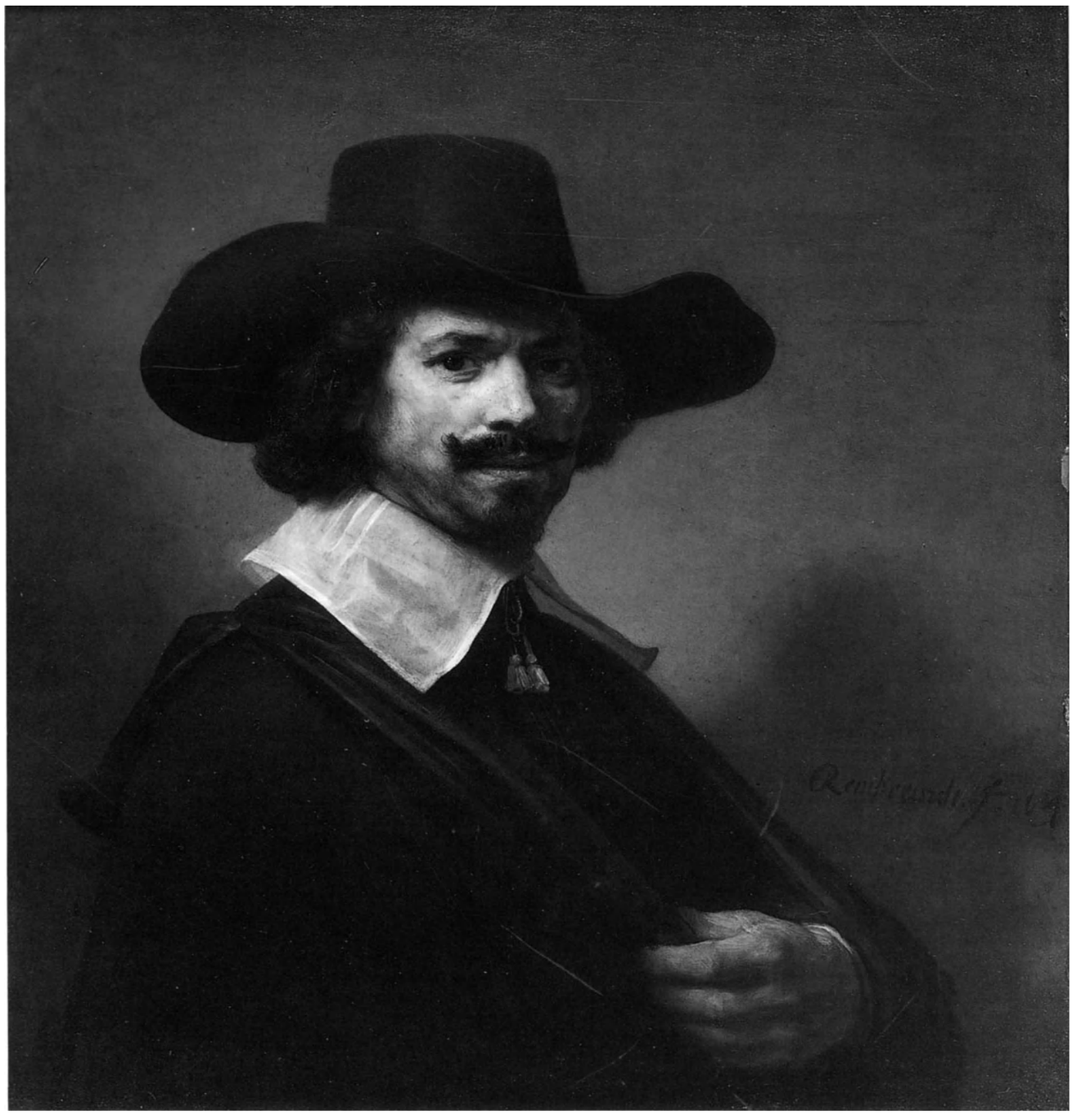
1 Gerson 181; Br.-Gerson 350.
2 Schwartz 1984, fig. 165.
3 Tümpel 1986, cat. no. 238.
4 Unpublished catalogue entry by W. Stechow, kindly put at our disposal by the Cleveland Museum.
5 W. Bode, *Studien zur Geschichte der holländischen Malerei*, Braunschweig 1883, p. 405.
6 W.R. Valentiner, *Rembrandt paintings in America*, New York 1931, no. 56.
7 HdG 846.

C 106 **Portrait of a man** (companion-piece to no. C 107)

ENGLAND, COLL. DUKE OF WESTMINSTER

HDG 749; BR. 251; BAUCH 394; GERSON 251

Fig. 1. Panel 74 × 66.5 cm



1. Summarized opinion

A generally well preserved painting that, like its companion-piece no. C 107, and together with nos. C 97 and C 114 belongs to a group of works attributable to Carel Fabritius. It was produced in the early 1640s — probably 1642 — and in Rembrandt's workshop.

2. Description of subject

The sitter is seen to just above the waist, the body three-quarters right and the head rather more towards the viewer, on whom the gaze is fixed. He has dark half-length hair and a moustache and beard. His black hat has a broad, rakishly sweeping brim, and a simple flat collar is fastened at the front with tasselled bandstrings. Beneath this can be seen a small part of a dark

Fig. 2. X-Ray



brown doublet fastened with a row of buttons. A brownish grey cloak is worn over the shoulders, with revers of black shiny stuff at the front and hanging down the back. The man's left arm is bent across the chest, and the hand projecting from under one side of the cloak loosely holds the edge of the other side. The light, falling from the left, throws a cast shadow onto the rear wall on the right; the left background is also in shadow.

3. Observations and technical information

Working conditions

Examined in June 1971 (B.H., P.v.Th.) in reasonably good daylight and with the aid of UV light, off the wall and in its frame. Examined again in November 1988 (B.H., E.v.d.W.) in excellent light and with the aid of a microscope, I.R. reflectography, infrared photograph and X-ray films.

Support

DESCRIPTION: Panel, according to information received by P.G. Konody in 1929[1] Honduras mahogany, grain horizontal, 74 × 66.5 cm. Thickness 1.6 cm. To the left, above the hat, the level of the surface is stepped along a diagonal line. Back bevelled on all four sides.
SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

Ground

DESCRIPTION: Not seen with any certainty. A light brown shows through at the top edge and elsewhere.
SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

Paint layer

CONDITION: Generally good. Under UV light it can be seen that there have been local retouches. Craquelure: seen only in the lit upper part of the hand, which is done with several strokes of a thicker paint.
DESCRIPTION: The paint covers fully virtually everywhere, with some relief in the most pronounced lit passages. The grain of the panel cannot be seen at the surface, though the change in thickness already described is apparent.

The face is painted in the lit areas with broad, fluent strokes of flesh colour, ochre colour and reddish tints, which together with a quite marked difference in tonal values give a suggestion of plasticity. In the entire eye area on the left the paint is applied noticeably more thinly, so that the hollow of the eye-socket is accentuated. Between the flowing brushstrokes used to render, very convincingly, the eye and its immediate surroundings one senses a thin underlying layer that in most places gives the impression of being an underpainting rather than the ground. The lower edge of the upper eyelid is at the left done heavily in brown, but on the right consists solely of an exposed underpainting. The eyelid itself is heightened with a hazy stroke in a greyish flesh tint; the deep shadow in the eye-socket above it is shown in dark and lighter brown, lying somewhat over the blackish paint of the eyebrow. The white of the eye consists of greyish paint; the iris is painted thinly, with an oval shape, and the black pupil has two irregularly formed catchlights. Some white against the lower eyelid gives a vague hint of moisture. On the right two strokes of brown separated by a stroke of ochrish flesh colour indicate the eye-pouch; on the left this is rendered with small strokes of flesh tint and grey. The eye on the right is drawn with strokes of a very dark grey to black paint, supplemented with strokes of brown and grey.

The nose, in reddish flesh colours, is worked up along the ridge with fine lines of red and a long highlight in a whitish paint, and above the lefthand wing with fine touches of an ochrish flesh tint. In the shadowed underside of the tip of the nose the paint — a brownish grey — is much thinner, and the lefthand nostril, in a very dark grey, is also painted thinly. The adjacent underedge of the wing of the nose is shown with reddish paint. The upper lip in dark red, and the lower lip heightened with a reddish grey, are separated by a thickly-painted mouth-line in a darker reddish grey. The moustache consists mostly of bold strokes of black with some fine strokes of grey at the upper left; the beard is handled in similar fashion with strokes of grey at the upper left on the chin. Along the jaw variously placed, small strokes of grey with a dark grey lower down depict the heavy growth of stubble. The hair is painted entirely opaquely in brown, with a hint of a sheen of light on the curls done in a thicker, lighter brown with fine brushstrokes. The cast shadow of the edge of the hat on the forehead is in an opaque and quite thickly applied brown-grey.

The hat itself is in black with a slight amount of shading created by using a dark grey on the curve of the crown, a somewhat lighter grey on the lit upper edge of a thin cord running round the crown and at the front of the brim, and finally a dark brown-grey on the underside of the brim. Dark paint that shows through the paint of the background to either side of the hat-brim indicates that at these points the outline of the hat was originally somewhat different. The collar is painted fluently and boldly, on the left partly over a dark underlying layer; the brightest and thickest white is used in the sewn pleats at the upper left of the collar and in the hem of the lit part — the collar in shadow on the right is done in a dirty brown-grey, with some black on the hem. On the left, in relief in the dark paint of the clothing, one can see the shape given to the collar at an earlier stage — projecting less far towards the left, but otherwise rather broader downwards and, in the case of the lowest part of the righthand edge, to the right. The bandstrings and tassels, the latter in grey and white, are indicated cursorily. The cloak is executed on the lit shoulder in a brownish grey, and the revers and collar in grey-black in which very long brushstrokes in a lighter grey provide a skilful rendering of the sheen on the material. Initially the contour of the cloak at the lower left was further to the left. Above the hand, a lighter brown is used for the foreshortened and weakly-lit sleeve of the doublet than for the part seen against the chest. The structure of the hand is succinctly rendered with vigorous brushstrokes that in the fingers run with their length while at the knuckles they are placed crosswise. Flesh tints are used in the lit part of the hand, heightened with ochre colour on the index finger, and greyish browns in the part in shadow.

The lit part of the background is a yellowish brown-grey, applied flatly and opaquely with scarcely discernible brushwork. To the right of the man's chin and cheek this colour tends towards a warm grey. The shadows on the wall are done with a dark grey, while at the bottom righthand edge one finds a reddish grey. Beneath the background seen today at the paint surface there are brushstrokes plainly visible in relief. This, and the fact that a signature in the upper righthand corner is covered over with the grey-brown paint of the present background that extends across the whole lit part of the latter, makes one suspect that the present background was executed only after the completion of an earlier one. The corrections to either side of the hat-brim are made with the paint of the second background; these changes in the hat present such a level of plastic quality that one can certainly think of them as autograph, and the same is true for the alteration in the collar.
SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

X-Rays

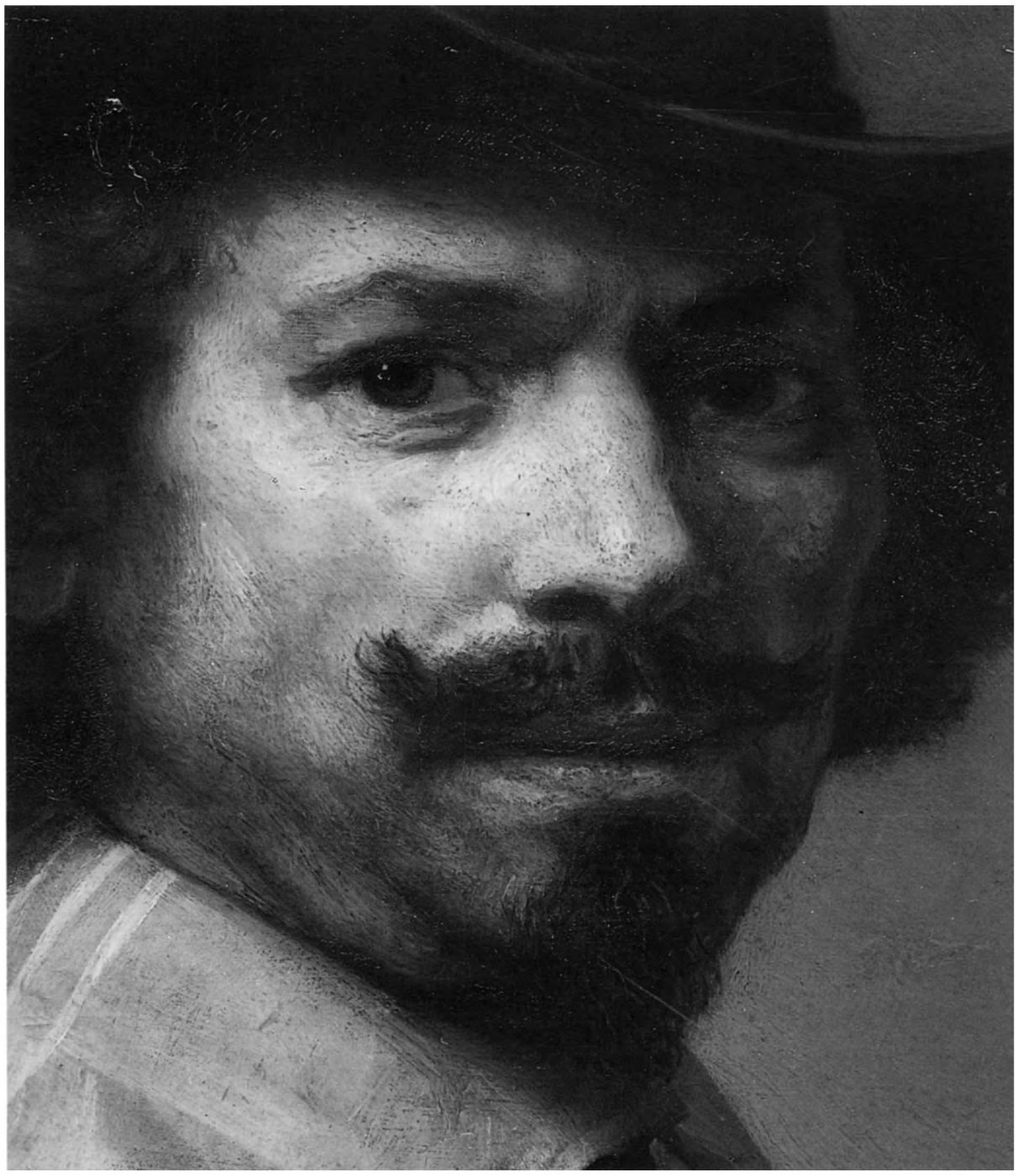
The radiographic image is determined to a substantial extent by differences of density in the wood, or the priming applied to it, as a result of knots or the associated curving grain-pattern. Independent of this there are several lines that give a light image — one of them cutting through the hat and face — and are made up from small patches showing up as light. One can find nothing on the back of the panel that might explain these lines, from which one can assume there must be radioabsorbent material beneath the paint on the front.

The X-ray image of the head otherwise matches what one expects from the visible paint surface. The earlier shape of the hat-brim already seen with the naked eye shows up distinctly in the X-ray. Originally, the border ran a little further to the left, and the underedge was considerably further up. The more strictly oval shape that was initially kept to is bordered at the top, left and bottom by clearly visible strokes of radioabsorbent paint that must belong to the first background. The shape of the collar, too, was appreciably changed during the painting process. The first version, as described in the paint layer, and the presentday version were painted with very bold and almost random strokes. The hand appears rather cursory in the X-ray, and only the highest lights are recognizable as fairly sketchy strokes of paint containing lead white.

Signature

At the top right, through a layer of brown-grey placed over it, one can read in black <*Rembrandt* / *f* 1642> (fig. 4). It is

Fig. 3. Detail (1 : 1)



impossible to assess the authenticity of this overpainted inscription, but as we shall discuss below the date of 1642 is well in line with the connexion that will be described with other works attributable to the same hand (see *4. Comments*).

On the right, in the cast shadow on the rear wall, there is in dark brown the remarkably large inscription that is always described in the literature, <*Rembrandt. f. 164(.)*>. The date has been read variously by different authors — as 1644 by, for instance, Waagen[2], and as 1647 by Vosmaer[3] among others. Gerson[4] made no final judgment. At the position of the last digit, normally hidden by the frame, there is a restored damage that now makes it impossible to discern a figure. The *4* seems to have been done in a different paint, and far too large. Vestiges of another number can be seen beneath it, possibly readable as a *5*. The not very cohesive inscription, downward-sloping to the right, is because of its insensitive style of writing unconvincing.

Fig. 4. Detail with signature at top right (infrared photograph)



It may be assumed that with the first signature overpainted, the second was placed in the shadow area. The signatures were examined using infrared reflectography, but this method provided no fresh insights.

Varnish

No special remarks.

4. Comments

In respect of attribution, dating and identity of the sitter, the man's portrait and its companion-piece in the same collection offer a problem in the Rembrandt literature. Finding an answer to this may in part have been made difficult by the originals not being readily accessible. The Rembrandt attribution, with which the paintings were first recognizably described early in the 19th century, has been scarcely doubted into recent times, even after P.G. Konody at the time of the exhibition of *Dutch art* at the Royal Academy in London in 1929 offered the opinion 'that Rembrandt's hand had no part in their painting, however good they may be in themselves'[1]; the woman's portrait he ascribed, for reasons that are not all that convincing, to Gerbrand van den Eeckhout. Konody's publication prompted Laurie to adapt his method of comparative analysis of Rembrandt's brushwork to these paintings, and he concluded that they were authentic[5]. Bredius[6], Bauch[7], Gerson[4] — who thought the woman's portrait 'considerably inferior to' the man's — and Schwartz[8] all supported the Rembrandt attribution. Only Tümpel[9] ascribed the works — rightly in our opinion — to Rembrandt's workshop. Depending on what people thought they found on the painting, the date is given variously as 1644 or 1647, an uncertainty that in itself perhaps points up the unclear position the paintings would (if they were to be seen as Rembrandts) occupy among the artist's oeuvre.

It is indeed obvious that both these portraits cannot be linked directly with Rembrandt's — hardly numerous — autograph portraits from the 1640s. They remind one most, from the viewpoint of composition, of the portraits of Herman Doomer and his wife from 1640 (nos. A 140 and A 141), though they are not really like these in the approach to form and space. Compared with the subtle atmospheric feeling that Rembrandt's free yet refined handling of paint and colour creates in those works, the present two portraits display a different and sometimes daring use of colour and a stronger stylizing of form using an idiosyncratic brushwork such as one does not find in Rembrandt. The fact that the rendering of form in the man's portrait is a rather sharper and more angular than in the woman's, where the emphasis is precisely on soft, curving shapes, even makes one wonder whether they are in fact both from the same hand — the more so as the tonal value of the background, and consequently also the function of the contours and their relationship to the internal detail, varies quite markedly in the two paintings. On closer consideration there is however ample reason to recognize the same hand in both: around the eyes in particular both works show not only similar detail but also, and especially, a similar use of fairly self-contained colour that, applied more or less broadly, makes a quite free yet wholly effective contribution to the modelling. As to the differing tonal values in the backgrounds and the consequences of this, such variations between companion-pieces were not unusual in Rembrandt and his school (see Vol. II, p. 6), and the Doomer portraits just mentioned are examples of this. Taking all things together, the Westminster portraits seem to have a clear connexion with Rembrandt's portrait style, and yet at the same time give a glimpse of another and distinctive artist's personality.

As has already been commented in discussing the Pasadena *Bust of Rembrandt* (no. C 97), the treatment of the man's portrait offers so many parallels with the Pasadena painting on the one hand and with the Rotterdam *Bust of a young man (self-portrait?)* signed by Carel Fabritius (Sumowski *Gemälde* II, no. 603) on the other that attributing these works to a single hand is quite justifiable. The artistic temperament one knows from Fabritius's later works can also be detected in the woman's portrait, in particular in the quite strong colour accents such as the broad, thick strokes below and along the top of the more strongly-lit eye; these can be compared with similar and even more freely-placed accents in Fabritius's 1648 *Portrait of Abraham de Potter* in Amsterdam and the *Bust of a man wearing a helmet* (ascribed to him) in Groningen (Sumowski *Gemälde* II, nos. 602 and 604). Similar features are here combined with reminiscences of Rembrandt's portrait of Doomer's wife (no. A 141), especially in the way the hands are rendered. One finds a similar combination in the *Portrait of a woman* in Toronto (no. C 114) that can also be attributed to Fabritius. Independently of ourselves, Mr F.J. Duparc in Montreal has likewise attributed nos. C 106, C 107 and C 114. to Carel

Fabritius.

These two portraits thus appear to be typical examples of the youthful work of a highly gifted pupil, produced (so one may suppose) in Rembrandt's workshop. Mahogany panels were not uncommon there; J. Bauch and D. Eckstein (in: *Wood science and technology* 15, 1981, p. 255) list six instances of mahogany from Central America between 1634 and 1654. The composition, and to a certain extent the execution, of both paintings betray the direct influence of Rembrandt's Doomer portraits of 1640. Nos. C 106 and C 107 belong — together with the Toronto work just mentioned — to the same phase of Fabritius's development as the *Bust of Rembrandt* in Pasadena, datable *c.* 1641, and were probably painted soon after then. It is hard to explain why in the man's portrait (and in the woman's as well) the first background was completely overpainted; yet the year 1642 that the overpainted inscription shows would fit in very well with the situation of both paintings just described. There is no complete certainty as to when Fabritius worked in Rembrandt's workshop; on the documentary evidence, the period from September 1641 to April 1643 seems most likely, but it is not impossible that he was also among Rembrandt's workshop assistants before or after then.

The sitters were still without a name *c.* 1800, but soon afterwards they were taken by Smith[10] and others to be the Haarlem painter Nicolaes Berchem and his wife (see also *6. Graphic reproductions*). What gave rise to this hardly obvious identification is unclear; at all events it is quite unacceptable if only because of the age of the sitter (Berchem was born in 1620). The identification of the subjects now current, and endorsed by all recent authors, as the Rotterdam painter Hendrick Martensz. Sorgh and his wife comes from Schmidt-Degener[11], and is based on the likeness he saw with a set of portraits of a couple loaned to the Museum Boymans in Rotterdam in 1912, done by Sorgh and dated 1645, and looked on as portraying Sorgh and his wife. This likeness however has to do mostly with the dress of the sitters; in the heads it is so unspecific that it is impossible to draw any conclusions. For the time being, the subjects must unfortunately remain anonymous.

5. Documents and sources

None.

6. Graphic reproductions

An engraving by a certain Dupuis reported by Hofstede de Groot[12] is unknown to us. In all probability this mention was based on a confusion with N.A. Dupuis' engraving after Rembrandt's *Portrait of Herman Doomer* (see no. A 140, *6. Graphic reproductions*, 1).

1. Mezzotint by B. Richards (?–?) inscribed: *Printed for Jn° Spilsbury, Engraver & Map & Print Seller, in Russel Court, CoventGarden - Sep^r 5^th 1766. / Done from an Original Picture Painted by Rembrandt, by B. Richards* (Charrington 155). Reproduces the painting in reverse, framed slightly closer.
2. Engraving by Niccolò Schiavonetti (Barsano 1771–London 1813) inscribed: *Rembrandt pinxit. - N. Schiavonetti sculpsit. / Nicholas Berghem.* Reproduces the painting in the same direction as the original.
3. Lithograph by Johann Conrad Hamburger (Frankfurt/M. 1809–?) as the frontispiece ('Nicholas Berghem') for the fifth volume of Smith's *Catalogue raisonné* ...[10].

7. Copies

None.

8. Provenance

Together with the companion-piece (no. C 107):
– According to Buchanan[13] imported into England by Delahante after 1804: 'Portrait of a Man and Woman, Sold to Earl Grosvenor'. The Richards mezzotint of 1766 mentioned above suggests that the paintings were or had been in England before then.
– Coll. Lord Grosvenor, by descent to the Dukes of Westminster. J. Young, *A catalogue of the pictures at Grosvenor House*, London [1821], nos. 124 ('Nicholas Berghem') and 117.

9. Summary

Together with its companion-piece (no. C 107) this man's portrait has, through its execution, a place of its own among the rembrandtesque paintings from the 1640s. Although the two works differ somewhat in their stylizing of form and distribution of tonal values, they still show the same approach on essential points. This is typical of a group of works that can be linked with the later signed work of Carel Fabritius (cf. nos. C 97 and C 114). This pair of portraits was done in Rembrandt's workshop, probably by Fabritius, in 1642. The sitters — earlier taken to be the painter Nicolaes Berchem and his wife, and later seen as Hendrick Martensz. Sorgh and his wife — have for the time being to remain nameless.

REFERENCES

1 P.G. Konody, 'A Rembrandt problem', *Apollo* 9 (1929), pp. 207–209.
2 G.F. Waagen, *Treasures of art in Great Britain*, London 1854, V, p. 166.
3 C. Vosmaer, *Rembrandt. Sa vie et ses oeuvres*, The Hague 1877, pp. 277, 542–543.
4 Gerson 251, 252.
5 A.P. Laurie, *The brush-work of Rembrandt and his school*, Oxford-London 1932, p. 25.
6 Bredius 251, 370.
7 Bauch 394, 509.
8 Schwartz 1984, figs. 294, 295.
9 Tümpel 1986, cat. nos. A 92 and A 114.
10 J. Smith, *A catalogue raisonné of the work of the most eminent Dutch, Flemish and French painters* V, London 1834, frontispiece; VII, London 1836, nos. 282, 528.
11 F. Schmidt-Degener, 'Portretten door Rembrandt', *O.H.* 32 (1914), pp. 217–224, esp. 223–224.
12 HdG 749.
13 W. Buchanan, *Memoirs of painting*, London 1824, II, p. 192.

C 107 **Portrait of a woman** (companion-piece to no. C 106)

ENGLAND, COLL. DUKE OF WESTMINSTER

HDG 865; BR. 370; BAUCH 509; GERSON 252

Fig. 1. Panel 74.2 × 66.5 cm



1. Summarized opinion

A generally well preserved painting that, like its companion-piece no. C 106 and together with nos. C 97 and C 114, belongs to a group of works attributable to Carel Fabritius. It was produced in the early 1640s — probably 1642 — and in Rembrandt's workshop.

2. Description of subject

The sitter is seen to the waist, the body square-on with the head turned a little and the gaze still further towards the left. Her hands are held level at waist height, the right hand — which has a ring on the index finger — resting in the left. On her head she wears a white winged cap the crown of which is encircled by two shiny gold bands, and the upstanding edge of a shirt protrudes

Fig. 2. X-Ray



above a white ruff. The rest of her costume is black; the coat, of the 'vlieger' type, hangs open to either side of a buttoned bodice. Her sleeves have white cuffs at the wrist, trimmed with lace.

The light falls from the left, throwing cast shadows of the head on the collar and of the right hand on the left. The figure is placed against a neutral, dark background.

3. Observations and technical information

Working conditions

Examined in June 1971 (B.H., P.v.Th.) in reasonably good daylight and with the aid of UV light, off the wall and out of the frame. Examined again in November 1988 (B.H., E.v.d.W.) in excellent light and with the aid of a microscope, infrared photograph and X-ray films.

Fig. 3. Detail (1 : 1)



Fig. 4. Detail (1 : 1)



Support

DESCRIPTION: Panel, according to information received by P.G. Konody in 1929[1] Honduras mahogany, grain horizontal, 73.8 × 66.3 cm. Thickness 1.6 to (on the right) 1.9 cm. The panel has a number of cracks and knots in the centre that can also be seen at the front surface. Back bevelled irregularly along all four sides, narrowest on the right where the panel is thickest.
SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

Ground

DESCRIPTION: A light brown that shows through at the hairline may belong to the ground.
SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

Paint layer

CONDITION: Generally good. As has already been said, there are occasional cracks in the panel, especially by the shoulder on the left. In the cheek on the right there is a long repaired scratch, where stopping has been used. The shadow parts of the cap show some wearing; as may be seen under UV light, there are retouches here and there to the left in the background and in the ruff, and the dark shadows along the fingers have been strengthened. Craquelure: fine horizontal cracks can be seen in the lightest part of the forehead.
DESCRIPTION: The painting shows a continuous surface, with a moderate relief in the lightest passages; the grain of the panel is nowhere apparent.

In the face the accent is placed on the homogeneity of the self-contained and brightly lit form; the appearance of the shadow side is determined to such an extent by reflexions of light on the curves of chin and neck that the shadows are limited to accents at the side of the nose and, stronger, below it, and on the right on the temple and cheek. One is struck by the fact that this striving for a fixed geometry is coupled with great directness in the mostly broad brushwork that, especially in the areas round the eyes, beneath the nose and around the mouth results in a certain angularity. The colour-scheme too is emphatic — shades of ochre colour mixed with white, pink and bright greys are used in the lit areas, with dark brown, a madder-like red and dark greys in the shadows and a vivid red for the mouth.

In the forehead the flesh colour is applied thickly right up to the hairline. The tint ranges from almost white in the centre to ochrish and thence to greys at the edges. The eye areas are built up skilfully and, as already described, with broad brushstrokes over a preparatory painting in greys and browns that can occasionally still be glimpsed. The shadows in the eye-sockets consist of a warmly-tinted light grey merging at the temple on the right into a darker grey. On the eyelid on the left there is a wide stroke of pink that is carried through to the nose. Beneath it, to each side of and below the eye-pouch, there is an accent in whitish flesh colour applied with a broad, curved brushstroke with an angular upper border. The remarkably large pupils consist of a thin black and the irises of a dark grey over a brown that shows through, and the white of the eye is rather bluish in tint. Dots and spots of white against the lower eyelids suggest the rim of moisture, and in the eye on the right dabs of red are placed in each corner.

A long-drawn highlight is placed along the ridge of the nose in thick, whitish paint, with a crisp accent on the tip. The underside of the nose is heavily painted with broad strokes of dark paint that is partly overlapped by a stroke of warm brown below the tip of the nose and a curved stroke of grey that to the right forms the lower edge of the wing of the nose; adjoining this, the contour of the wing is outlined with a broad stroke of dark madder-like red. The nostril is formed by a touch of dark paint that is, again, embedded in the same red. In the mouth the bright red lips are separated by lines of blackish paint shot through with some red; the lower lip is heightened quite meticulously with dabs of reddish paint. A purplish grey is used for the shadow below this, and a thickly-applied pink for the highest light on the chin; between the two there are small touches of yellow. The reflexion of light from the collar onto the chin and neck is rendered with broadly-brushed, bright and opaque grey, and in the inner shadow on the cheek higher up some more madder-like red is used together with a dark grey. The hair, combed back, is painted with blackish paint over a brown that shows through.

In the cap the brushstroke at the top is mostly long in light yellow, running with the curve of the shape; short strokes of yellow are set crosswise on these. The parts that catch the light are painted with a whitish grey that tends slightly towards blue, placed over a preparatory stage in dark grey; thick dots of an ochre colour are used on the gold-coloured bands encircling the crown. The subtly shaded lighting of the wing to the right is suggested effectively, in varied tints of grey. The stiff neckband of the shirt on the right, lightened with reflexions of light from the ruff, is done in white and greyish paint, and at the centre is bordered at the top by a line of madder-like red in the shadow between the collar and the throat. The ruff is for the greater part painted broadly with thick, drawn-out strokes of white set along the radiating pleats. The edge has a complex of rounded and evenly-placed strokes of white to show the edges catching the light.

The dark costume is treated soberly in dark grey and given detail with long, supple strokes of black that effectively suggests the modelling. The hands are painted broadly with thick paint and clearly visible brushstrokes that both in the fingers — especially at the knuckles — and on the back of the hand are placed at right angles to its length. The ring, in ochre colour with a touch of yellow, is done broadly and skilfully; the edges of shadow at the cuffs are in strokes of brown placed over a white that shows through. The cuffs themselves are done with angular brushwork, the outer edges made up of casually-placed strokes.

The background, especially at the bottom, is very dark; to the left of the head a lighter, brownish grey is used. At various places in the background, especially on the right above the head and at shoulder height, can be seen brushstrokes that belong to an underlying layer; the latter is, as may be detected on the relief of these strokes where the thin dark paint of the top layer has been slightly worn, much lighter and may be described as a beige grey. By the righthand contour of the right arm there is a dark zone in the background that according to the X-rays comes about through an alteration to this contour. At the lower right this dark area now serves as a shadow. The place where the sleeve is inserted into the bodice shows in the bodice, on the right and left, a projection that (as the X-rays prove) was not planned in an earlier stage. The overpainting of the whole of the background may have to do with the change of contour and would then — as was probably the case with the companion-piece as well — have had to be done by the artist himself.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

X-Rays

The radiographic image is determined in part by differences in density in the wood, or the priming applied to it, as a result of knots and the associated curving grain-pattern. The white patches at the upper lip and mouth and running across the neck are connected with the stopping of irregularities in the back surface of the panel. In the left background there is clear evidence of paint-loss. The head, collar and hands match the paint surface, and it is in the background that one finds the clearest differences between the X-ray image and the present appearance of the painting. Along both shoulders, and above and diagonally to the left beside the head, there are 'radioabsorbent' brushstrokes that can also be seen in relief at the surface, and that to judge from patches of wear were done in a coarsely applied, light beige-grey paint. Evidently the wall behind the woman was once done partly in a light paint. The woman's body consequently then stood out more clearly against the background, while the present very strong contrast with the head, cap and collar was less marked.

The dark reserves for the contours along the lefthand side of the face and the collar can be seen as evidence that the head did not overlap the background, but that the now overpainted background was brought up to a face contour that already existed. A reserve was provided in the light background for the figure, extending considerably further upwards and to the right at the contour of the right shoulder and arm than these features do today. On both left and right the projecting part of the bodice by the sleeves does not seem to have been provided for in the initial lay-in.

Signature

At the lower left, in black <*Rembrandt.f / 1647*>. The writing is so awkward and differs so much from that of Rembrandt that it cannot be regarded as authentic.

Varnish

No special remarks.

4. Comments

See no. C 106.

6. Graphic reproductions

According to Hofstede de Groot[2], Niccolò Schiavonetti made an engraving of this painting as well (cf. no. C 106, *6. Graphic reproductions*, 2), but it has remained unknown to us.

7. Copies

None.

8. Provenance

See no. C 106.

9. Summary

See no. C 106.

REFERENCES

1 P.G. Konody, 'A Rembrandt problem', *Apollo* 9 (1929), pp. 207-209.
2 HdG 865.

C 108 Portrait of Antonie Coopal

BOSTON, MASS., MUSEUM OF FINE ARTS, ACC. NO. 130.1984, ON ANONYMOUS LOAN

HDG 634; BR. 203; BAUCH 377; GERSON 183

1. Summarized opinion

A well preserved painting that despite marked differences in quality and style from Rembrandt's work was probably done in his circle or even his workshop in 1635, and can be attributed to the same hand as painted no. C 112.

2. Description of subject

A young man with blond, curling hair and an elegant moustache and chin tuft is seen to the waist, with the body turned three-quarters right and the head turned towards the viewer. His right hand is held across the chest — perhaps to keep his cloak closed — and his gloved left hand clasps a glove in front of him. He wears a wide-brimmed black hat and a wide, flat lace collar over a black cloak. The light falls from the left, leaving the right arm (projecting towards the front) in half-shadow; the figure casts a shadow on the rear wall to the right.

3. Observations and technical information

Working conditions

Examined on 25 April 1969 (J.B., B.H.) in good daylight and out of the frame. Again on 30 October 1984 (S.H.L.) in good daylight and out of the frame. Five X-ray prints — four of individual films and one of the mosaic — were received later.

Support

DESCRIPTION: Mahogany (?) panel, grain vertical, 83.7 × 67 cm. Thickness *c.* 2.1 cm (left) to 1.8 cm (right). Single plank. Back bevelled down to a thickness of about 1.3 cm on all four sides, over a fairly uneven width varying from 7 cm (at top left and bottom right) to 2.5 cm (bottom left). Both the front and back exhibit a not entirely smooth surface showing some vertical bands (plane marks?).
SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

Ground

DESCRIPTION: A light brown shows through in large parts of the background and in shadow areas of the face and the man's left hand.
SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

Paint layer

CONDITION: Good. Craquelure: a very fine and somewhat wavy pattern is seen in the collar.
DESCRIPTION: The handling of paint is typified in general — leaving aside the thin parts of the background — by paint applied thickly with mostly straight brushstrokes that are invariably detectable.

The background is executed in the lighter areas with animated brushwork in a thick grey, which extends in vertical strokes to the top; the latter is done in a thinner and darker grey brushed over the ground, which shows through it, and the same grey is used for the cast shadow at the lower right.

The face is painted, in the lit half, in a light yellowish flesh colour impasto, with some pink on the cheek and quite broad strokes of a white-yellow along the nose and above and below the eye on the left. The eye itself is defined crisply in thick paint against the thinner and rather reddish brown shadow of the eye-socket. In the thick white of the eye, which is white on the left and yellowish on the right, the iris is partly translucent, with a touch of grey in the lightened part opposite the catchlight placed on the left above a black pupil. There are two flat, reddish colour accents on the eyepouch, and a white catchlight on the tip of the nose.

A grey-brown line provides the sharp boundary between the lit ridge of the nose and the brown-grey area of shadow which further to the right is painted in a somewhat translucent brown with some opaque flesh tint on the patch of light below the eye on the right. The latter is done in brown, grey-brown and greys, with a tiny grey catchlight in the iris and a small stroke of pink along the lower lid. In the shadow at the corner of the eye there are three touches of an opaque dark brown.

The shadow below the wing of the nose is indicated with a small stroke in a flat ruddy brown, the nostril with a virtually black touch and the wing with a light brown. In the light the moustache and beard show strokes of grey-brown, with dark brown in the shadow. A comparatively flat, faded red is used in the upper lip, and a rather lighter red with accents of pink for the lower; the thin mouth-line is done in black, as is the shadow below the chin.

In the hair the curls are rendered with thin strokes of thick brown-yellow paint placed over brown; above the eyebrow on the left there are two short scratchmarks going down to the ground. The hat is a fairly even black and dark grey, though the thick paint reveals traces of broad brushstrokes running in various directions. The collar is laid-in broadly in white and grey on top of which the lace pattern is drawn with rather chaotic strokes of black, grey and some thick white. On the left, below the hair, the cast shadow from a curl is shown in a murky greenish brown. The clothing, like the hat, is for the most part brushed in a quite thick black and dark grey; amidst this the hand in front of the chest is shown, with a cursorily indicated cuff, in a flat orange brown, and further down in somewhat greenish brown the gloved hand is rendered in a thick greenish grey with a little black.
SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

X-Rays

The radiographic image is disturbed somewhat by vertical bands in which (obviously because of the uneven surface of the panel) the ground tends to be concentrated. For the rest the image very largely matches what the paint surface leads one to expect. The execution seems very direct, and no changes in form of any import have been made. Only in the gloved hand does one find a rather chaotic form that does not go with the present appearance. Sometimes, as in the cuff and in parts of the collar, light areas can be interpreted as an underpainting. The uptilted hat-brim appears rather light, evidently due to the depth of the layer of dark grey paint used for it. Contour corrections are almost absent from this area as well. On the far left the outline of the cloak has been placed a little out over the grey background after this had already been painted.

Signature

On the right in the cast shadow on the wall, in thick dark brown paint <*Rembrandt. ft* (followed by three dots set out as a triangle) / *1635*>. The inscription lacks any homogeneity, and cannot be regarded as autograph.

Varnish

No special remarks.

4. Comments

The attribution of this work to Rembrandt was until recently generally accepted, inter alia by Gerson[1] and Schwartz[2], and rejected only by Tümpel[3] who reported that other experts in the United States, too, did not believe in its authenticity. This adverse opinion cannot be called surprising, given the great differences the painting offers from Rembrandt's portraits of the mid-1630s. Similarities with them are to be found mainly in rather superficial features of composition and lighting. This is true especially of

Fig. 1. Panel 83.7 × 67 cm



Fig. 2. X-Ray

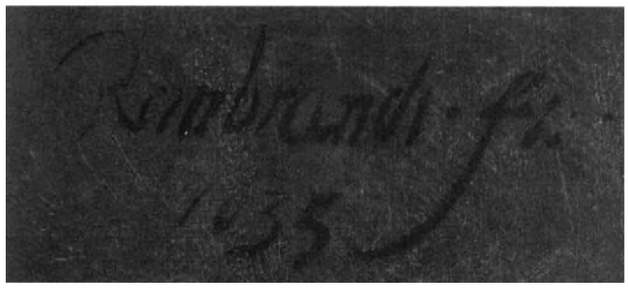


Fig. 3. Detail (1 : 1)



the treatment of light in the background and face, and to a lesser degree of the strange shadow that falls across the front part of the figure — a motif Rembrandt last used in 1632 (in the New York *Man in oriental dress*, no. A 48, and the San Francisco *Portrait of Joris de Caullery*, no. A 53). The motif of one hand held before the chest and the other lower down comes from knee-length portraits by Rembrandt and his studio (see nos. A 52 and C 68), but may have occurred in, precisely, 1635 in what could be termed a large bust portrait; the London *Portrait of Philips Lucasz.* (no. A 115) and the *Portrait of a man* in a private collection (no. C 104) may have been examples of this, before both were probably made into ovals. While these fairly elementary resemblances are sufficient to connect the present painting with

Fig. 4. Detail with signature (reduced)



Rembrandt's work, the handling of paint results in an appearance quite different from it. The generally thick application of paint and the strongly marked and mostly straight brushstrokes, where spiky indication of form and accents offer a strong contrast with the surroundings, have a quite different character and produce a different effect from the shorter and more flexible stroke that Rembrandt uses to suggest convexities. The effect in the background, too, is more contrasty than atmospheric, and despite the very rembrandtesque cast shadow there is little to help give a feeling of depth. Seemingly typical of the painter is a certain bravura in rendering some passages — such as the hat and curls — while elsewhere the suggestion remains far too superficial (in the lace collar, for example) or there is an unhappy use of colour (as in the shadow cast by the hair on the collar or the hand in shadow).

Despite all these differences one finds, when one compares the face with that in Rembrandt's 1635 *Portrait of Philip Lucasz.*, an amazing similarity in the lighting and, more generally, in the pattern created by the shapes of the face. Looked at one by one, the mouth and beard, the nostril and the eye-socket on the left exhibit a remarkable similarity of treatment; in the present work this lacks however the strong suggestion of three-dimensionality of the Rembrandt, where it is evidently brought about by the different nature of the paint surface. One does however have to assume that this painter was thoroughly familiar with the recipes for a rembrandtesque portrait of the mid-1630s.

The most acceptable explanation for these somewhat paradoxical qualities is to suppose that the present work was done by a Rembrandt workshop assistant whose hand reveals a singular coarseness. In many respects the painting bears the same relation to Rembrandt's prototype as does the New York *Portrait of a 70-year-old woman* (no. C 112), which likewise bears the date 1635. In that painting too the brushwork differs from Rembrandt's and serves a different function, the whole picture is lacking in atmospheric effect, and the background is similarly unsatisfactory as a suggestion of space surrounding the figure. Both paintings appear to be based on widely differing Rembrandt works from 1634/35 — no. C 108 on work like the *Portrait of Philips Lucasz*, and the New York woman's portrait on the London *Portrait of an 83-year-old woman* (no. A 104) — and to translate them with a rather more sober vision and coarser brushwork. There is even, if one makes allowance for the differences between an old and a young face, so much similarity between the two paintings in the function of contrasting accents (in the eye passages in particular) that one wonders whether the same assistant may have been responsible for both. At the least, they form parallel phenomena in the output from the Rembrandt school in the mid-1630s.

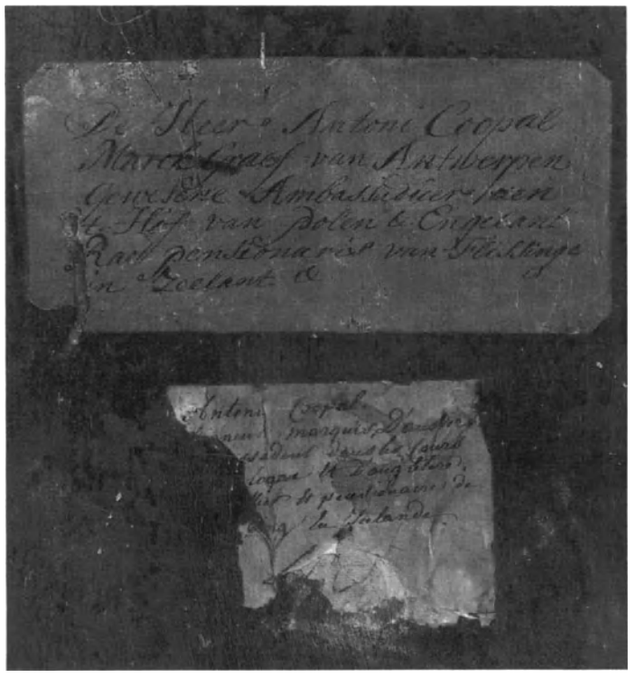
If we are to believe two apparently 18th-century labels stuck to the back of the panel (see *5. Documents and sources*, fig. 5) — and there is no reason to distrust them — the sitter is Antonie Coopal or Copal (on whom see v.B.F. in: *De Nederlandsche Leeuw* 4, 1884, pp. 29–30 and Mulder in: *Nieuw Nederlandsch Biografisch Woordenboek* VII, Leiden 1927, col. 321). He was born about 1606, the son of Cornelis Fransen Copal of The Hague who in 1603 became a burger of Flushing. In 1626 he was registered as 'Antonius Copallius Flissinganus 20, M[edicinae]' in the Album Studiosorum of Leiden university (where he may well have met his contemporary Rembrandt!). He was a Flushing councillor in 1633, and a magistrate in 1638, '39, '41, '42 and '49; from 1666 until his death in 1672 he was pensionary — something akin to municipal secretary — of that town. In the Rembrandt literature he is known as the brother of François Coopal, the husband of Saskia's elder sister Titia van Uylenburgh. It is also said of Antonie Coopal that he served as a secret agent for Frederik Hendrik, and in 1646 devised a plan for placing Antwerp in the Prince's hands. For this he stipulated payment of seven tons of gold (four for himself and three for his helpers) and the hereditary title of margrave for himself and his heirs; the operation did not come off, and Antwerp did not fall to Frederik Hendrik. The remarkable thing is that the label gives him a list of grandiloquent titles including that of Margrave of Antwerp (a quality he never in fact possessed) and ambassador in Poland and England, of which nothing is known from any other source; these statements perhaps reflect an over-ambitious family tradition. A son of Antonie Coopal, also named Antonie, is known to have invoked his father's services to Frederik Hendrik when, in 1684, he was trying to obtain an office from Willem III.

5. Documents and sources

An apparently 18th-century label on the back (fig. 5) identifies the sitter as: 'De Heer Antoni Coopal / MarckGraaf van Antwerpen / Gewesene Ambassaduer aen / 't Hof van Polen & Engelant / Raett pensionaris van Flissinge / in Zeelant &'.

A smaller and incomplete label gives a French translation of the same text: '.. Antoni Coopal./ [...]neur marquis D'anvers /

Fig. 5. Labels on the back



[Amba]ssadeur dans les Cours / [de Po]logne et D'angletere,/ [consei]ller et pensionaire de / [Fles]sing En Zeelande.'

6. Graphic reproductions

None.

7. Copies

None.

8. Provenance

According to Hofstede de Groot[4] perhaps identical with a painting ('The Polish Ambassador'), panel(?) 33 × 30 inches [= 82.5 × 75 cm], arched top, sale coll. E.W. Lake, London (Christie's) 11–12 July 1845, no. 44 (and again 7–8 April 1848, no. 152). In view of the description, dimensions and shape this identification is certainly incorrect.
*– Probably coll. Choiseul-Praslin, sale Paris 18–25 February 1793 (Lugt 5005), no. 35: 'Rembrantz. Un Portrait d'homme vue presque à mi-corps, la tête tournée de trois quarts & portant des moustaches; il est coëffé de cheveux châtains & d'un grand chapeau rabattu; son habillement est un manteau noir sur lequel se détache un large collet de dentelle. Ce morceau porte un caractère de vérité si frappant, que l'illusion de la réalité s'opère en le regardant. On croiroit véritablement, tant les tons sont justes & harmonieux, considérer un être animé; le grand art seul de la couleur peut nous tromper à ce point, & nous devons avouer qu'à cet égard Rembrantz est parvenu à ne jamais craindre de rivaux. Haut. 30 p. Larg. 24 [= 81 × 64.8 cm]. B[ois].' (5201 francs to De Praslin).
– Dealer Thomas Lawrie & Co., London (1898).
– Coll. Baron Nathaniel von Rothschild, Vienna (d. 1905). Baron Alphonse von Rothschild (d. 1942).
– Dealer Frederick Mont, New York.

9. Summary

Although the design comes quite close to that of Rembrandt's portraits from the mid-1630s, the execution is not in keeping. It is marked by a predominantly thick handling of paint, a rather rigid brushwork and strongly-contrasting linear accents. One may assume that the painting was indeed done in Rembrandt's circle, and perhaps even in his workshop. A woman's portrait that is related to Rembrandt's prototype in a similar way (no. C 112) can be attributed to the same hand.

REFERENCES

1 Gerson 183; Br.-Gerson 203.
2 Schwartz 1984, fig. 130.
3 Tümpel 1986, cat. no. A89.
4 HdG 634.

C 109 Portrait of an old man in a tabbard

MERTOUN, BERWICKSHIRE, THE DUKE OF SUTHERLAND

HDG 744; BR. 214; BAUCH 381; GERSON 187

Fig. 1. Canvas 134.5 × 104.2 cm



1. Summarized opinion

A reasonably well preserved painting, superficially resembling the work of Rembrandt and his school from the late 1630s but probably produced outside his immediate circle, and later.

2. Description of subject

The subject, seen to below the knees and facing three-quarters left, sits in a folding chair, looking straight ahead. His left arm lies on the armrest, with the hand hanging loose; his right hand grasps the end of the other armrest. He wears a grey tabbard, trimmed over the shoulders and down the front with a broad band of fur that bends in a large fold over the knees, and with a narrow edge-band of fur on sleeves that button together halfway down the forearms. The dark sleeves of a doublet are seen below these, and have narrow folded-over cuffs. He has a grey moustache extending into long sideburns, and a wide grey beard below which one sees the crossed-over ends of a folded white scarf. His grey hair is drawn to the side, beneath a black skullcap. A table on the left is covered with a grey cloth, and the light falls from the left.

3. Observations and technical information

Working conditions

Examined on 7 June 1971 (B.H., P.v.Th.) in moderate daylight and in the frame.

Support

DESCRIPTION: Canvas, lined, 134.5 × 104.2 cm including a strip 2–3 cm wide added later to the righthand side; otherwise a single piece.
SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

Ground

DESCRIPTION: A yellow-brown is exposed at places in the fold of fur over the man's knees, and in scratchmarks in his hair, the edges of the beard and the fur trim on the left; it also shows through in thin areas, especially in the fur.
SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

Paint layer

CONDITION: Somewhat flattened, though generally good apart from local overpaintings and repairs. The latter are found at various points in the background (to the upper left and right of and above the head, near the top edge, to the right below the signature and along the added strip on the right) and also in various dark passages in the clothing (including along the inner contour of the black sleeve on the left, along the lefthand contour of the fur trim on that side, and in the shadow part of the knob of the chairback on the right). Craquelure: an unpronounced irregular pattern in the light areas and here and there in the browns and greys.
DESCRIPTION: The background is executed in a fairly dark brown with occasionally visible brushwork; along the figure a slightly more opaque paint tending more to grey has been used, lightest on the right along the chair (close to the paint on the added strip). The tablecloth on the left is indicated in an almost flat bluish grey, vaguely bordered at the top. The chair is painted in a brown that tends towards violet, with strong but unsuggestive catchlights in yellowish white and blue-grey, and on the end of the righthand armrest, in grey (later refreshed with black), an awkward indication of rosette-shaped ornamentation.

The light parts of the man's head are predominantly in a reddish flesh colour, with a more yellow tint in the highest lights. The brushstroke is scarcely discernible in the thick yellowish white of the highest light in the centre of the forehead, where there are also strokes of a pinkish tint. Towards the right the brownish and greyish paint of the shadow appears rather patchily beneath the flesh colour. The contour of the forehead and cheek on the left is uncertainly drawn; a great deal of relatively thin red is used in the cheeks, as well as on the tip of the nose which has a pink-white highlight. A long highlight runs down the ridge of the nose. The cast shadow below the nose is black, and the shadow along it set down in dark pink overlaid with a greenish-grey glaze. The eyebrows show the same greenish grey, with yellowish-white strokes placed on top of this to show the hairs.

Both eyes are defined rather diagrammatically with small pinkish and greyish lines, with a hint of eyelashes at the extreme left. Along the bottom of the white of the eye (a murky grey on the left, and slightly more yellow on the right) there is a long thin catchlight to represent a reflexion of light in the moisture. The irises are painted in a grey with unsharp edges, with a catchlight placed at the lefthand rim of the black pupils (the righthand one of which is larger and set higher than the other). Strokes of a reddish paint are used to model the eye-pouches.

The hair on the right is set down in a dark grey paint on top of which there are strokes of a light grey, and in which there are quite long scratchmarks; the ear is shown by a patch of thin brownish paint. The hair above the forehead is rendered with thin, streaky strokes of black over the flesh colour; below this are small strokes of a brownish paint, presumably meant to represent cast shadow from the hair. The moustache and beard are done with yellowish-brown and greyish paint, the beard on the left with a bluish grey, with coarse scratchmarks at the edges. A little pink shows the lower lip and chin.

The scarf is painted with brushwork that is hard to follow and provides little suggestion of the stuff. The lit part of the fur revers, where the light ground shows through, is executed in broad and fine strokes in a dark brown and yellow-brown together with a little red and grey. In the shadow parts on the left less colour is used, the brushstroke is longer and there are numerous scratchmarks. In the area of the fold over the knees, where patches of ground are exposed, long strokes suggest the hairs in yellowish and, occasionally, greenish paint. The grey of the tabbard is painted thinly with longish strokes in the lighter passages; no clear suggestion of plastic structure results, especially not on the right below the dangling hand where a patch of light is suggested with a thickly-brushed brownish grey. On the left by the knee greenish-grey strokes set over a translucent brown offer a clumsy indication of folds. On the black sleeve on the right this is essayed using oblique strokes of grey, and on the lefthand sleeve with strokes in a herringbone pattern.

The dangling hand on the right, whose limp contour shows arbitrary convexities, has numerous haphazard strokes of yellowish white, pink and red on the back; the shadows between the fingers are done in a ruddy brown with a few strokes of red, and those along the underside in brown-red with a trace of muddy grey. The hand on the left is painted in similar colours, though with a broader brushstroke; the highest light is formed by a stroke of light paint at the root of the thumb. The cuffs are shown rather indistinctly with strokes of white along the hand — on the left in grey with whitish cross-strokes, and on the right in yellowish grey.
SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

X-Rays

None.

Signature

At the top right in dark brown paint <*Rembrandt f 1637.*> (the year placed a little lower than the letters preceding it). The inscription is unconvincing, through the over-meticulous form and the varying size of the letters.

Varnish

No special remarks.

Fig. 2. Detail (1 : 1)

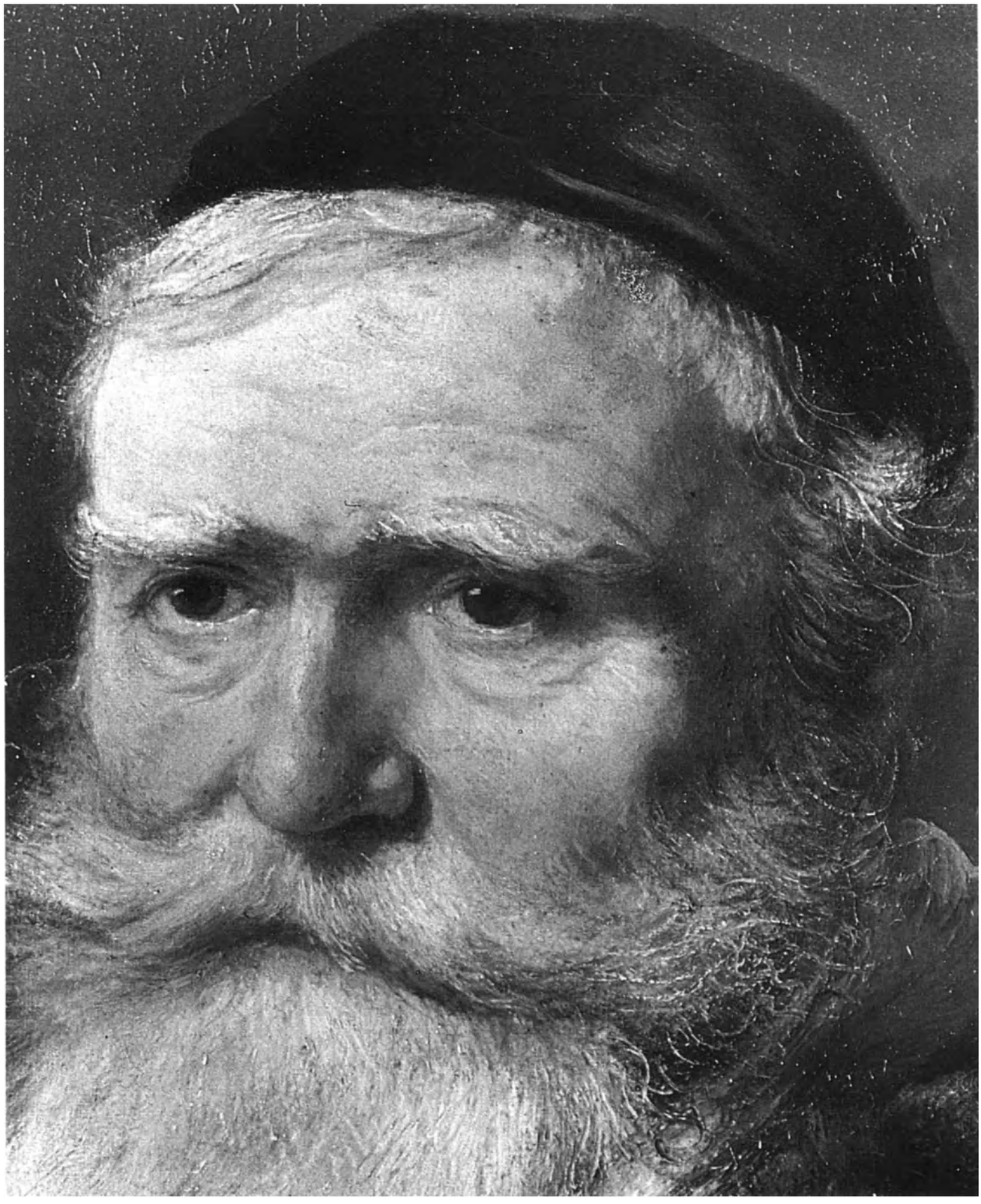


Fig. 3. Detail (1 : 1)



4. Comments

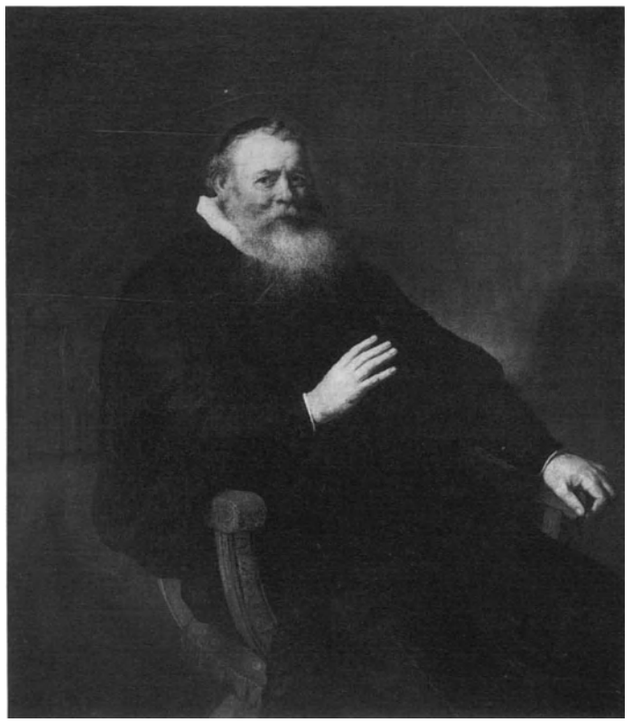
Until Gerson[1] first cast doubt on the attribution the place of this painting in the Rembrandt oeuvre rested to a large extent on a certain resemblance in motif to the Antwerp *Portrait of Eleazar* (or more likely *Henricus*) *Swalmius* (fig. 5; Br. 213). The two works are indeed alike in subject and composition (in reverse), but this does not extend to the manner of painting, and since moreover the Antwerp painting has ceased to be attributed to Rembrandt but rather to his circle — Gerson opts for Flinck (Br.-Gerson 213) — it can provide no reason for ascribing the present work to him either. Tümpel[2] saw it as being from Rembrandt's circle.

When looked at more closely, the painting indeed cannot lay claim to being rembrandtesque in the real sense of the word; this applies to both the composition and the manner of painting. The structure of the figure is remarkably clumsy, and it is

Fig. 4. Detail with signature (reduced)



Fig. 5. Circle of Rembrandt, *Portrait of Eleazar (or more likely Henricus) Swalmius*, 1637, canvas 135.7 × 111.4 cm. Antwerp, Koninklijk Museum voor Schone Kunsten



given almost more-than-human bulk by the enormous tabbard. The run of the shoulder-line and left arm gives an unnatural impression, making it look as if the elbow is being tilted up in a forced pose. The anatomy of the area round the knees is quite unclear. The almost symmetrical placing of the hands creates a certain rigidity, heightened further by the man's straight-ahead gaze. A comparison with the Boston *Portrait of Johannes Elison* of 1634 (no. A 98) demonstrates how much more satisfactorily Rembrandt coped with these basic shapes, the natural-looking balance with which he places the figure in its surroundings, how he gives the hands a matter-of-fact yet significant pose, and how he achieves a certain dynamic by turning the head slightly against the body. It is already strange that the sitter in no. C 109 should be facing to the left; this is most unusual for a man's portrait, and because the light is, as is normal, coming from the left the minimal shadowing results in a loss of three-dimensional differentiation coupled with a lack of plasticity. The painter, failing to achieve natural liveliness in either the pose or the sitter's gaze, seems to have tried to make up for this by having the white scarf draped loosely round the neck and by the irregular line taken by the edges of the fur trim standing out against the dark clothing.

Further comparison with the *Portrait of Johannes Elison* and other Rembrandt portraits from the 1630s makes it obvious that while the handling of paint and use of colour may show some knowledge of Rembrandt's portraits, the pictorial purpose of these was not properly grasped. The spatial clarity and individual characteristic that Rembrandt produces using discreet means has here been attempted with a far wider variety of mixed colours and greater emphasis on details and yet the result is sketchy and lacking in suggestive power. This goes for the indistinctly structured background, the chair with its exaggerated highlights and the plastically ineffective clothing, as well as for the flesh areas. In the head the use of red tints is overdone (as occurred to William Young Ottley as far back as 1818, see *8. Provenance*), and the excessive emphasis on components such as eye-pouches and eyebrows create an unatmospheric and thus un-Rembrandtlike effect, making the face look like a mask. The scratchmarks do little to help. In the hands the free brushwork seems to emulate that of Rembrandt, but because of the unconvincingly-placed strokes in various colours and the arbitrary curves in the contours they do not have the firmness of structure that Rembrandt achieves in his hands.

Comparing the present work with Rembrandt's portraits thus shows that its similarity to them can be termed no more than superficial. Even the *Portrait of Eleazar* (or *Henricus) Swalmius* in Antwerp, which we attribute to Rembrandt's studio, exhibits both in the pose and in the application of paint, use of colour and atmospheric effect an approach and execution far closer to Rembrandt's own work; this precludes the possibility of the two paintings being from the same hand.

It is certainly quite possible that the painter of no. C 109 took the Antwerp painting as his model. The fact that both paintings carry a signature and date of 1637 in the top righthand corner (both undoubtedly non-autograph) is suggestive in this respect, but as there is total lack of certainty as to the origin of these inscriptions one cannot draw any conclusions from them. One can however find other features in the present work that suggest a date later than 1637. These are the faulty understanding the artist seems to have had of Rembrandt's style and economic use of paint, including the use of scratchmarks made with the tail of the brush. The loosely hanging scarf would have been a most unusual article of clothing for the 1630s; one would expect it more in the latter half of the century, though it cannot be taken to provide an exact *terminus post quem*. The general

picture of the handling of paint and nature of the craquelure does at all events give the painting a 17th-century look, but because of the differences in manner of painting we have described the possibility of its having been done in Rembrandt's workshop must be discounted.

5. Documents and sources

None.

6. Graphic reproductions

1. Etching by Johannes Pieter de Frey (Amsterdam 1770–Paris 1834), inscribed: *Rembrandt pinx 1637 — J de Frey f aqua forte 1804*. Reproduces the painting in reverse.

7. Copies

1. Drawing, pencil with black chalk and coloured wash, oval with height (?) 20.2 cm, sale Amsterdam (Sotheby, Mak van Waay) 6 November 1978, no. 79, repr. p.113, as: Salomon de Bray. Shows the sitter in great detail down to the waist, and appears to be 18th-century.

8. Provenance

- Coll. Jan Gildemeester Jansz.; depicted in the painting dated 1794–95 of Adriaan de Lelie (1755–1820) that shows Gildemeester's gallery of paintings (Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum, inv. no. A 4100). Sale Amsterdam 11ff June 1800 (Lugt 6102), no. 182: 'Rembrand. hoog 52, breed 40 duim [= 133.8 × 102.9 cm]. Doek. Het pourtrait van een oud man. Hy is tot de kniën verbeeld, levensgroote, met gryzen baard, en een zwart kalotje op 't hoofd, zynde gekleed in een bonten rok, en zittende in een armstoel. Alles is krachtig en met de natuur overeenkomende wyze uitgevoerd' (Canvas. The portrait of an old man. He is shown to the knees, lifesize, with a grey beard and a black skullcap on his head, dressed in a fur gown and sitting in an armchair. All is executed vigorously and in a way matching nature) (1625 guilders to W. Reyers).
- Coll. Marquis of Stafford. W.Y. Ottley, *Engravings of the most noble The Marquis of Stafford's Collection of Pictures...* IV, London 1818, p. 99, no. 69 plate 37: '...the carnations of a more sanguineous hue than is common in the pictures of Rembrandt'.
- Coll. Lord Egerton.
- Coll. the Earl of Ellesmere, London, Bridgewater House (cat. 1892, no. 173).

9. Summary

The painting, which has superficially rembrandtesque features, is marked by a lack of natural animation, suggestion of depth and atmospheric effect. The enormous tabbard swamps and conceals the body, and the shapes do not really match an anatomical structure. The handling of paint and use of colour only partially contribute to a suggestion of plasticity. Attribution to Rembrandt must therefore be ruled out.

Quite possibly, in view of the (reversed) similarity in layout and the similar placing and form of the inscription, the author was familiar with the Antwerp *Portrait of Eleazar* (or *Henricus) Swalmius*, previously regarded as a Rembrandt, and took it as his prototype; the two paintings are however definitely not from the same hand. No. C 109 must have been produced in the 17th century, though probably after and perhaps even well after 1637.

REFERENCES

1 Br.-Gerson 214.
2 Tümpel 1986, A 90.

C 110 Portrait of a man standing in a doorway

PRIVATE COLLECTION

HDG 747; BR. 222; BAUCH 390; GERSON 246

1. Summarized opinion

A well preserved work that was painted, probably in 1641, in Rembrandt's workshop by an otherwise unknown hand.

2. Description of subject

The man is seen to the hips with one hand held in front of his chest, the body three-quarters to the right and his head turned towards the viewer. He wears a broad-brimmed hat and is dressed in a black doublet decorated with silver-grey stitching, and a pleated collar and cuff both with lace edges. A cloak lined with black velvet hangs over his left shoulder. The light falls from the left, and he stands in front of a rather vaguely defined arched stone doorway into which one is looking obliquely from the left.

3. Observations and technical information

Working conditions

Examined on 20 May 1968 (J.B., B.H., E.v.d.W.) in reasonably good light and in the frame. Again on 2 October 1972 (J.B., S.H.L.) in good artificial light and with the aid of three X-ray films; and again on 26 February 1983 (J.B., E.v.d.W.) in good daylight and artificial light and out of the frame, with the help of a full set of eight X-ray films. Prints of the latter, and of three autoradiographs, were received later.

Support

DESCRIPTION: Poplar-wood panel (according to information kindly supplied by Mr Marco Grassi), grain vertical, 104.5 × 78.5 cm. Thickness *c.* 2.5–2 cm (at the left and right of centre respectively); the surface is slightly wavy and has a number of knots. Back painted with a dark substance, accumulations of which in hollows in the grain, the knots and elsewhere show up light in the X-rays. Bevelled on all four sides, to a thickness of 0.95–0.75 cm on the right and left but only 0.75–0.65 cm at the top and bottom. As the mitre-ridge in the corners does not run exactly into the corner of the angle, and the signature and date by the righthand edge are no longer complete, one may assume that narrow strips have been sawn off along the left- and righthand sides.
SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

Ground

DESCRIPTION: A light yellow brown is partly exposed on the extreme left of the hair, and shows through in the shadow side of the face.
SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

Paint layer

CONDITION: Generally good. Thinly painted passages, such as the shadow side of the face, may perhaps have lost somewhat in cohesion due to wearing. In some areas, mostly where the artist himself has made corrections, there are predominantly horizontal fissures — in the edge of the hat at the lower right, in parts of the upper half of the background and in the initially lower hanging part of the sleeve, where the paint has formed islets. Craquelure: a fine, regular and mostly horizontal pattern is seen in the collar, face and hair.
DESCRIPTION: The paint surface is in general continuous and, in the light flesh areas, offers a certain degree of impasto as it also does in shaping dark, linear elements of the costume. The hair shows a freer handling of paint, with the ground contributing to the appearance. The background is for the most part opaque and flat.

In the lit half of the face the flesh colour, which here and there tends to a pink, is applied thickly with partly diagonal and fairly wide brushstrokes, sometimes overlapped wet-in-wet, that terminate abruptly above the moustache and help define its shape. A flat pink is used on the cheek by the wing of the nose. Along the ridge of the nose there is a long, pinkish stroke, and solid white catchlights halfway along it and at the tip. Along the jaw the flesh colour, applied fairly dry with some grey, exposes a darker layer — probably belonging to the underpainting — alongside which the neck is painted flatly, again in a broadly-brushed flesh colour. A flat brown with some pink shows the cast shadow of the earlobe. In the more thinly painted shadow side of the face the shadow along the nose is marked by a translucent brownish paint and the adjoining half-shadow by a warm flesh colour and fairly opaque grey, beside which a thick and opaque warm brown (that shows up lightish in the X-rays) is used along the somewhat indeterminate contour.

In the eye on the left one finds an almost draughtsmanlike treatment that is plastically not entirely effective. The fold of the upper lid, the corner of the eye and the lower eyelid are done in tints of red and pink, and the underedge of the upper eyelid with a brown line (with some black by the iris). A reddish impression is heightened by an orange-brown colour having been placed over the greyish-white paint of the white of the eye. The iris is built up very carefully from strokes in a variety of colours — greenish grey, orangey brown and brown with a large, flat white catchlight. The same colours recur in the iris of the other eye, but are there more merged with one another. The latter eye is otherwise defined by lines drawn in brown with some pink on the eyelid and a large red corner to the eye. The eyebrows are shown cursorily in grey, lighter on the left and darker on the right.

The shadow below the wing of the nose is formed by a flat reddish brown in which a fine stroke of carmine red gives the nostril. The moustache is done with thickish strokes of a yellowish brown, partly wet-in-wet with the flesh colour and the upper lip. The mouth is relatively colourful, with mostly horizontal strokes of bright pink, red and orange-red in the upper lip and reds and one or two vertical strokes of carmine red in the lower. The lip beard and hair are painted partly wet-in-wet with the flesh colour in browns, some yellow-brown and — in the case of the hair — some grey, all with casual strokes that leave some of the ground exposed.

The collar is defined meticulously in greys and white, and the same may be said for the painstakingly-done internal detail of the doublet in shades of greys and blacks. The cloak is executed in fairly flat tints of dark grey and black, with precisely drawn highlights and rather more blurred sheens of light to show the velvet lining. Further down the definition of form falls off. The hand, too, is done fairly summarily, in the shadow with a warm flesh colour and thin grey.

The background has a progression of shades of dark grey, darkest in the lefthand jamb and front of the doorway, rather less dark in the underside of the arch where wide dark lines represent the joins between the stones, and lighter in the view through on the left and right of the figure.

Even to the naked eye there are hints, in relief or in a light colour, of corrections and pentimenti that can be identified in detail by means of the X-rays and autoradiographs; they have to do mostly with the shape of the hat and collar, and with the presence of a dangling hand on the right. Remarkable (and unusual to say the least) are a number of long and roughly parallel scratched-in lines, which appear to describe the shape of an elbow in front of the body and now hidden under the cloak.
SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

X-Rays

Some unexpected features of the radiographic image are due to the material painted over the back of the panel. Much of what appears light must be ascribed (as well as to the grounding material on the front) to the accumulations of this material in the hollows of knots (e.g. at the top right), vertical grain, or other

Fig. 1. Panel 104.5 × 78.5 cm (reproduced after W. Bode and C. Hofstede de Groot, *Rembrandt* IV, Paris 1900)



hollows such as damages (e.g. at the top in the crown of the hat).

Nevertheless it is possible from a number of radiographic contrasts to draw conclusions as to reserves and contours. It is obvious, for instance, that the contour of the cloak on the right occupied a wider space than it does today, and that there was a hand with a sleeve-cuff; the wide shape of this hand, which has disappeared, suggests that it perhaps held something (a glove, or a letter?), or else was painted in two versions. One can also assume that the background to the right of this painted-out arm was relatively light. Level with the bottom tip of the present cuff where the brushstrokes of the background run horizontal, this area, which shows up light, is bordered by a darker area; this gives the impression of there having been a table at this point.

Various corrections have been made to the limits of the hat-brim, on the left and right. On the left the reserve provided for it seems to have been long and narrow; the crescent-shaped end of this was filled in with an autograph retouch that has ended up rather dark (it is dark both in the X-ray and at the surface), and to give the brim the appearance of being turned further up it was extended upwards over the background and the crown. On the right the brim must have initially turned up more, and one sees the light trace of a correction that still does not wholly match the brim that today projects fairly flat towards the right.

The left part of the collar appears, compared to an earlier lay-in, to have been extended somewhat upwards and towards the left.

In the face one notices that even in the eye on the right the white of the eye provides a distinct image, as does much less clearly the shadow tint — resembling a reflexion of light — along the contour of the cheek on the right.

Neutron activation radiographs

Autoradiograph 6 shows the radiation from mainly manganese as a constituent of umber. The versions of the hat-brim already observed in the X-rays and at the surface can be seen; on the right the present version appears to have been produced by an extensive overpainting of the earlier version and part of the background. One gets the impression that the cloak, gathered up in folds by the man's right hand was prepared in this form more distinctly than it appears today. The lines we have described as scratched-in, which seem to show an elbow rather lower down than the present one, are clearly visible. There was apparently a good deal of hesitation about the contour on the right, and there are no unequivocal traces of the second hand. Horizontal accents above the table already suspected from the X-rays give the impression of there having been a book lying on it. Only a few features of the background architecture are seen to some extent.

Autoradiograph 10 shows the radiation from mainly phosphorus as a constituent of bone black, as used in the underpainting, working up the costume, and elsewhere. The fold furthest to the left in the now deep black velvet lining of the cloak was, it seems, originally not planned. Of the architecture in the background one sees only a few mainly linear features on the left and right.

Signature

At the bottom right in black, incomplete through being cut off *<Remb(r) / f.164(1)>*. The *r* and *1* shown in parentheses are only partially present, and the reading of these is thus to some extent conjectural. The script is very uncertain, and does not make an impression of authenticity.

Varnish

No special remarks.

4. Comments

This man's portrait has been almost generally accepted as autograph Rembrandt, right up to the most recent literature. Only Tümpel[1] — who stated wrongly that Gerson had rejected the attribution — referred to Rembrandt's 'circle', using the argument that it was a 'hardly painterly work'. This does, indeed, sum up the principal objection to Rembrandt's being its author, because despite a number of similarities with his style and manner of working the painting is typified by an overall appearance that lacks atmosphere, together with an emphasis on linear elements that cannot be reconciled with his work from around 1640. This is very much the case with the head; though this is not painted smoothly, an almost uniform intensity of lighting in the lit part of the face yields little effect of plasticity. It is also true of the costume, including the collar which is very competently and painstakingly worked up but has the accent strongly on the description of form while giving little suggestion of bulk — this in very sharp contrast with Rembrandt's *Portrait of Herman Doomer* of 1640 in New York (no. A 140) in which the same motifs can be found. The red and pink that frequently occur in the face play a major role in the colour-scheme, to an extent unusual with Rembrandt. In the background there is a strange ambiguity in the depiction of the doorway — on the left the jamb appears, as if a component in an illusionistic framing were intended, to coincide with the edge of the picture plane, but then the perspective applied to the obliquely placed archway implies a rather strong recession in depth. Taken as a whole, the background does little to help suggest the space surrounding the figure, and it is unclear how the figure and the architecture relate to each other.

In spite of these shortcomings, which would be unthinkable with Rembrandt himself, there is so much similarity with his portrait production in the 1630s and early '40s that we may assume the painting to have been done in his studio. Besides the use of poplar-wood, which was not uncommon in Rembrandt's workshop production around 1640 (see Table of Reference Material), these similarities involve both the manner of painting and the composition. In the head especially the influence of Rembrandt's prototype is, for all the discrepancies we have just mentioned, unmistakeable — not only in the free brushwork of the hair, but in the firmly painted lit flesh areas as well. The summary but well-defined hand and cuff are, both as a motif and in execution, directly reminiscent of similar hands in Rembrandt's work — in the *Portrait of a man holding a hat* datable around 1639 (no. A 130) and even in the much earlier *Portrait of Marten Looten* dated 1632 in Los Angeles (no. A 52). The resemblances in the structure and silhouette of the figure must have been

considerable, particularly when in the case of the present work the hat still had a more turned-up brim, the figure extended further on the right, and when the sitter's other hand (perhaps holding a glove or letter) was visible below and to the right of the hand seen today.

Comparison with Rembrandt's portraits, including those from around 1640, makes clear however how much more of an atmospheric effect he was able to achieve by using gradations of light in the background and by how much more tension he knew to create in the contours of the figure.

The background has in fact undergone more alterations than the change to the figure's righthand contour alone called for; the X-rays and autoradiographs show that to the right of the figure the background was not only lighter than it is now but also had a table (with a book on it?), of the kind sometimes added to portraits from Rembrandt's workshop while work was in progress (see nos. A 79 and C 68). It is very questionable whether this motif was compatible with an archway such as we see today, so the latter was possibly introduced only when the table was removed and the background toned down. In its present form the door-jamb with capital on the left, seen as a repoussoir reminds one of the painted framing round Rembrandt's portraits of Nicolaes van Bambeeck and Agatha Bas of 1641 (nos. A 144 and A 145), though the adjacent perspective of the archway is more like what one sees in, for instance, the 1633 *Portrait of a man* in Kassel (no. A 81). This cannot be called a successful solution, either as a coherent rendering of space or in the somewhat primitive representation of the masonry.

For all that, there can be little doubt that no. C 110 belongs among the relatively numerous portraits that were painted in Rembrandt's workshop about 1640 by other hands (see Introduction Chapter II). Though the inscription is incomplete in its present state, and moreover cannot be described as reliable, the year — which in the literature is also interpreted as 1643 but can best be read as 1641 — is probably an accurate indication. One can find no work among the portraits known to have been done by workshop assistants during this period that seems likely to be from the same hand.

An obscure tradition[2] has it that the sitter is the Jewish doctor Ephraim Bueno (1599–1665), but there is no reliable evidence for this and Rembrandt's etched portrait of Bueno of 1647 (B. 278) shows a quite different-looking man.

5. Documents and sources

None.

6. Graphic reproductions

None.

7. Copies

None.

8. Provenance

- Coll. Jurriaans, sale Amsterdam 28 August 1817 (Lugt 9211), no. 49: 'Rembrand van Rhijn, hoog 41, breed 30 duimen [= 105.3 × 77.1 cm]. Paneel. Een deftig Man in zijden kleeding, hij heeft een mantel om, en kraag om den hals, en houdt zijne regterhand op zijne borst. Het doet door zijne meesterlijke en krachtige schildering eene zeer treffende en schoone werking' (....An elegant man dressed in silk, he wears a cloak and a collar round the neck, and holds his right hand before his chest. Through its masterly and powerful painting it makes a very striking and fine effect) (1995 guilders to De Vries, i.e. one of the auctioneers).
- Dealer Thomas Emmerson, London (according to Smith in 1836).
- Coll. Alfred Morrison, London.
- Coll. Hugh Morrison, Fonthill House, Tisbury, Wilts.
- Coll. John Granville Morrison, later Lord Margadale; sale London (Christie's) 25 June 1971, lot 13 (bought in).
- Coll. Thyssen-Bornemisza, Lugano.
- Sale New York (Sotheby's) 14 January 1988, no. 116.

9. Summary

Although the handling of paint and composition show a great many points of similarity with Rembrandt's portraits, the linear character of the execution and the use of colour argue against an attribution to him. The background — created stage-by-stage through quite radical corrections and pentimenti — betrays a dependence on Rembrandt's *Portrait of Nicolaes Bambeeck* dated 1641 in Brussels (no. A 144), but fails to achieve a convincing effect of depth. The portrait must have been painted in Rembrandt's studio, probably in 1641. One cannot, among the workshop pieces known today, point to any painting done by the same hand.

REFERENCES

1 Tümpel 1986, cat. no. A 91.
2 Cat. *An exhibition of paintings by Rembrandt*, Edinburgh 1950, no. 17.

C 111 **Portrait of Petronella Buys** (companion-piece of no. A 115)

FORMERLY NEW YORK, COLL. MR ANDRÉ MEYER

HDG 661; BR. 349; BAUCH 486; GERSON 179

1. Summarized opinion

A well preserved painting dated 1635 that can be attributed to a workshop assistant who was also responsible for the costume in the companion-piece, the London *Portrait of Philips Lucasz.* (no. A 115), and probably for a *Portrait of a young woman* dated 1633 (no. C 81).

2. Description of subject

The sitter is seen to the waist against a background of a curtain hanging in folds; she is turned three-quarters left, and does not look towards the viewer. She wears a very wide wheel ruff with lace edging over a lace bib (on which there is a brooch) lying over a black garment. Around her throat there is a double row of pearls, and the lace diadem-cap worn over back-combed hair seems also to be decorated with pearls; there is a jewel in her hair. The light falls from the left.

3. Observations and technical information

Working conditions

Examined in October 1971 (B.H., E.v.d.W.) under moderate lighting, in the frame and on the wall.

Support

DESCRIPTION: Panel, probably oak, grain vertical, oval 79 × 58.5 cm. Single plank. Back not examined; we do not therefore know whether this is a radial board similar to and of the same thickness as the panel of the companion-piece, nor could we study the inscription discussed below under *4. Comments.*

SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

Ground

DESCRIPTION: A brownish tint, apparently belonging to the underpainting, shows through in thin places in the hair and background.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

Paint layer

CONDITION: Good, so far as could be judged in the circumstances. Craquelure: fairly long, vertical cracks in the thicker flesh areas, and quite small shrinkage cracks in the collar.

DESCRIPTION: The curtain is painted in a purplish grey, and in thin areas the brushwork allows the ground to show through. The sheens of light on the folds are shown with not very suggestive strokes of thicker paint, mostly more or less vertical but horizontal to the left above the head.

The face is done mostly smoothly and opaquely, in both the lit and shadow parts. The relief of brushstrokes can be made out on the forehead and nose. The flesh colour in the light is pale yellowish, while shadow areas are partly brownish or (by the nose) a reddish brown, and partly a cool grey; the reflexions of light in this are done in a light grey along the jawbone and yellowish on the cheekbone, and are not satisfactorily integrated. In the area round the neck and jawline the modelling is done rather clumsily with lines of ruddy tint.

The shaping of the eyes is meticulous but with little sensitivity; the lids are drawn with hard lines of reddish and brown paint. The eyebrow on the left is painted in a cool grey that to the left merges into short strokes of brown, while that on the right is marked more distinctly in a cool grey that to the left merges into the ruddy brown of the shadow alongside the nose.

The hair is for the most part painted thinly in browns, with above the forehead an indication of small locks of hair that are partly covered by the flesh colour of the forehead. The paint of the hair alongside the lace cap is very thickly applied; the cap is painted with curling white strokes, with over these brown and dark grey to show the pattern of the lace and white highlights for the otherwise cursorily indicated pearls.

The pearls round the throat are done in grey with white dots, and are partly circumscribed by a solid black. The collar is rendered, over an underpainting done with diagonal brushstrokes that are visible in relief, as grey folds painted with straight lines and in one place (just right of centre) crosswise hatching in white. The very dark grey cast shadow has a flat effect, and shows a dingy grey transition to the white. The ends of the folds are done convincingly with rapid strokes in various tones of grey and one or two carelessly placed accents of white.

The black clothing, with strokes of a dull grey, gives no clear suggestion of form; the same is true of the brooch and chain — the latter done in a yellowish brown with long strokes of grey (for the shadows) and long rows of irregularly placed strokes and dots of light yellow.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

X-Rays

None.

Signature

On the left above the shoulder in black *<Rembrandt.f:/1635.>*. There is a diagonal line below the date; this feature also occurs in signatures from 1632 (no. A 61), 1633 (nos. A 78, A 82 and A 84) and 1634 (no. A 103). In the present case however the inscription, which rises steeply to the right and is placed hesitantly, does not make an authentic impression.

Varnish

No special remarks.

4. Comments

In 1913 Hofstede de Groot[1] drew attention to an apparently 17th-century inscription on the back of the panel of this painting; he reproduced this as a tracing (see no. A 115 fig. 5 and *5. Documents and sources)*. The inscription describes the portrait as that of Petronella Buys; he was able to identify her first husband as Philips Lucasz., and to find the latter in a man's portrait in the National Gallery, London (no. A 115) that like the present work bears the date 1635, has the same dimensions and also features a curtain as its background. Though we know nothing in detail of the physical make-up of the panel of no. C 111, and thus cannot tell whether like the man's portrait it was also originally rectangular, the combination finds some support in the fact that the panel is, as with the *Portrait of Philips Lucasz.*, a single plank. The remains of an inscription on the back of the man's portrait are unfortunately illegible, and it is even impossible to tell whether the lettering was of the same type as that on the woman's portrait. The idea that no. C 111 and the London man's portrait are companion-pieces can, all things considered, be regarded as plausible, and it has been generally accepted in the literature. One cannot say, however, that there is a strong similarity in manner of painting between the two paintings such as one would expect in companion-pieces. Perhaps because the woman's portrait has always been in private ownership (see *8. Provenance*) it has been seen by few scholars[2]; at all events, there has never been any surprise expressed

Fig. 1. Panel 79 × 58.5 cm (reproduced after W. Bode and C. Hofstede de Groot, *Rembrandt* II, Paris 1897)



in the literature at the stylistic discrepancy between the two paintings, nor any doubt as to the attribution of no. C 111.

Yet the difference in execution between the paintings must be termed considerable, most clearly so in the heads. That in the man's portrait has a strong suggestion of subtly differentiated convexities, achieved by an alternation of opaque and more translucent paint and the use of small brushstrokes with a somewhat rugged surface in the lit area in which linear elements are integrated into the three-dimensional effect. The execution of the woman's portrait differs from this in being remarkably smooth — almost enamel-like — and uniformly opaque in the lit and shadow parts. Though the light on the face and the reflexion of light from the wide wheel ruff must result in a certain amount of light falling on the shadow side of the face, this cannot account for the strange and unRembrandt-like treatment, especially when one sees how Rembrandt himself found, in 1634, a totally different and richly varied pictorial solution in similar situations (cf. nos. A 87 and A 103). The markedly linear and rather insensitive treatment of the eyes and the ruddy brown used here and in some shadow areas also contribute to the deviant appearance; the most jarring note in this respect is the reddish lines that are meant to give modelling in the throat and jaw area. Outside the face, too, the execution is often far from satisfactory. This applies to the curtain, where the light and dark accents produce no effect of plasticity, and to a high degree to the dark clothing where the contour gives a body shape that is hard to relate to the head and in which a few haphazard grey accents fail to suggest any kind of structure. The jewel in the hair is indistinctly shaped, and the pearls round the throat are for the most part ringed by a zone of black that through being done so clumsily and flatly gives no depth and sometimes produces pearls of an angular form. And finally, the lace in the diadem cap, around the rim of the wheel ruff and in the bib beneath the latter is — though not without a certain vitality — rather confused overall and devoid of any clear pattern.

It is in this lace, most obviously where the bib lies over the black garment, that one can see a certain resemblance to the way the lace collar in the London man's portrait is done. One finds there a similar manner of painting — fluent in the main shape but rather chaotic in the detail — that cannot be reconciled with Rembrandt's approach and has given us reason to ascribe the costume in the *Portrait of Philips Lucasz.* to an assistant. There is every sign of that same assistant being responsible for this woman's portrait in its entirety. We are therefore dealing with a painter who, on some points more than others, was guided by Rembrandt's own example when helping to carry out portrait commissions. It sometimes happened that an assistant executed both of a pair of companion-pieces (cf., for example, the portraits in Braunschweig, nos. C 70 and C 71, and in Boston, nos. C 72 and C 73), but it could also happen that Rembrandt dealt with the man's portrait (or part of it) while an assistant did the woman's (cf. the portraits in Vienna, nos. A 45 and C 80).

The question of whether we know of other works carried out in Rembrandt's studio by the same assistant can most probably be answered in the affirmative; the number of works one wants to consider as being by this same hand depends however on the degree of variation one is willing to allow within the production of a single assistant. The *Portrait of a young woman* in an American private collection (no. C 81) that carries the (probably reliable) date 1633 shows on important points such a great similarity to the *Portrait of Petronella Buys* that an attribution to the same hand can be seen as justified. The distribution of quite flat and opaque shadow passages tending towards a reddish colour or grey is in both instances very much the same, as is the way these passages are set against the somewhat enamel-like lit areas, and the latter are on the left bordered by a rather indeterminate cheek contour. The same can be said about the way linear elements occur in the indication of the eyelids and mouth-lines but are also used in less obvious contexts such as along the throat jewellery. A further great similarity is seen in the rather slovenly way a little grey is used to give some (scarcely comprehensible) detail in the black costume. The lace cap in the 1633 painting cannot be compared with no. C 111 (where this feature is absent), but it does not compare badly with the collar of Philips Lucasz. in the London man's portrait.

One can, therefore, detect in these portraits the tracks of a painter who worked in Rembrandt's studio between 1633 and 1635. When one wonders whether this production can be further expanded, attention focuses first of all on the *Portrait of a woman* dated 1632 in New York (no. C 69) in which, though there are unmistakeable differences, the distribution of lighting and the colouring in the head and the nature of the linear features (especially in the eyes) offer striking resemblances. One may then turn to the *Bust of a young man* in San Diego (no. C 55) where — with even greater differences in manner of painting, due either to the individual hand or to the use of another prototype — the same kind of similarity is nevertheless found. It is particularly the typical relationship between lit passages, shadow areas and reflexions of light that lends all these works a certain similarity to Isack Jouderville's only signed work in Dublin (see Vol. II, Introduction, Chapter III, fig. 32). We do not intend here to try to map out exactly the extent of Jouderville's share in

Rembrandt's workshop production; but the portraits that according to the sources Jouderville must have painted (ibid., note 175) cannot have looked all that different from the *Portrait of Petronella Buys*.

5. Documents and sources

Mentioned, together with the companion-piece, in the division of the estate of Jacques Specx dated 31 August 1655 (see no. A 115 under *5. Documents and sources*).

Hofstede de Groot[1] published a facsimile of the following inscription on the back of the panel: 'Jonckvr. petronella Buijs: sijne Huijsvrw / naer dato getrout aen de Hr. Borgermr. Cardon' (The lady petronella Buijs: his wife / after this date married to Burgermaster Cardon) (see no. A 115 fig. 5). The inscription obviously relates to that on the back of the portrait of the sitter's first husband; the London *Portrait of Philips Lucasz.* (no. A 115) does indeed carry on the back the remains of an inscription, but it cannot be made out what this was, nor even if the lettering was of the same type as that of no. C 111.

6. Graphic reproductions

None.

7. Copies

None.

8. Provenance

- Coll. Cornelis Sebille Roos (1754–1820), Amsterdam art dealer and agent; sale Amsterdam 28 August 1820, no. 85 (180 guilders to Engelberts).
- C.E. Vaillant and J. Sargenton sale, Amsterdam 19–20 April 1830, no. 74 (540 guilders to Roos).
- Dealer Cornelis François Roos (1802–1874), Amsterdam; according to Smith[3] still offered for sale by him, for 500 guilders, in 1836.
- Coll. Adrian Hope, sale London 30 June 1894, no. 56 (£1365).
- Dealer C. Sedelmeyer (*Catalogue of 300 paintings*, Paris 1898, no. 126).
- Dealer M. Knoedler & Co., New York.
- Coll. Joseph Jefferson, New York, sale American Art Association, 27 April 1906, no. 50.
- Dealer A. Preyer, The Hague.
- Dealer F. Kleinberger, Paris.
- Coll. A. de Ridder, Kronberg (Taunus).
- Coll. M. van Gelder, Uccle near Brussels.
- Dealer D. Katz, Dieren.
- Schaeffer Galleries, New York.
- Coll. André Meyer, sale New York (Sotheby's) 22 October 1980, no. 12.
- Dealer Wildenstein & Co., New York.

9. Summary

The handling of paint and rendering of form in no. C 111 differ to such an extent from those of Rembrandt that an attribution to him may be ruled out. Although the enamel-like character of the paint in the face, and the colour-scheme used there, do not closely resemble his work, it must be termed highly probable that the *Portrait of Petronella Buys* was painted in his workshop as the companion-piece to the London *Portrait of Philips Lucasz.* (no. A 115). It has to be assumed that in the latter portrait the collar and clothing were done by an assistant, and that this same assistant executed the whole of the woman's portrait; he seems also to have been responsible for the *Portrait of a young woman* dated 1633 (no. C 81). Probably the *Portrait of Petronella Buys*, like its pendant, was originally rectangular and was made into an oval in the latter part of the 17th century.

REFERENCES

1 C. Hofstede de Groot, 'Rembrandts portretten van Philips Lucasse en Petronella Buys', *O.H.* 31 (1913), pp. 236–240.
2 Bauch 486; Gerson 179; Br.-Gerson 349.
3 J. Smith, *A catalogue raisonné of the works of the most eminent Dutch, Flemish and French painters ...* VII, London 1836, no. 497.

C 112 Portrait of a 70-year-old woman

NEW YORK, N.Y., THE METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART, ACC.NO. 14.40.603
BEQUEST OF BENJAMIN ALTMAN, 1913

HDG 868; BR. 348; BAUCH 491; GERSON 185

Fig. 1. Canvas 127.3 × 98.4 cm



Fig. 2. Detail (1 : 1)

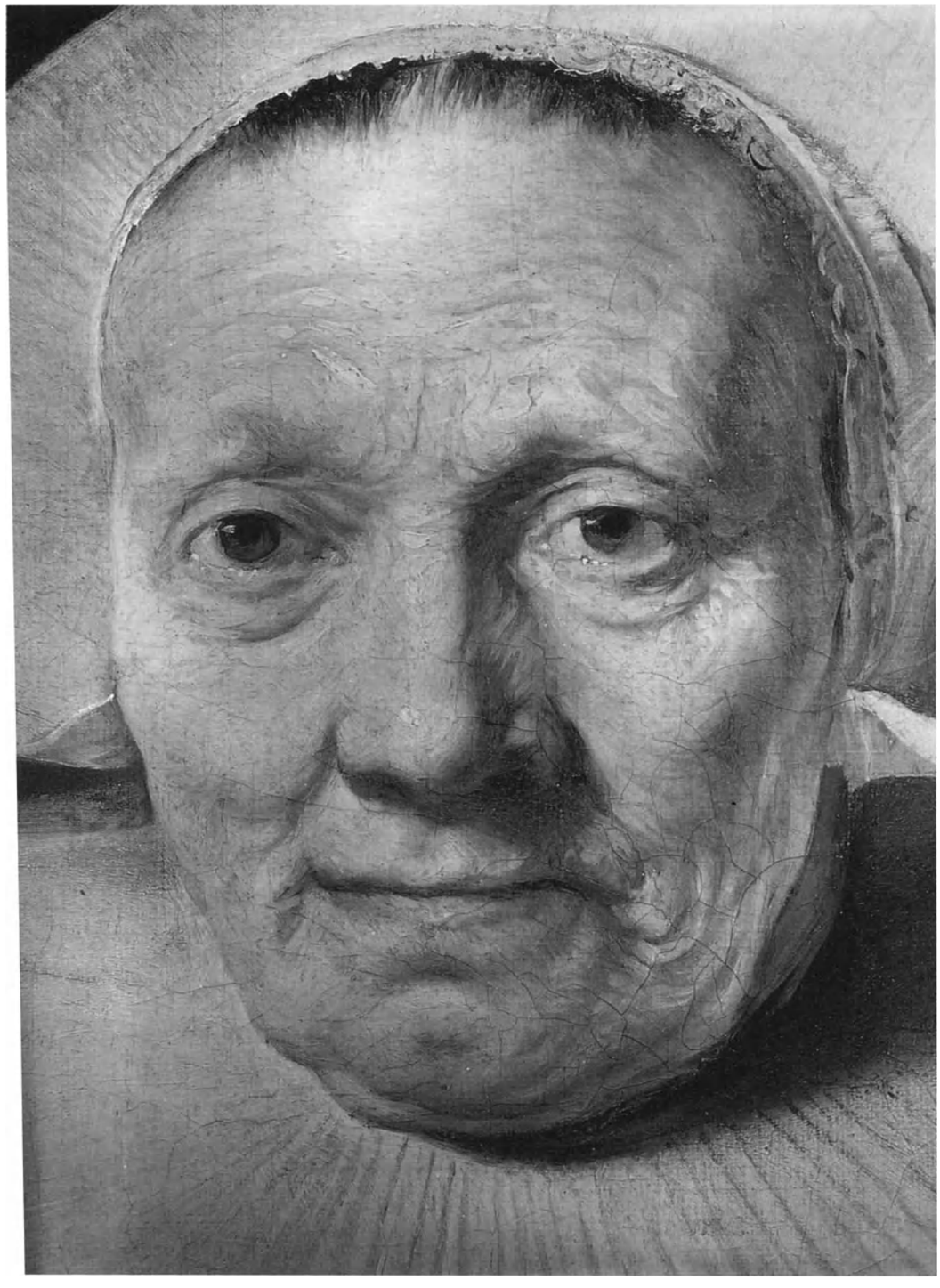


Fig. 3. X-Ray



1. Summarized opinion

A well preserved painting that despite marked differences in quality and style from the work of Rembrandt may well have been produced in his studio in 1635, probably by the same assistent who was responsible for no. C 108.

2. Description of subject

The sitter is seen to below the knees, seated in a folding chair and turned a little towards the left. Her left hand rests on one arm of the chair, while the right hand droops from the other. She wears a white cap, a wide, stiff wheel-ruff and simple white cuffs at the wrists. Her black costume comprises a bodice made from an ornamented stuff, a plain 'vlieger' coat with slightly upstanding shoulder-caps and sleeves and a wide, plain skirt that drapes in folds. Two crossed gold rings are worn on the index finger of her right hand. The light falls from the left front, and the figures casts a shadow to the right on the wall behind.

3. Observations and technical information

Working conditions

Examined on 17 April 1969 (J.B., B.H.) in good daylight and in the frame. A copy-film of the X-ray of the head and collar was received later.

Support

DESCRIPTION: Canvas, lined, 127.3 × 98.4 cm (measured along the stretcher).
SCIENTIFIC DATA: The X-ray image does not allow an accurate threadcount; so far as can be made out, there are *c.* 13–14 vertical and 15–16 horizontal threads/cm.

Ground

DESCRIPTION: A brownish colour shows through the broadly brushed paint of the background.
SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

Paint layer

CONDITION: Generally good, with a few retouches here and there in the background. Craquelure: an irregular network of cracks, of the kind normal in a 17th-century painting on canvas.
DESCRIPTION: The background is brushed broadly in shades of a somewhat murky grey-brown. The brushstrokes are mostly quite long and slightly curved, and do not offer a pattern with a rhythm of its own; they run alongside the figure, generally parallel to the contour and also along the cast shadow to the right, which is done in rather thinner paint. The chair is rendered very cursorily in browns, with dark brown and black used for the contours and to indicate the form, and some flat dark red as a shapeless indication of the seat. The armrest on the left is rendered in a flat dark grey-brown.

The woman's face is painted, in the lit parts, with free strokes of varying length most of which lie over a flatly-applied flesh colour and give the modelling of folds in the skin with a light flesh colour and a light brown. On the left a thin grey is used in the temple and eye-socket. The eye, there, is drawn for the most part in a light brown-red; the white of the eye is done in yellowish and grey paint with dots of white along the bottom to show the rim of moisture. A white catchlight is set, over some pinkish red, in the corner of the eye, and a fairly flat catchlight is placed on the left in the quite sharply-outlined iris opposite a touch of lighter grey-brown. The eye on the right is executed in similar fashion, though with grey instead of brown-red to show the eyelids. Over the brown-grey paint used for the shadows in the eye-socket and along the nose and to the right on the cheek, strokes of grey and light brown are placed along the nose, and on the far right on the cheek there are strokes of a brownish flesh colour to suggest a reflexion of light from the collar. A bright pink-red is used on both cheeks and in the lips, the latter separated by a greyish mouth-line.

The cap and collar are in greys worked up with white, and are painted competently but with little subtlety. The black clothing is mainly in dark greys, with black and for the most part very precise detail, locally heavy black outlines and sheens of light rendered with light greys; the skirt is mainly black, with broad strokes of dark grey that provide a perfunctory indication of sheens of light along the folds.

The hand on the right is executed for the greater part in a fairly broadly brushed yellowish flesh colour, with wide strokes of brown for the shadows between the fingers and to the right along the edge, a few short strokes in a reddish brown placed crosswise for the knuckles, and relaxed strokes of grey indicating the veins. The hand on the left is painted with rather longer brushstrokes in a somewhat warmer flesh colour.
SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

X-Rays

The available film offers an image that suggests a sure and practised treatment. The collar shows no traces of a light underpainting. Some very small spots of paint loss can be seen.

Signature

At the top right in fairly thin, dark paint <*Rembrandt. f* (followed by three dots set in a triangular pattern) / *1635*>. Though quite fluently written, the letters and figures with their uncharacteristic linking of small strokes (in the bowl of the *R* and shaft of the *d*), their unusual sloping stance and their rather spiky shape do not make a reliable impression.

Somewhat lower down on the left there is an inscription <*AET SUE 70.*>; below this, and rather vaguer <*24. / 3*> gives the date and month.

Varnish

No special remarks.

4. Comments

This painting, done with some bravura but no great sensitivity, shows so slight a resemblance to Rembrandt's portraits from the 1630s that it is surprising that no-one doubted its authenticity until Gerson[1] termed the Rembrandt attribution 'not convincing', and attributed it to his Amsterdam circle. Schwartz and Tümpel did not include it in their books of 1984 and 1986 respectively. A vaguely rembrandtesque feature can be seen in the way the degree of details falls off towards the bottom in the very broad indication of the skirt. Against this there is the fact that as a way of suggesting plasticity and depth this treatment leaves everything to be desired, and that in general the construction of the figure in its relation to the chair is far from convincing. What is more, the transition from the more detailed handling of the bodice and sleeves to the broad rendering of the skirt is remarkably abrupt, so that there is no impression of an optical effect stemming from gradations in the lighting. In general it may be said that the brushwork is different from Rembrandt's and has a different function. This is most evident in the flesh areas and, for instance, in the contours given to the costume. At many places

Fig. 4. Detail (1 : 1)



the artist uses for these a sinuous black line, which because of its heavy-handiness — clearest in the folds of the sleeve on the left — works against rather than towards a three-dimensional effect. Such outlines are very different indeed from the strongly differentiated contours we see in similar passages by Rembrandt, which with their outward bulges and reentrant angles produce a definite plasticity. The brushwork in the head shows a similar lack of spatial effect. The eyes are handled with relative success; the accents of light are placed in a way that suggests that the artist was familar with Rembrandt's working methods as these can be found in e.g. his 1634 *Portrait of an 83-year-old woman* in London (no. A 104). The way light and dark touches are used for the modelling of the wrinkled skin appears to be based directly on the treatment of the head in that (or a similar) picture. In the present work the indications of wrinkles and folds have however a mainly linear effect and lack the subtle integration in a plastic image and the feeling for an interplay of merging shadows that typifies Rembrandt's portraits from the 1630s. This is sensed most strongly in the transitions from light to shade as, for example, in the strange curved, lighter strokes set over the paint of the shadow of the nose. The same lack makes itself even more strongly felt in the two hands, which in Rembrandt's portraits too are admittedly done more broadly than the head, but never in such flat strokes of contrasting colour, which remind one somewhat of what one knows from the Haarlem of Frans Hals. In the entire picture the brushstroke, more free than controlled, defines the form in a mostly draughtsmanlike manner, and does not manage to suggest an atmospheric link between the various parts of the body or between the figure and the space in which we see it. In this respect the background, with its comparatively indifferent brushwork and a quite un-Rembrandtlike, sharply-outlined cast shadow suggestion, is similarly ineffective. All things considered, the differences from Rembrandt's work are such that an attribution to him cannot be entertained.

Given the lack of understanding the artist betrays of Rembrandt's approach and methods, one hesitates to ascribe it to a close follower; yet because of the close correspondances just described to a

Fig. 5. Detail with signature (reduced)



work such as the *Portrait of an 83-year-old woman* it is not unlikely that it was done by a workshop assistant trained elsewhere (Haarlem ?). A similar interpretation of Rembrandt's style resulting in an equally deviant treatment is found in the *Portrait of Antonie Coopal* (no. C 108) also dated 1635. There is a fair possibility that both pictures are from the same hand.

At sales in 1760, 1769 and 1782 (see *8. Provenance*) no. C 112 can be found described as the companion-piece to a man's portrait that can be identified with the *Portrait of a 69-year-old man* in the Corcoran Gallery of Art, Washington DC (Br. 212); this was rebutted by Schmidt-Degener[2], who accepted both paintings as Rembrandts, while Gerson not only doubted the attribution of no. C 112, but also rightly rejected the attribution of the man's portrait to him (Br.-Gerson 212). On top of this, however, the execution of the latter — not at all rembrandtesque — is quite different from that of the New York woman's portrait. This does not of course rule out the possibility that the man's picture was meant to match the woman's. If the two crossed rings the woman wears on her right index finger are seen as a sign of her being a widow, then her portrait would however from the outset have not been intended to have a pendant. The composition, tending towards a frontal view, would not argue against this.

5. Documents and sources

None.

6. Graphic reproductions

None.

7. Copies

None.

8. Provenance

- Together with the *Portrait of a 69-year-old man* in the Corcoran Gallery of Art, Washington DC (Br. 212) in the sale of colls. M. ten Hove and J.A. Tourton, Amsterdam 8ff April 1760 (Lugt 1092), no. 2: 'Een Vrouwe Pourtret, zynde een kniestuk levensgroote, zittende in een Leuningstoel, rustende met hare handen op de Leuningen derzelve, mede zeer kragtig en helder geschildert, door dito [Rembrandt], de hoogte en breedte is als de bovenstaande [hoog 49 breet 38 duim = 126 × 97.6 cm] (De Schilderyen zyn alle gemeten zonder hare Lysten, en volgens Amsterdamsche Voetmaat van elf duim) (A woman's portrait, a knee-length piece lifesize, seated in an armchair with her hands resting on the arms, very powerfully and brightly painted, by the same ... the height and width are as the above... The Paintings are all measured without their frames, and in Amsterdam feet of eleven inches) (together with lot 1, 585 guilders to Yver). In the margin of the copy of the catalogue in the Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris, there is a note (by J. van der Marck Ezn.?) that 'Deze byde stukken zyn de schoonste die van hem bekend zyn, en in zyn beste tyd geschildert Ao 1635'. (These two pieces are the finest known by him, and were painted in his best period Anno 1635).
- Together with the same painting in sale Amsterdam 8 May 1769 (Lugt 1759), no. 66: 'Rembrandt van Rhyn. Een Deftige Vrouw, of de Huysvrouw van den voorigen meede gezeeten op een Leuningstoel, edoch meerder van vooren te zien en niet minder gracelyk van houding, en rustende met haar beyde handen op deszelfs Leuningen. op Doek, hoog en br. als de voorgaande [hoog 49 duim, br. 37½ duim = 126 × 96.3 cm]. Deese twee Pourtraitten voornoemt zyn van zyn beste tydt, daar by Exact geteekent, uytvoerigh, helder en krachtig geschildert' (Rembrandt van Rhyn. A Dignified Woman, or the Wife of the former likewise sitting in an armchair though seen more from the front and resting both hands on the Arms of the same. on Canvas, height and width as the foregoing ..... These two Portraits are from his best period, Exactly drawn and thoroughly, brightly and vigorously painted) (with lot no. 65 for 650 guilders to Fouquet).
*- Together with the same painting in a sale [coll. Sainte-Foix] Paris 22–24 April 1782 (Lugt 3411), no. 3: 'Rembrandt. Deux Tableaux faisans pendans; l'un représente un homme assis dans un fauteuil, vêtu de noir, le col garni d'une large fraise blanche, la main droite appuyée sur un fauteuil, & la gauche tenant son chapeau; derrière lui est une table couverte d'un tapis rouge. L'autre offre une vieille femme assise dans un fauteuil; elle est aussi de grandeur naturelle, & vue jusqu'au-dessous du genou, la main droite appuyée sur sa cuisse, & la gauche sur le bras du fauteuil, & est vêtue de noir; la tête couverte d'un coëffe blanche, & le col garni d'une large fraise aussi blanche. Ces Tableaux, pleins de force et d'harmonie, sont de la belle manière de Rembrandt. Hauteur 45 pouces, largeur 34 pouces [= 121.5 × 91.8 cm], T[oile].' (2399 livres 19 sous to Donjeux).
- Coll. Conte de Morny, sale Paris 31ff May 1865, no. 69 (4900 francs).
- Dealer L. Lesser, London 1889.
- Coll. Arthur Sanderson, Edinburgh.
- Dealer Duveen Bros., London.
- Coll. Benjamin Altman; bequeathed to the museum in 1913.

9. Summary

Though it does in detail reveal familiarity with Rembrandt's portraits from the 1630s, no. C 112 shows such differences from his handling of paint that an attribution to him is impossible to accept. Fairly free brushstrokes, in the hands reminding one somewhat of Frans Hals, result generally in a picture that is unconvincing in terms of plasticity and three-dimensionality. It can however be supposed to have been painted in Rembrandt's studio, possibly by the same assistant who did the *Portrait of Antonie Coopal* (no. C 108).

REFERENCES

1 Br.-Gerson 348.
2 F. Schmidt-Degener, 'Portretten door Rembrandt II. Mennisten', *Onze Kunst* 25 (1914), pp. 1–7.

C 113 Portrait of Anna Wijmer

AMSTERDAM, SIX COLLECTION, NO. 3

HDG 728; BR. 358; BAUCH 500 (FIG. 499); GERSON 235

1. Summarized opinion

A reasonably well preserved portrait that was painted in Rembrandt's workshop in 1641.

2. Description of subject

A woman, seen to the knees, is shown sitting in what is evidently a folding chair (cf., for example, no. A 98), placed at an angle to the right so that the body is seen in three-quarters profile; the face is turned almost square-on to the viewer. Her right hand grasps the knob of the armrest, while her left hand is held in front of her with the fingers together and slightly bent. Her black costume is decorated all over with sewn-on strips of braiding, horizontal on the sleeves and bodice and vertical on the skirt. A 'vlieger' coat has fur revers. A cloth cap is worn over hair combed straight back, and she has a wide wheel-ruff and lace-edged linen cuffs.

The figure is lit from above to the left, and set against a background that is for the most part in darkness.

3. Observations and technical information

Working conditions

Examined in February 1971 (B.H., P.v.Th.) in good daylight and out of the frame. Nine X-ray films were received later. Examined again in May 1987 (B.H., E.v.d.W.) and on 5 November 1987 (E.v.d.W. together with J. Mosk of the Amsterdam Central Laboratory for Objects of Art & Science).

Support

DESCRIPTION: Panel of poplarwood[1] — though its considerable weight would seem to belie this — , grain vertical, 99.5 × 81.5 cm. Thickness *c.* 2.5 cm. Single plank. Back bevelled along all four sides to a thickness of *c.* 1.5 cm.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: There is some indication that the panel comes from the same tree as that of the *Portrait of a young woman (Maria Trip?)* in Amsterdam (no. A 131)[1].

Ground

DESCRIPTION: Visible as a fairly light yellowish brown in the hairline and on the left in the left eye-socket.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: In a number of the paint samples described below under *Paint layer*, SCIENTIFIC DATA, the layer structure is complete, and in these instances microscope examination shows the cross-section's bottom layer to consist of chalk, bound one may assume by a glue-like medium. On top of this one can see a thin layer comprising mainly white lead in which a fine brown pigment is dispersed. This kind of double ground is repeatedly encountered with Rembrandt's panels; it was a way of preparing panels in the 17th century that is also described in the Mayerne manuscript (cf. Vol. I, Chapter II, pp. 18–19).

Paint layer

CONDITION: Panel shrinkage has resulted in vertical rows of almost horizontal cracks to the right of the figure in the background and the arm, as well as long, diagonal cracks in the bodice. A dark area at the lower left appears to have been overpainted; this covers over a shape (of a table) visible in relief. Some areas, especially the chair and the shadows between the fingers of both hands, present a blanched surface. The condition is otherwise good, apart from slight restorations in the right of the collar by the neck. Craquelure: a fine craquelure formed by hair cracks running slightly upwards is seen in the thicker areas of flesh colour and white.

DESCRIPTION: The face is painted with small, merging strokes in a variety of flesh tones, using a fair amount of red. Whitish and pink glazes are laid over the flesh colour, suggesting the reflexion of light from the ruff onto the jaw and cheek on the right beside the corner of the mouth. The somewhat fuzzy brushwork contributes to a convincing modelling and rendering of material in the head, especially the fleshy forehead in which fine lines of pink indicate furrows. To the right, next to the light shadow area, there follows a fairly strong and quite thickly painted reflexion of light along the temple, spreading into the eye-socket and continuing along the cheekbone, where it is less well integrated into its surroundings than it is higher up by the forehead. At the hairline, where the ground shows through, the whitish strokes of flesh colour lie over the thinner brown of the hair.

The eyes are executed relatively broadly. The one on the left has an upper lid that to the right is rather unsatisfactory and lacking in structure as it runs into the corner of the eye; in the centre it has a small white highlight. At its upper edge the eyelid is bounded by a translucent zone in which a grey-brown line of shadow is placed. The eyelid casts a strikingly broad shadow on the eye; the white of the eye is bluish to the right, the fuzzily-edged iris is greyish, the pupil black, and there is no catchlight. The corner of the eye is marked by a touch of brick red. The lower eyelid, painted with a fairly thick line of flesh colour, has a rim of moisture. The other eye, partly in shadow, is executed in a similar fashion, but rather more broadly.

The effectively modelled nose, with white highlights on the ridge and tip, has subtly shaded pink and also yellowish tints. The thinly-painted cast shadow, set in a reserve by the tip and righthand wing of the nose, is well integrated in terms of tonal values. The plasticity achieved in this area is further enhanced by the firmly placed light on the upper lip beside this cast shadow. The outlines of the bright pink lips are unsharp, and the mouth-line is shown vaguely in a dark brownish red.

The cap and ruff are painted competently and with close attention to form. In the collar in particular, where the bluish-seeming grey shadows have been placed over a white initial lay-in, the consistently-pursued precision has led to a dry rendering of the pleated fabric that contrasts with the sensitive handling of the head. The representation of the lace edging at the cuffs is diagrammatic and rather awkward.

The higher hand is painted quite differently from the face, with crosswise brushstrokes in thicker paint of various flesh tints clearly apparent. They suggest the plastic form, helped by the contrast between the relatively thickly painted areas and the thinly done shadows. The effect is today somewhat marred by the blanching that has occurred in the paint in the shadows between the fingers. Whitish and pink highlights form the highest lights on the fingers, and the nails are meticulously rendered.

The execution of the lower hand, more weakly lit, is less sound. The colour is sallow, and the brushstroke (plainly visible in the lighter parts) bears little relation to the hand's structure. The edge of shadow along the cuff gives no effect of depth, and the cuff itself is flat.

The clothing is carefully but rather soberly painted. Edgings of light are shown with thin lines of grey and white. The sewn-on bands of braiding on the skirt are done with great care, without however achieving an adequate effect. The fur is shown with clear brushstrokes in yellow-brown and grey paint, but the rendering of material is disappointing.

In the bottom lefthand corner one can see in the paint relief that a horizontal rectangular form, ending just short of the front chairleg and with a rounded corner penetrating into the armrest, has been overpainted; there was obviously initially a table at this point. The signature is just above the position of the edge of the table, and the part of the skirt that projects behind the chair ends abruptly at the same place. The chair is rendered in a dull, somewhat crusty brown paint. The area that continues to the righthand corner via the shadow side of the cuff and hand is hard to read. In the righthand corner, adjoining the black skirt, there is a band that seems to be a continuation of the fur trimming the coat. The fur is clearly bordered at the bottom, but at the top merges into a patchy area that itself shows a straight upper edge and seems to have had an architectural function.

Fig. 1. Panel 99.5 × 81.5 cm



Fig. 2. X-Ray



Fig. 3. Detail (1 : 1)



Fig. 4. Detail (1 : 1)



The brown-grey background is very flat, with a continuous paint surface, but nevertheless shows a few brushmarks. The level of light varies little, the darkest tone being at the upper right. The contours of the cheek on the right by the ruff, of the shoulder on the left and of the arm on the right show modest corrections in the shape of autograph retouches where the reserve left for the figure in the paint of the background was larger than the final execution required; here the tone is a little lighter. In the bottom lefthand corner a zone of rather lighter paint, differing in colour and craquelure, runs along the chairback.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: Cross-sections were prepared from seven paint samples (filed in the Central Research Laboratory, Amsterdam, as nos. 1444:6–13). The samples were taken very largely to gain an idea of the paint structure and physical history of the lower part of the painting. In view of the observation at the paint surface that a table-like shape was painted out at the bottom lefthand corner, there is a possibility that this was done by a later hand and that other passages in that area were overpainted at the same time.

A sample from the area of the tablecloth (taken at 22.5 cm from the lefthand side and 9 cm from the bottom edge) showed this area to have originally been red; this confirms that it did indeed show a tablecloth. The layer consisted mostly of an organic red mixed with fine grains of an inorganic red pigment. Over this was a thick grey-brown layer rich in binding medium that can best be seen as belonging to decoration on the tablecloth. This layer must have been more or less dry when the black of the top layer visible today was applied. There was however no evidence found — in the form of an intervening layer of varnish — that the tablecloth was overpainted by a later hand.

A black overpainting was found in a sample taken from the similarly dark area to the right of the tablecloth, recognizable as such by the fact that the topmost thin layer of black paint was on top of a layer of varnish; this however probably means no more than that there was local retouching in this area. There was no evidence of later overpainting in any of the other samples from the problematic zone, which were taken in the shadowed lower hand and between the fingers of this hand. The sample from the lastnamed site must also provide an explanation for a white efflorescence found at some places on the dark paint between the fingers. This appeared in the cross-section as a white granular substance the composition of which needs closer analysis.

A cross-section of a sample taken in the *d* of the signature showed beneath the uppermost black layer — which must coincide with the paint of the signature — a fluorescing intermediate layer below which there was a dark layer that must correspond to the paint of the background. The lastnamed layer lies immediately on top of the ground. The degree of fluorescence in the intermediate layer is markedly less than that

of the varnish layers on the signature, so it is not a foregone conclusion that the signature is over a layer of varnish and has to be discounted as a later addition; the presence of the fluorescing intermediate layer does however warrant the suspicion that the signature was not written by the author of the painting.

X-Rays

Contrary to what one would expect from the surface, parts of the background appear lightish in the radiographic image, partly — on the right along the head and shoulder — in a distinctly visible and rather jumbled pattern of brushstrokes, and elsewhere along parts of the contour as a cloudy grey. The now almost uniform dark background was evidently toned down at a late stage.

A vertical light band on the left (through the arm) gives the impression of being connected with the ground. Higher up, above the ruff, there is however a light band that appears to be due to strokes of paint; one wonders whether this showed some vertical feature in the background.

The meticulous execution of the ruff is confirmed; it is noticeable that the righthand contour shows up dark — the paint of the collar obviously does not extend over that of the background. The corrections filling in the initially over-generous reserve in the background at the shoulder on the left are clearly apparent.

Brushstrokes of varying width and no great degree of organization are seen in the lit part of the head and, less strongly, in the shadow side of the face. The greatest concentrations of radioabsorbent paint are found on the left of the forehead and on the bridge of the nose. The reflected light along the forehead on the right shows up relatively dark. The hand on the right offers a clear image of strokes placed systematically crosswise, while that on the left gives a less firm and somewhat patchy image.

The pale shine on the upper surface of the chairback shows up weakly to the left of the upper arm.

The cracks described in the paint layer, ground and panel give a clear, dark image. The pieces of canvas on the back of the panel mentioned below under *5. Documents and sources* also show up distinctly, obviously because of them having been primed.

Signature

In black, at the lower left above the edge of the overpainted table described above, <*Rembrandt* / *.f 1641*>. In shape, the letters and figures show great similarity to those of authentic signatures; only a slight lack of homogenous rhythm stands in the way of believing it to be autograph. There is some reason to suppose that the signature was not done at the same time as the rest of the painting (see *Paint layer*, SCIENTIFIC DATA).

Varnish

A thick layer of old varnish, shattered at some places, somewhat impedes observation.

4. Comments

The painting is done on what is mentioned in the literature as poplarwood (though it is surprisingly heavy), and this kind of wood was not all that unusual in Rembrandt's own work and that from his studio (see J. Bauch and D. Eckstein[1] where three examples are listed of which nos. C 113 and A 131 may have come from the same tree); even more than in other instances, the working of the wood has been the cause of peculiar cracks in the ground and paint layer (see also, for example, no. C 102). The work carries a not entirely confidence-inspiring signature and date of 1641, and shows a number of general

Fig. 5. Detail with signature (reduced)



similarities with Rembrandt's work from this period; there are however what must be described as deviant features. A certain resemblance to works such as Rembrandt's Amsterdam *Portrait of a young woman (Maria Trip?)* of 1639 (no. A 131) resides in a tendency to a lower contrast than marked Rembrandt's earlier portraits, and to a *sfumato*ish effect in the definition of form. As a result the figure does not stand out all that strongly against the quite dark background and can achieve a solid plastic identity. And yet the execution lacks to a great extent the forceful manner of painting and characteristic of form that one expects from Rembrandt around 1640 (and which give its character the Amsterdam portrait just mentioned). The way the head is painted is outstanding more for sensitive detail than for a convincing coherence; the brushwork demonstrated by the X-rays has none of the firm, systematic handling one finds in, for instance, the 1640 *Portrait of Baertje Martens* in Leningrad (no. A 141). The eyes have little clarity of construction, and in their plastic effect are clearly inferior to those in Rembrandt's portraits. The characterization of form one finds here seems to be that of a different artist, as is evident also from the absence of any catchlight on the eyeball. A lack of certainty is manifest in the poorly integrated reflexion of light along the forehead and cheekbone, and a lack of firmness in the dark red mouth-line which in Rembrandt's portraits normally shows a distinct brushstroke. In general the colour-scheme in the head is striking for a use of various tints of pink and red that would be unusual for Rembrandt; coupled with this use of colour there is a feeble shadow effect that must (if one thinks of, for example, the 1641 *Portrait of Agatha Bas* in Buckingham Palace, no. A 145) also be termed uncharacteristic. This lack of strong accents and hence of any rich suggestion of volume marks the whole of the figure. The contours do not have a rhythm of their own, and fulfil only a passive role in separating the figure from the background, most disturbingly so on the right along the arm. Equally untypical is the way that, probably in conjunction

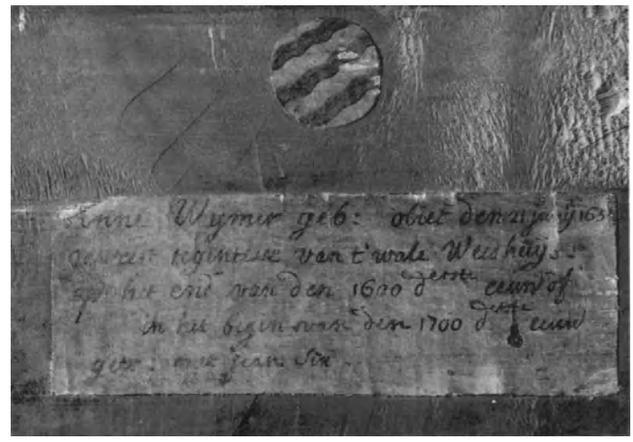
with the correction along the shoulder on the left and the arm on the right of an overgenerous reserve left for the figure in the background paint, the contour there stands against a relatively light band of background. The artist seems to have made his reserves more generous than one generally finds in Rembrandt; on the right along the ruff the X-ray shows a dark band proving that at this point the white paint does not lie over the background paint. The detailing of the costume, finally, is generally uninteresting and sometimes (e.g. in the cuffs) even weak. These more or less pronounced stylistic and technical differences from Rembrandt's painted portraits of around 1640 make an attribution to him unacceptable.

Alongside the problem of attribution there is a problem of the present condition of the lower part of the painting. The paint surface relief in the bottom lefthand corner reveals a shape that can be read as a table covered with a cloth, a notion supported by the presence of an underlying layer of paint (see above under *Paint layer*, SCIENTIFIC DATA). There seems to have been a change on the right by the clothing. By all appearances the painter himself made this.

Apart from the changes in the lower part of the painting, which are difficult to pinpoint, the work prompts three questions: that of its date, that of the identity of the sitter, and that of who painted it. A date in the 1640s seems the most likely. The tendency already described to a lower contrast and a somewhat *sfumato*ish treatment is found in Rembrandt and his circle in these years, and also in such a leading portraitist as Bartholomeus van der Helst. The inscription that appears on the painting may, with 1641, quite well be giving the right date.

In the light of this dating the tradition that the portrait is of Anna Wijmer (1584–1654), the widow of Jean Six, is a little surprising; the sitter would then be 57 years of age, and must have been particularly well preserved. There is however evidence that seems to support the tradition on this point: first of all, there are two pieces of canvas on the back of the panel one oval and showing the arms of the Wijmer family and the other bearing an inscription with her name (see *5. Documents and sources* and fig. 6); this is unmistakeably of much later date, but does of course carry some weight. It should be commented here that Anna Wijmer played an important role in her family. One of a family of cloth merchants who emigrated to the Northern Netherlands from St Omer, she was married in 1606 to Jean Six (1575–1617), who came from a family of cloth and silk dyers from the same town. Her sister Johanna Wijmer (*c.* 1584–1624) married Guillaume Six (1564–1619), Jean's only brother. After the death of her husband in 1617 and of her brother-in-law in 1619 Anna Wijmer managed the family's by then

Fig. 6. Pieces of canvas stuck on the back



flourishing business in Amsterdam until her two sons Pieter (1612–1680) and Jan (1618–1700) grew up. She was a governess of the Walenweeshuis (Walloon Orphanage) in 1639, 1640, 1643 and 1644; unfortunately, she is not in any of the surviving group portraits done for that institution. In the year she died Rembrandt painted the portrait of her youngest son Jan (Br. 276), who was a poet and art collector, held several public offices and was once (in 1691) burgomaster of Amsterdam. If the portrait does show Anna Wijmer as a widow, this might explain why the sitter is facing not to the left — the normal pose for a married woman — but towards the right. Her clothing does not however point unequivocally to widowhood, as for instance a black headdress would do. The pose and dress would make one think of an unmarried woman rather than of a widow.

There can be no doubt that there were portraits of Anna Wijmer in existence; at the beginning of the 18th century there was mention of two portraits of her. In the first place, the deed drawn up on 17 July 1704 sharing out the estate of Pieter (II) Six (1655–1703), the son of Anna's elder son Pieter (who was also known as an art collector), speaks of 'Het Pourtraict van sijn Ed^ts^ Grootmoeder Anna Wijmer, door de oude Backer'[2] — which must refer to Jacob Adriaensz. Backer (here called 'the Elder' to distinguish him from his younger nephew Adriaen). And in the second, the inventory of the estate of Margaretha Tulp, widow of Anna Wijmer's younger son Jan, completed on 9 October 1709 and giving the painter's name for none of the family portraits except Rembrandt's one of Jan Six, mentions '1 portrait van Anna Wijmer'[3]. Everything suggests that both of Anna's sons owned a portrait of her. One of the two may have been the subject of a poem published by Vondel in 1660 (in: *Poëzy*):

Op de schildery van Mejoffer Anna Wijmers
Aldus schijnt Anna hier te leven
Die Six het leven heeft gegeven.
Zij dekt de borsten, die hij soogh,
Men kent de zoon uit 's moeders oogh.

Fig. 7. J.A. Backer, *Portrait of a widow*, canvas 105 × 76 cm. Copenhagen, Statens Museum for Kunst



Fig. 8. J.A. Backer, *Portrait of a widow*, canvas 163 × 115 cm. Darmstadt, Hessisches Landesmuseum



(On the portrait of Mistress Anna Wijmers: Thus Anna seems to live, who gave life to Six. Her hand covers the breast at which he suckled, and one recognizes the son from the mother's eye.)

As Vondel wrote a number of poems for Jan Six — including those on a portrait of him and on a painting by Lastman that he owned — and must have known him personally, one may assume that the poem was intended for Jan and related to the portrait in his possession, the same one that was listed in 1709 without an artist's name. Vondel's poem does not give an incontrovertible answer as to whether this can be identified with the present work. Sterck[4] believed that the pose of the sitter's left hand can be seen as covering the breasts but, quite apart from the correctness or otherwise of this interpretation, Vondel does not in fact mention her hands; he only makes a link between the 'covered breasts' and the son. One must gather from the poem that there was a family likeness between the portrait of Jan Six's mother and himself, and if one compares no. C 113 with known portraits of Jan Six (including the one by Rembrandt), any claim to resemblance does seem rather remote. Vondel's little poem provides no evidence that no. C 113 is identical with the portrait of Anna Wijmer owned by Jan Six.

What happened subsequently to the two portraits of Anna Wijmer is not very clear. The first-mentioned, which in 1703/04 was in the estate of Pieter (II) Six was, as I.H. van Eeghen[5] demonstrated, kept by the widow for the son Pieter (III), but whether he still owned it when he died without issue in 1755, or his widow at her death in 1763, is not known. We have also lost track of the other portrait, the one in the estate of Jan Six's widow. The deed of 6 January 1710 dividing up the estate, published in full by Van Eeghen (op. cit., pp. 66–67), does not include it or Rembrandt's portrait of Jan Six, because it was specifically bequeathed to one of the three children (which, one does not know). A short list of family portraits that, in accordance with the will of the widow of the eldest son Nicolaas in 1727, passed to the second son Jan (II) Six (1668–1750) does mention portraits of Jan Six (probably including the one by Rembrandt), but none of Anna Wijmer (Van Eeghen, op. cit., note 5, p. 68). It is quite possible that this portrait was by then already owned by Jan (II) and thus remained in the family. However, the fact that the age of the sitter in the painting now regarded as being of her can hardly match that of Anna Wijmer in 1641, and that a portrait of her by Jacob Backer must have existed, justifies one in considering another possibility. Two portraits from

Backer's hand from about 1640, showing a widow in a black headdress, are known; one of them (fig. 8) shows the woman full-length and seated facing left (Darmstadt, Hessisches Landesmuseum, no. 654; K. Bauch, *Jacob Adriaensz. Backer*, Berlin 1926, no. 196). The other (fig. 7) has the same woman in the same chair with a few variations, in reverse compared to the first, but seen only to the knees (Copenhagen, Statens Museum for Kunst, no 3713; Bauch, op. cit., no. 198; Sumowski *Gemälde* I, no. 64; to judge by the unusually narrow framing, considerably reduced in width and height). Can these, one wonders, conceivably be the portraits of Anna Wijmer mentioned in 1704 and 1709? The apparent age of the sitter (she looks to be in her 50s) is much closer to that of Anna Wijmer than that of the woman portrayed in no. C 113; and in her strong features it is easier to see not only the shrewd businesswoman and intelligent raiser of children she must have been, but also the likeness to her son Jan that Vondel comments on. Identifying this widow as Anna Wijmer can for the time being remain no more than attractive conjecture. All one knows of the pedigree of the two portraits is that the one in Copenhagen was mentioned in 1785 as in the collection of Count Otto Thott at Gaunø, and that the one in Darmstadt was acquired before 1820.

The present work is first recognizable for certain in an inventory of the possessions of a grandson of Jan (II) Six (1668–1750), again called Jan (1756–1827). At the time of his second marriage in Amsterdam on 22 July 1811, item no. 1 was described as 'Een Vrouwe Pourtrait Leevensgroote tot den Knie in 't swart gekleed, zittende in Een Leuningstoel door Rembrand van Rijn f 2500–'[3]. The sitter of no. 2, unmistakeably identical with Rembrandt's portrait of Jan Six, is likewise not named, probably because this had no bearing on the valuation. The same is true of the inventory of the estate of the same Jan Six, drawn up in The Hague on 6 August 1827; both paintings were then (at low valuations based on the inheritance tariff) described under nos. 36 and 37 as: 'een vrouwenportret met handen f 600,–' and 'een mansportret niet geacheveerd f 500,–'[3]. Not until the family portraits owned by Jan's son Hendrik Six, lord of Hillegom (1790–1847) were combined with the paintings from the Van Winter collection in what was occasionally called the 'Kabinet Six van Hillegom' did — as Van Eeghen has reported — the archivist Scheltema[6] talk about the portraits of Jan Six and his mother by Rembrandt.

In the light of the foregoing one can only say, with regard to the identification of the sitter in no. C 113 as Anna Wijmer, that the painting cannot be identical with her painting by Backer described in 1704 as in the estate of Pieter (II) Six — because it is not a work by Backer (see also below) — and that an identification with her portrait in the Jan Six estate is not really likely either if one takes seriously Vondel's words ('One recognizes the son from the mother's eye') describing a resemblance between mother and son. This being so, no conclusive significance can be attached to the inscription with the name Anna Wijmer, already mentioned as being on a piece of canvas on the back of the panel. The strange draughting of the inscription (with, for instance, no space left for the missing date of birth) suggests that it was copied from an incomplete original, to judge from the writing probably during the 18th century (see *5. Documents and sources*). It is also strange that the piece of canvas, the weave of which shows up clearly in the X-ray (which could point either to the adhesive used or to a ground), must judging by sinuosities in the threads have been part of a stretched and perhaps even painted canvas.

The fact that the painting cannot be traced with certainty as in the possession of the Six family before 1811 does not of course mean that they did not own it before then. It is for example quite conceivable that it was among the portraits that came into the possession of Jan (II) Six through his third marriage to Anna Elisabeth van den Bempden (1695–1773), who was a granddaughter of Nicolaes Tulp. The marriage must have brought a number of portraits of members of the Tulp family into the Six family (adding them to those already brought in with the marriage of Margaretha Tulp to Jan (I) Six). This applies, for example, to the equestrian portrait of Dirck Tulp (1624–1682), the only son of Nicolaes Tulp, done by Paulus Potter and still in the Six Collection (see I.H.v.E. in: *Amstelodamum. Maandblad...* 57, 1970, p. 189) and of the Collection's portraits of Dirck and his wife Anna Burgh by Jurrriaen Ovens from 1658 (H. Schmidt, *Jürgen Ovens*, Kiel 1922, nos. 258 and 206). That the present work, too, could have come into the Six family collection in this way opens up the possibility of the sitter being among the members or members-by-marriage of the Tulp family.

Where the identity of the artist is concerned, the Rembrandt attribution has long been accepted, since 1811, the first year in which the painting can be traced for certain. After it had been on view at the Rembrandt exhibition in Amsterdam in 1956 (cat. no. 45), the first doubts about the attribution were expressed by White[7] and Rosenberg[8], and it was rejected by Winkler who pointed out the old attribution of a portrait of Anna Wijmer to Jacob Backer[9]. Backer's authorship was rightly rejected by Sumowski[10], who thought the painting had to be accepted as a Rembrandt. Bauch[11] only voiced surprise at the youthful appearance of the supposedly 57-year-old woman, and did not cast doubt on the Rembrandt attribution. Gerson[12], who wrongly considered that the unusual kind of wood used for the panel — thought after 1956 to be djati —

Fig. 9. Rembrandt workshop (F. Bol?), *Portrait of a young woman*, canvas 72 × 62 cm. Dublin, National Gallery of Ireland



would have influenced the painting technique, was reminded by its 'heavy, inexpressive way' of the work of Bol. Schwartz[13] and Tümpel[14] both doubted the identification of the sitter, while the attribution to Rembrandt himself was doubted by the former and disbelieved by the latter.

As already argued, we too cannot accept an attribution to Rembrandt himself, and ascribing it to Backer is equally unthinkable — the portrait has none of his elegant and direct manner of painting. There can be little doubt that it comes from Rembrandt's workshop: this is suggested not only by the execution, which is rembrandtesque in the broad sense of the word, but also by the panel's being on poplar(?)wood. There is some reason to suspect[1] that the panel came from the same tree as the panel of Rembrandt's *Portrait of a young woman (Maria Trip?)* of 1639 in Amsterdam (no. A 131) — a circumstance that not infrequently occurs and gives cause to believe that both panels belonged to the same batch of wood and came together into the same workshop. The subject — a sitter shown with one hand resting on the armrest of the chair and the other sometimes holding a glove or handkerchief — is found in a range of variations in Rembrandt himself, in particular in the Boston *Portrait of Maria Bockenolle* (no. A 99), and in a number of studio products (nos. C 67, C 80 and C 114). The painting may be counted among the not inconsiderable number of portraits painted around 1640 by various of his assistants (on this see Chapter II).

The author cannot be named with certainty. A similar pedestrian treatment can be found, particularly in the clothing, in two women's portraits belonging to the same group of workshop pieces. One of these, the Amsterdam *Portrait of Elisabeth Bas* (Blankert *Bol*, pp. 13 and 57 and no. R200), previously attributed to Rembrandt and by Bredius to Bol, does not in the wrinkled face of the old woman lend itself all that well to comparison with the painting in the Six Collection. The other, the *Portrait of a young woman* in Dublin (fig. 9), likewise earlier attributed to Rembrandt and by Sumowski (*Gemälde* I, no. 159) to Bol, is poorly preserved precisely in the head but shows similarities with no. C 113 in the rather broad definition of form and, again, in the way large areas of the costume are rendered. Only the more strongly lit hand with the gloves, like those of Elisabeth Bas, show a more lively brushwork. The Amsterdam and Dublin paintings are, because of their similarity to Bol's earliest portraits dated 1642 (see Blankert *Bol*, nos. 117 and 121 in East Berlin and Baltimore and the undated no. 119 in Capetown), certainly in line to be regarded as being done by him in Rembrandt's studio about 1640. If it is from the same hand, the woman's portrait in the Six Collection would, as Gerson suggested, also be by Bol, and because of a strong tendency towards *sfumato* and (especially in the hands) a certain simplification of form have been done under the influence of Rembrandt's *Portrait of Agatha Bas* dated 1641 in Buckingham Palace (no. A 145). This would mean that, as the inscription says, the work dates from 1641, just before — on the evidence of the date of 1641 on the signed *Gideon's sacrifice* in the Rijksmuseum Het Catherijneconvent, Utrecht (Blankert *Bol*, no. 11; Sumowski *Gemälde* I, no. 79) — Bol set up on his own.

5. Documents and sources

Two pieces of canvas are stuck to the back of the panel (fig. 6). One shows an oval shield (as commonly used by married women) with the bearings of the Wijmer family (gold with three red undulating bends sinister). The other is rectangular and bears the words: 'Anne Wymer geb: obiet den 21 junij 165[.] / geweest regentesse van t' wale Weeshuijs./ op het end van den 16ooderste eeuw of / in het begin van den 17ooderste eeuw / getr: met jean Six.' The inscription, the writing of which looks 18th-century, gives the impression of having been copied, only half-understood, from an older text; there is for example no space left for the year of birth. The rectangular piece of canvas shows sinuosities in the horizontal threads, clearly evident especially in the X-ray; it is obviously a fragment from a canvas that had been stretched, primed and probably painted on. Both the oval and the rectangular piece would seem to come from a canvas on which a portrait of Anna Wijmer was painted and to show its front and back respectively.

6. Graphic reproductions

None, apart from 19th-century prints.

7. Copies

None.

8. Provenance

– Not identifiable with certainty as being in the possession of the Six family until the inventory, drawn up in Amsterdam on 22 July 1811 by the notary Arent Santhagens, of the property of Jan Six (1756–1827) at the time of his second marriage. There it was given as: 'No. 1. Een Vrouwe Pourtrait Leevensgroote tot den Knie in 't swart gekleed, zittende in Een Leuningstoel door Rembrand van Rijn f 2 500,-'. In the inventory of the estate of the same Jan Six drawn up on 6 August 1827 by the notary Jan Bas in The Hague, it is mentioned as no. 38: 'een vrouwenportret met handen f 600,-' Subsequently owned by Jan's son Hendrik Six, lord of Hillegom (1790–1847), who in 1822 married Lucretia Johanna van Winter; this combined the family portraits with the paintings in the Van Winter collection to form the 'Kabinet Six van Hillegom'[3].
– Subsequently owned by Jan Pieter Six (1824–1899) and Jan Six (1857–1926).

9. Summary

The portrait, painted on poplarwood, does in its execution show a certain resemblance to Rembrandt's work from around 1640 — and the date of 1641 it carries may thus very well give the right year — but comparison with them reveals substantial differences. An absence of effective suggestion of depth and strong characterization of form, stemming from a generally overcareful manner of painting, makes the attribution to Rembrandt, usual since 1811 but doubted or rejected a number of times after 1956, unacceptable. Both the manner of painting and the kind of wood used for the panel however suggest that this work was produced in Rembrandt's workshop. It is impossible to say for sure who painted it; Bol would seem a possibility.

The identification of the sitter as Anna Wijmer (1584–1654), the widow of Jean Six whose children included the poet, art collector and burgomaster Jan Six, rests on the Wijmer coat-of-arms and an (18th-century?) inscription on two pieces of canvas stuck to the back of the panel. Even if one does not count the youthful appearance of the sitter (who would supposedly be 57 years old) as a cogent objection, there are insufficient grounds for this identification. Documents show that Anna Wijmer's sons Pieter and Jan Six both owned a portrait of her, one mentioned as a work by 'Backer the Elder' in the estate of Pieter's son Pieter in 1704, the other listed without an artist's name in the estate of Jan's widow in 1709. It is out of the question for no. C 113 to be the same as the first (because it cannot be attributed to Jacob Adriaensz. Backer), and unlikely that it is identical with the second (because a poem by Vondel speaks of a facial resemblance to her son Jan). The age, pose and dress of the woman seen in this work give reason to supppose her to be a spinster who was 30–40 years of age around the year 1641.

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 M.G. de Boer, 'Vergeten leden van een bekend geslacht', *Jaarboek ..Amstelodamum* 42 (1948), pp. 10–34, esp. 14; cf. Amsterdam, City Archives, N.A. 6285, fol. 654.
3 I.H. van E[eghen], 'De familie Six en Rembrandts portretten', *Amstelodamum. Maandblad...* 58 (1971), pp. 112–116, esp. 112 note 1 (cf. Amsterdam, City Archives, N.A. 6285 fol. 749), 113 and 115.
4 J.F.M. Sterck, *Oorkonden van Vondel en zijn kring*, Bussum 1918, p. 291.
5 I.H. van Eeghen, 'Anna Wijmer en Jan Six', *Jaarboek...Amstelodamum* 76 (1984), pp. 36–68, esp. 54 and 63.
6 P. Scheltema, *Rembrand. Redevoering over het leven en de verdiensten van Rembrand van Rijn...*, Amsterdam 1853, pp. 87–88.
7 C. White, 'Rembrandt exhibitions in Holland', *Burl. Mag.* 98 (1956), pp. 321–324, esp. 322.
8 J. Rosenberg, 'Die Rembrandt-Ausstellungen in Holland', *Kunstchronik* 10 (1956), pp. 345–354, esp. 349.
9 F. Winkler, 'Echt, Falsch, Verfälscht' (part of: 'Die Rembrandt-Forschung im Lichte der Ausstellungen des Jahres 1956'), *Kunstchronik* 10 (1957), pp. 141–144, esp. 144.
10 Sumowski 1957/58, p. 223–247, esp. 225.
11 Bauch 500.
12 Gerson 235; Br.-Gerson 358.
13 Schwartz 1984, fig. 240, p. 380.
14 Tümpel 1986, cat. no. A 112.

C 114 Portrait of a seated woman with a handkerchief

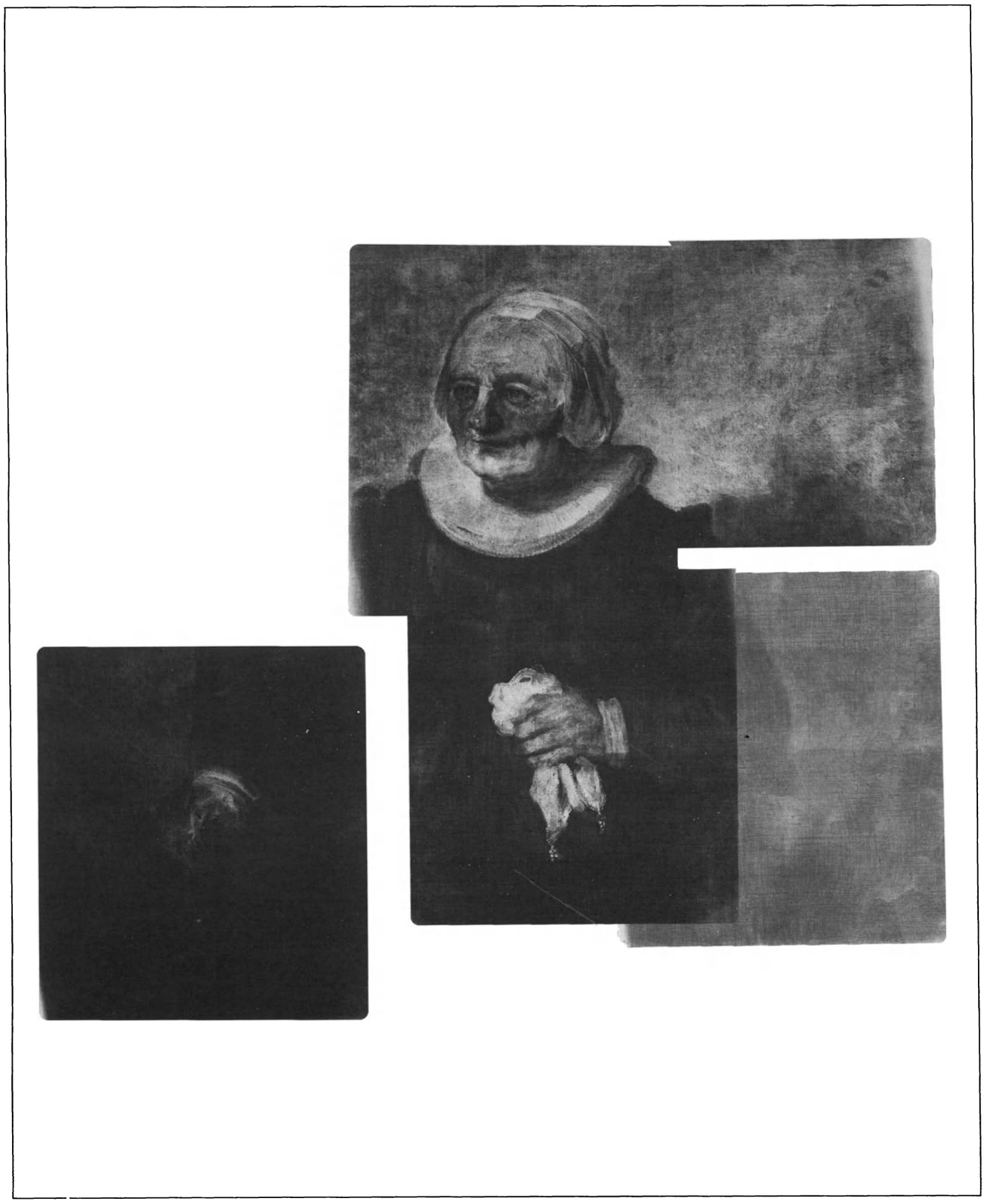
TORONTO, ART GALLERY OF ONTARIO
GIFT OF R.Y. EATON, 1956 AND MRS. R.Y. EATON, 1966

HDG 861; BR. 369; BAUCH 506; GERSON 249

Fig. 1. Canvas 124.5 × 100.3 cm



Fig. 2. X-Ray



1. Summarized opinion

A painting, well preserved in its vital areas, that like nos. C 97, C 106 and C 107 belongs to a group of works that can be attributed to Carel Fabritius. It was produced in the early 1640s (1644?), probably in Rembrandt's workshop.

2. Description of subject

A woman is seen to just below the knees, sitting in an armchair with the body turned slightly to the left, with the face and gaze rather further to the left still. Her right hand is on the end of an armrest, with the elbow raised somewhat so that the upper body tilts a little towards the right. The elbow of the left arm is on the other armrest, and a handkerchief is held in her left hand.

The woman is dressed in a black 'vlieger' coat worn over a black bodice and skirt. She wears a white, winged cap, a white ruff and simple white cuffs at the wrists; a ring is worn on the ring finger of her right hand. The light falls from the left onto the greater part of the body and at the upper right onto the wall behind her, in which a tall niche is seen and on which the figure casts a shadow. Beneath this, in semi-darkness, a closed book lies on a table.

3. Observations and technical information

Working conditions

Examined in July 1972 (S.H.L., E.v.d.W.) in good daylight and in the frame, with the aid of an ultraviolet and an infrared photograph and of 12 X-ray films together covering almost all of the painting; four of the latter, showing the head, the background to the right of it and the two hands, were received later.

Support

DESCRIPTION: Canvas, lined, 124.5 × 100.3 cm. Single piece. In the available X-ray films cusping is apparent along the top and both sides, with only vague distortion along the bottom.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: So far as can be seen from the available X-rays, there is cusping along the righthand side of varying pitch (13–20 cm), with the longest extending *c.* 35 cm into the canvas and the shortest some 20 cm. On the left there are two cusps about 13 cm in pitch, stretching *c.* 13 cm inwards. The cusping along the top was not measured.

Threadcount: 12.9 vertical threads/cm (12.5–13.2) and 13.8 horizontal threads/cm (12.5–15). In view of the great regularity in the density of the vertical threads and the wide variation in that of the horizontals, the warp may be assumed to run vertically. The canvas thus belongs among the few we have investigated that have more weft than warp threads. Given the present width just over 100 cm (described in 1811 as '41 pouces' [= 105.5 cm], see *8. Provenance*), an original standard width of one-and-a-half ells (*c.* 107 cm) is likely.

Ground

DESCRIPTION: A greyish tint, which seems to belong to the ground, shows through in thin places near the eyes and in the cap.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

Paint layer

CONDITION: The head, the lit parts of the ruff and the lit hand on the right are, apart from a few very tiny spot retouches, in sound condition. It is however clear, from the UV photograph in particular, that the painting has been retouched at many points elsewhere — in narrow bands along the edges and scattererd over a large part of the background, at the upper left above the figure and extending to the right from there to above the head, and then downwards to about halfway down the painting. In the dark costume practically the whole righthand part has been thinly overpainted, with the figure contour strengthened along its full height, and the same is true of the part at the lower left and of the skirt at the bottom centre. Elsewhere in the clothing folds have been accentuated, and contrasts with the collar, cuffs and handkerchief have been reinforced with dark paint. The upper part of the cast shadow from the head on the ruff has been refreshed. The hand on the left is poorly preserved — all the contour lines have been gone over, and isolated patches of pinkish paint on the thumb seems to show that the original cohesion of treatment has been lost. A small hole in the canvas is found to the left below the horizontal bar of the righthand armrest. Craquelure: an irregular pattern, of a kind common with 17th-century paintings, is fairly large in the light paint of the flesh areas.

DESCRIPTION: An animated and varied brushwork that can be readily followed in most places typifies the treatment of the head, together with a remarkably variegated colour-scheme in which pink in different shades predominates. The most strongly lit parts of the face are formed in a sometimes angular fashion, with firm, light accents immediately below the eye-pouch, on the forehead and below the mouth. Occasionally, at these places, small ridges of paint have built up at the edges and ends of the brushstrokes. Shadow passages are often to a varying extent let into reserves, with the light paint brought round them with free, loose strokes or partly brushed over them. In the forehead the paint is applied thickly right up to the hairline; strokes of pinkish and grey paint suggest the roots of the hair, which is combed hard back and covered by the cap. A rather pronounced pink is used in the middle of the forehead, with the tint becoming lighter and greyer towards the temple on the right. The wrinkles on the brow and above the nose are indicated summarily in a somewhat darker pink and brown. The shadow in the eye-socket on the right is set down with a dark, ruddy brown that towards the right is placed slightly over the flesh colour. The eyebrows and borders of the upper eyelids have a relatively linear appearance. In the eyes the grey of the irises has been applied later than the black used to give the edges; small, fragmented catchlights are placed in the not completely round pupils with dots of grey and white. In the immediate vicinity of the eyes a pink flesh tint has been used, with a subdued pink on the ridge of the nose where at the top the paint is applied with a series of horizontal strokes and elsewhere with strokes following the form. A bold, square catchlight has been placed on the tip. The shadows on and along the underside of the nose are very dark greenish grey and dark brown, with a flick of flesh tint on the wing to the right. The cheeks and chin shows a remarkable gamut of colour — greyish, whitish, pink and tints tending towards a violet, with a strong pink-red on the righthand cheek; in combination with the free brushwork, this diversity of hues provides a broad and free rendering of plastic form. The mouth is painted wet-in-wet with the surrounding flesh colour, in brownish and light red paint, the mouth-line consisting of a linked series of strokes. The shadow area to the right under the chin is done in a brownish paint, and the reflexions of light with yellow brown and, by the angle of the jaw, some pink.

The shape, material and lighting of the cap (the last is quite complicated on the right) are handled fluently and skilfully. At the top a fair measure of impasto is used in the highest light, alternating with strokes that follow the curves of the shape and with a series of small brushstrokes that, set close together, are at right angles to them. A brown-grey is used in the shadows, and a thin grey that tends towards blue for the openings in the wings. The edge of the white ruff is, on the left, placed over the black of the costume; on the right the lower outline seems in part to be defined by the black brought up against it. Otherwise, there appear to be two layers involved in the structure of the collar — a broad underpainting brushed with the curve, with its relief still

Fig. 3. Detail (1 : 1)



evident in the paint surface, and a top layer in which the brushstrokes are placed along the pleats. The dark in the gaps seems to consist of thin, translucent paint brushed over the white, and the lower edge that catches the light was added subsequently with strokes of white. In the overall appearance, general form outweighs the drawing of detail. The shadow cast by the head on the ruff, which according to the X-ray is set in a reserve in the white, is painted with a thick and rather murky grey (the righthand upper part of which has, as already mentioned, been overpainted).

In the very fluently painted hand on the right a broad, broken brushwork marks the relief of the back of the hand, merging where this meets the fingers into strokes that follow the direction of the folds in the skin. In the fingers the brushstrokes are placed partly along their length and partly, in the lowest lit phalanges, crosswise as are a series of almost white highlights on the index and middle finger. At some points an intense yellow has been used for the shadows on the fingers, with red-brown in the dark contours. The handkerchief is rendered with loose, elegant brushstrokes using thick paint in light tints with brown-grey in the shadows. The image of the hand on the left is defined too much by overpainting, and probably also wearing, to give any idea of how it was originally done. A flat black, supplemented with dark greys, predominates in the heavily overpainted dark costume; little can now been made out of the indication of buttons on the bodice and folds in the skirt.

The background is executed for the most part in dark grey (once again greatly overpainted) and, on the right, in lighter grey and grey-brown. The dark grey is applied flatly, but around the head and in the area to the right of it the brushwork is very varied in its direction and at many places one gets the impression — confirmed by the X-rays — that lighter paint applied with clear brushstrokes is masked by a thin, dark paint; the ridges of the relief are occasionally visible (due to wearing of the top layer). The backrest of the chair just visible to the left of the figure, and done in a dark yellowish grey, stands out hardly at all against the background wall. The armrests, where they catch the light, are painted in a warm yellow-brown, with no evident sheen of light. The tablecloth on the right shows a heavy brown in the lightest part and a flat, very dark brown in the shadow; the book is indicated broadly with dark, yellowish paint.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

X-Rays

The radiographic image in many respects matches what one expects from the paint surface. It may be seen that around the head, and especially to the right of it, there are traces of very wide brushstrokes using radioabsorbent paint, such as one can find in the paint surface only further over to the right. The reserve left in this for the figure is clearly apparent. In the case of the head it is generally on the cramped side, and the final form is rather fuller; the lefthand wing of the cap, for instance, is wider in its final execution, and taken further downwards. The collar had, on both sides, a horizontal, straight top border, and in the final execution is extended over the paint of the background to its present rounded form. The underpainting of the collar with the brushstrokes following the form, already described, is in part clearly visible. In the face, too, the radiographic image seems to a major extent to be determined by strokes that were set down at an early stage and that, while still playing a role in the end result, are supplemented by strokes of an evidently less radioabsorbent material that to a large degree decide the colour and modelling. The great similarity between the brushwork seen in the left hand and in the handkerchief and the X-ray image of this is evidence of the great directness with which this passage was executed.

Signature

At the lower left, scarcely discernible to the naked eye but reasonably legible in photographs specially taken for the purpose <*Rembrandt. f / 1644*> (with the date diagonally below the *f*). The script makes a far from characteristic impression — the letters lack homogeneity, and angular elements (in the *a, n* and top loop of the *f*) are definitely untypical. It is impossible to regard the signature as autograph Rembrandt.

Varnish

Because of selective cleaning the varnish still present is unevenly distributed, and thicker in the dark passages than in the light.

4. Comments

Up to now the Rembrandt literature has always concerned itself with the identity of the sitter — of which more later — and hardly at all with the painting's authenticity. Most authors, including Bauch[1] and Gerson[2], accepted the Rembrandt attribution; Schwartz[3] gave it the benefit of the doubt, and only Tümpel[4] looked on it (though without giving his reasons) as a workshop piece. The latter opinion may be judged to be correct. The highly personal manner of painting, in the head and hand on the right especially, shows a distinctive character that differs from Rembrandt's manner of painting to a decisive degree. This personal stamp lies mostly in the sometimes quite bold independence of the brushstroke and colour in relation to the form being depicted. It is seen most clearly in the head, where both light and shadow passages are marked by a very pronounced use of colour and where the brushwork — in particular around the eyes — shows a quite individual rhythm in bold paintstrokes that, placed over an often diagonally-brushed flesh colour, give a vivid suggestion of the form without describing it accurately. On these points (but also others such as the blurring of the facial contour and the lighting in the cap and collar) the treatment exhibits a quite decisive resemblance to the *Portrait of a woman* in the Duke of Westminster's collection (no. C 107). As we explain in discussing the treatment of that painting, it and its companion-piece no. C 106, as well as the Pasadena *Bust of Rembrandt* (no. C 97), are so like the later work of Carel Fabritius that one is justified in ascribing these paintings to him; and the same is true of the woman's portrait in Toronto.

It is only broadly possible to be more precise in situating the painting in relation to the work of Fabritius and Rembrandt. The possibility that it was done in Rembrandt's workshop cannot be ruled out. The inscription *Rembrandt. f / 1644* might indicate this, but for the time being nothing can be said about the age of the inscription, and the possibility of its being a later addition has to be allowed for. In any case, one can well imagine that the work was produced rather later than the Duke of Westminster's two portraits; this could be deduced from the lively rendering of the woman's left hand holding the handkerchief, and from her animated

Fig. 4. Detail (1 : 1)



pose — as if she were turning round towards her husband portrayed in a companion-piece. The freedom of movement and the motif of the hand with the handkerchief can however also both be interpreted as a direct reminiscence of Rembrandt's *Portrait of Cornelis Claesz. Anslo and his wife* in Berlin (no. A 143), dating from 1640.

As has just been said, the sitter's pose points to

Fig. 5. Detail with signature (reduced)



there having been a companion-piece. In 1811 the painting was sold together with the *Portrait of a minister* now in Cologne (Br. 237) — then known as 'Le portrait de J.C. Sylvius' — but the two works were not described as pendants; it is not known how long they had been in the same ownership. (Hofstede de Groot's identification of the man's portrait with a work sold in Amsterdam without a companion-piece in 1778, is on the evidence of differing dimensions and description incorrect; see HdG 752.) It was only later that Smith[5], naming the portraits as those of Justus Lipsius and his wife, saw the two works as pendants; since then the idea has invariably been repeated in the literature, with greater or lesser conviction. Since Vosmaer[6] saw the man's portrait as being a posthumous portrayal of Jan Cornelisz. Sylvius (d. 1638), because of the likeness with Rembrandt's etched portraits of him from 1633 (B. 266) and 1646 (B. 280), it followed that the female sitter must be his widow Aeltje van Uylenburch (1572–1644), who was an older cousin of Saskia. There is however insufficient hard evidence for this assumption, even though Bredius (in his comments on Br. 237) does mention portraits of the Sylvius couple made by Rembrandt and owned by a grandson. Hofstede de Groot[7] (probably rightly) rejected the identification of the preacher seen in the portrait as Sylvius, mainly because of what he regarded as a poor resemblance to the etched portraits, and Vey and Kesting[8] agreed. Hofstede de Groot[9] certainly thought that the man's and woman's portraits were a pair, but this notion too is open to serious doubt. The difference in the dimensions, coupled with that in layout makes it improbable, and there are also differences in manner of painting (even though, singularly enough, the Cologne *Portrait of a minister* is also possibly by Carel Fabritius, albeit from a rather later phase close to that of the Rotterdam *Bust of a man (self-portrait?)*; Sumowski *Gemälde* II, no. 603). The identity of the woman sitter thus for the time being remains unknown.

5. Documents and sources

None.

6. Graphic reproductions

None.

7. Copies

None.

8. Provenance

- Coll. L.B. Coclers, sale Amsterdam (C.S. Roos and others) 7 August 1811 (Lugt 8056), no. 64: 'Rembrandt van Rhyn. Haut 50, large 41 pouces [= 128.7 × 105.5 cm]. Sur Toile. Une femme déjà agée d'une physionomie riante assise dans un fauteuil tenant de la main gauche un mouchoir blanc et a la coude appuyé sur le bras d'un fauteuil, la main droite est posée sur le second bras du fauteuil dans une demie teinte obscure. La naïveté et la bonne humeur sont peintes dans la physionomie de cette personne, le coloris est d'une vérité étonnante, d'un excellent dessein, très-délicat, qui fait un extraordinaire à Rembrandt' (2400 guilders to Roos).
- Coll. Cardinal Fesch, sale Rome 17–18 March 1845, no. 192 (as 'Portrait de la Veuve de Juste Lipse') (3410 scudi).
- Coll. Sir G.L. Holford, Dorchester House, London; sale London (Christie's) 17–18 May 1928, no. 35.
- Coll. R.Y. Eaton, Toronto; gift of R.Y. Eaton, 1956, and Mrs. R.Y. Eaton, 1966.

9. Summary

The very personal manner of painting, especially in the head and hands, is typified by a forthright use of the brush and occasional bold colours and differs from that of Rembrandt during the 1640s. The work shares this treatment with a group of paintings that also includes the Pasadena *Bust of Rembrandt* (no. C 97) and a pair of portraits in the coll. Duke of Westminster (nos. C 106 and C 107). All these paintings can be attributed to Carel Fabritius, and were probably done when he was working as an assistant in Rembrandt's studio around 1641/43. It is not impossible that the date of 1644 that appears on the Toronto painting provides an accurate dating.

The portrait undoubtedly had a pendant; this cannot however be identified, and the woman cannot be named.

REFERENCES

1 Bauch 506.
2 Gerson 249.
3 Schwartz 1984, p. 380.
4 Tümpel 1986, cat. no. A 113.
5 J. Smith, *A catalogue raisonné of the works of the most eminent Dutch, Flemish and French painters* V, London 1836, nos. 349 and 557.
6 C. Vosmaer, *Rembrandt. Sa vie et ses oeuvres*, The Hague 1877, pp. 261–262, 536.
7 C. Hofstede de Groot, *Arnold Houbraken und seine 'Groote Schouburgh' kritisch beleuchtet*, p. 195, note 2.
8 H. Vey and A. Kesting, *Katalog der niederländischen Gemälde von 1550 bis 1800 im Wallraf-Richartz-Museum und im öffentlichen Besitz der Stadt Köln*, Cologne 1967, pp. 87–88.
9 HdG 752 and 861.

C 115 Bust of a woman with a book, in fanciful dress

LOS ANGELES, CAL., WIGHT ART GALLERY, UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA

HDG 317A; BR. 351; BAUCH 260; GERSON –

1. Summarized opinion

An originally oval studio work from the early and mid-1630s, executed in two phases and probably by two different hands, which was given its present rectangular shape only later. The original female portrait can be attributed to the author of nos. C 70 and C 71.

2. Description of subject

The sitter is seen to the waist, facing three-quarters left; her left hand, just visible, rests on an open book. Over curling hair, hanging loose, she wears several scarves folded as a turban, apparently held together with a gold-coloured jewel; the ends of these hang over her shoulders. Beneath a fur-trimmed jacket, open at the front, can be seen the square neckline of a dark bodice, a shawl and a pleated shirt. The light falls from the left on the woman's well-filled face, leaving large parts of the book and hand in shadow. On the right the cast shadow of the head on the wall is vaguely seen.

3. Observations and technical information

Working conditions

Examined on 24 October 1971 (B.H., E.v.d.W.) in good light and out of the frame, with the help of five X-ray films (4 covering the whole painting and 1 of the head); a complete set of films was received later from the Conservation Center, Los Angeles County Museum of Art. Examined again on 1 November 1985 (J.B., E.v.d.W.) in excellent light.

Support

DESCRIPTION: Oak panel, grain vertical, originally oval *c.* 67 × 52.5 cm and at some time filled in to make a rectangle (entailing the loss of small segments of the original oval panel on all four sides) which was then let into another panel, cradled on the back. The present painted surface measures 65 × 50.7 cm, while the whole panel including unpainted edges and battens attached on the right and top and bottom is 67 × 52.7 cm. Joins in the original panel cannot be made out, but stopped woodworm passages that show up light in the X-rays, in vertical bands at 11–14 cm from the lefthand edge and 4–9 cm from the right, suggest that there is here some sapwood along the edges of parts that have been stuck together.
SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

Ground

DESCRIPTION: Shows through in translucent areas, especially in the penumbra of the face where it appears as a yellow-brown.
SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

Paint layer

CONDITION: Moderately well preserved. Some retouches (in the flesh-tones, in a rather purplish pink) can be seen on both cheeks and along the ridge of the nose and on the jawbone on the right; some also in the dark bodice. There is a scratch in the background above the headdress. The paint used on the later added spandrels extends past the joins; at the lower right it penetrates deep into the black of the clothing, while at the lower left it continues to the outline of the book cover. Craquelure: a few fine cracks and one or two larger vertical ones are seen in the white of the shirt, and a few shrinkage cracks on the righthand shoulder and in the book.
DESCRIPTION: The background is painted in mainly opaque greys with brushstrokes that are everywhere apparent, running in various directions. A rather darker layer is visible in small patches just below the ends of the hair (probably the original background, see below under *X-Rays* and *4. Comments.*

The lit parts of the face have a clearly visible brushwork that in general consistently follows the curved contours and forms and in one instance, on the upper lip, the direction of the light. Here and there the brushstroke is a little scumbled, for instance in the thin translucent pink used on the nose and both cheeks. In the shadow parts the handling of paint is marked by the use of alternating brown and grey tints and a varying degree of translucency. The reflected light along the jawbone is shown in an opaque, cool grey.

The eyes are done in a virtually identical manner; they are marked mainly by the way the irises, in thin grey, are outlined with a closed, perfectly circular ring of brown-black, which is sometimes just inside the reserve left for the iris in the white of the eye. A distinct dot of greyish white (almost lozenge-shaped on the left) forms a catchlight in the upper left of the iris; the light patch opposite it is rather thinner and more translucent (instead of — as is usual in Rembrandt — lighter and thicker) than the grey in the remainder of the iris. The inside corners of the eyes are shown with two tints of pink and a small black accent that, at least in the lefthand eye, closely follows the curve. The eyebrows are placed in reserves left in the flesh colour, and worked up on the left with a thinnish grey-brown that helps to show the convexity, and on the right with darker strokes that extend some way over the flesh colour. The lefthand eye-socket is in shades of yellow, pink and grey, while that on the right is in similar tints applied rather more thickly. The shadow along the ridge of the nose, which begins as a rather scumbled grey-brown, is done in shades of translucent brown with a little flesh colour and some pink, effectively suggesting the curving of the wing of the nose. A thick dab of white forms a highlight on the nose-tip.

The mouth area shows a similar manner of painting — between the somewhat translucent areas in the two corners the fullness of the top lip is achieved with small strokes of a cool pink, aided by a slightly bowed dark mouth-line. The underlip is set down in a warmer tint, over which small light vertical brushstrokes are placed to suggest the surface structure. The contour of the lit face against the hair nowhere offers a strong contrast, but is instead soft and in part somewhat transparent. A hard contrast is likewise avoided in the transition from the flesh tint of the forehead and the brown of the hair; sometimes strokes of brown run out over the flesh colour, while the flesh colour is also sometimes brushed over or along a curl. Fairly thick black and thinner greys placed in the brown give shape to the curls. Along the edges the grey of the background seems here and there to lie over curls painted earlier.

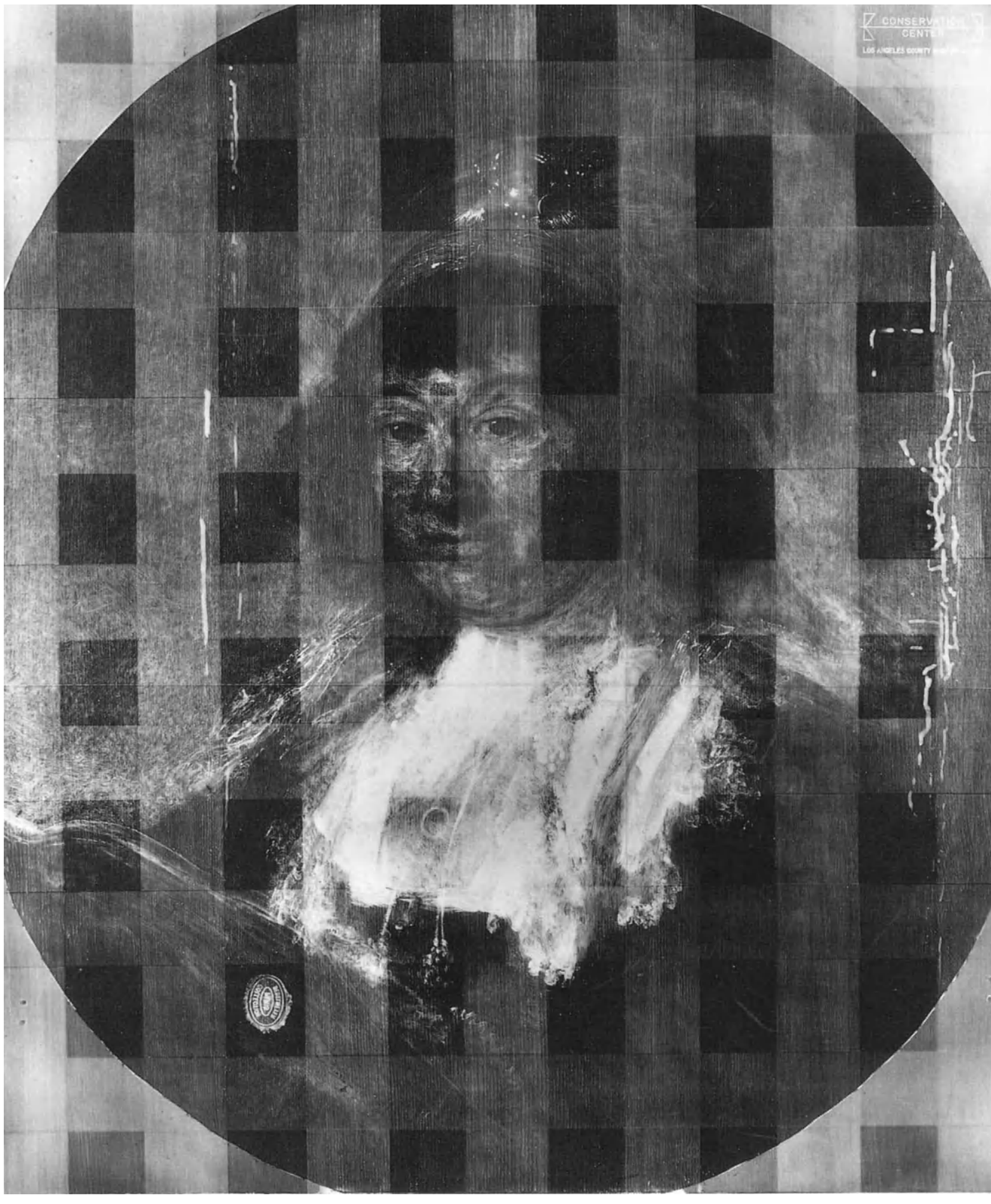
The fine folds in the headdress are shown, with strokes and thin brushlines done almost like hatching, in various tints of green, ochre, red-brown and dull brown, differing to suit the light. The shape of the gold-coloured metal ornament is defined in ochres and browns, with very finely-drawn sheens and reflexions of light. Below this the bottommost scarf, ends of which hang down onto the shoulder, has lively, fine highlights; on the shoulder on the left white highlights are intersected by strokes of black. The shawl is handled in a somewhat similar way (with a paint surface complicated further by the underlying structure, see *X-Rays*); the folds are shown with long strokes of quite thick paint, and the decoration with black dots and small lines and green blobs and flicks set at right angles to the folds. The shirt has been laid in a fairly thick white and grey-white and has small strokes of brown in a variety of tints to show the pleats; the ornament at the edging is done deftly in greys.

The bodice is executed in brown, like the fur trim which is worked up with strokes of an opaque grey. The jacket is black, on which is placed the zigzag line of white of the edge of the cuff. The hand is done fairly flatly in a murky colour; the paint can be seen to continue beneath the curling page of the book, which is done mostly in grey. The page shows a little ochre brown in the curling part, with a yellow-white rim of light. The cut edges of the pages are done coarsely and nonchalantly with strokes of

Fig. 1. Panel 65 × 50.7 cm



Fig. 2. X-Ray



grey-brown and black, with some red-brown for the binding.
SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

X-Rays

The image, marred somewhat by the cradle on the supporting panel, shows from the very first glance that the painting has undergone substantial alterations. This applies in the first place to the spandrels used to expand the originally oval panel into a rectangle. These additions have evidently been painted or given a ground, or both, with a material so different from the rest of the painting that they show up very much lighter; the expansion of the panel obviously took place using different material and at some later time.

It is obvious that, though the head including the headgear shows up clearly without interference from other forms, the costume appears for the most part quite different from its present aspect. A collar, lying in folds and decorated with lace, is visible in a fairly well-detailed and probably completed state; this continues downwards further than the present shirt, and is intersected by the present curling page of the book (which can hardly be seen in the X-ray). The remainder of the book is however readily visible, as is the woman's cuff and a few light traces at the position of her hand. In the centre of the collar, now overpainted, the radiograph shows a ring on a cord hanging round the neck, and below this two thin cords with tasselled bandstrings to either side of a jewel.

The background appears quite light on either side, with a clear brushstroke pattern. The reserve for the figure follows, on the left, the present contour; the tails of the scarves lying over the shoulder seem to have been placed over the paint of the background. The shape of the book, on the other hand, had a clear reserve left for it. The reserve for the hair is on the left occasionally wider than the present shape of this. In the right background the reserve for the contour of the figure seems to have been less steep than the present outline; the hanging tail of the scarf interferes with both.

The traces of the brushstroke in the face match to a great extent those apparent at the paint surface, and form a fine pattern of strokes that mostly curve to follow the form.

Stopped woodworm passages are seen clearly to the left and right sides, as does a wax seal 'Collection Sedelmeyer Paris'.

Signature

In the left background in brown-grey <*Rembrandt. f / 1635*>. Because of minor wear, the *R* and *b* especially are not complete. The rather spiky script and the not entirely cohesive form of the inscription (due to fragmented drawing of some letters) make it doubtful that it is autograph. Gerson[1] spoke of a 'faked signature'.

Varnish

The layer of varnish gives the whole colour-scheme a somewhat warmer character than the painting actually has, but does not hinder observation.

4. Comments

All the changes that, on the evidence of the X-rays, the painting has undergone make a judgment of its authenticity far from simple, especially as it is hard to reconstruct the extent and sequence of the alterations. Bauch[2], like Hofstede de Groot[3], Valentiner[4] and Bredius[5] before him, accepted it as an original Rembrandt. A subsequent negative verdict by Gerson[1], who even doubted its 17th-century origin, could not in the absence of X-rays take account of these changes. (An opinion by B.B. Fredericksen in: *Burl. Mag.* 108, 1966, p. 378, quoted by Gerson actually related to a different painting!) What is certain is that the enlargement of the panel to its present rectangular format must be regarded as having occurred only much later, and that the face as perhaps the most intact part of the painting can offer the most reliable indication for an attribution and dating. Our assessment will therefore be based on this.

The manner of painting in the face must be termed very careful, and quite rembrandtesque in the means employed and effect achieved. The brushwork results in a convincing suggestion of chiaroscuro and plasticity, and the use of translucent paint that lets the ground show through adds to this. Furthermore, the nature of the short brushstrokes, lying one beside the other and following the plastic form in the lit passages, together with the more blended handling of paint in the half-shadows, is very similar indeed to what one sees in Rembrandt's portraits from 1633/34. If the face fails nevertheless to convince, it is because the rembrandtesque elements are used with slightly too academic an effect and with rather too much accentuation of individual components of the picture. The meticulous brushstroke follows the convexities above and below along the eyes almost too systematically, to an extent where system takes precedence over observation. The perfectly circular irises, with their dark outlining, stand out against their surroundings, emphasizing a not entirely successful integration of the parts into the whole. All the features borrowed from Rembrandt's style, carefully though they are employed, still fail to produce pictorial cohesion of the kind one expects to find in Rembrandt. Though it is highly likely that the work was done in his workshop, one cannot detect his own hand in this face. The execution is, however, strongly reminiscent of another, just as carefully painted female portrait that can be placed in Rembrandt's studio — the one dated 1633 in Braunschweig (no. C 71). Nearly all the features that we have described above can also be found in that painting, especially the pattern of brushstrokes around the eyes and the strongly contrasting and perfectly round irises. (Even the way the catchlights are placed in the eyes, with the left one tending towards a lozenge shape, is identical.) The thoroughness with which the reflected lights are placed in the half-shadows, and the use of opaque paint in merging intermediate tints, are likewise common to both paintings. There is sufficient reason to attribute the face in no. C 115 — and thus probably the whole of the painting in its original state — to the same workshop assistant who was responsible for the Braunschweig woman's portrait (and the associated man's portrait, no. C 70).

Despite what one might think, it is not entirely clear which costume and cap originally went with

Fig. 3. Detail (1 : 1)



this (one can assume intact) face. The X-rays suggest a bourgeois costume that, taken together with the previous oval shape of the panel, appears to produce a conventional female portrait. Yet the lace collar does not entirely match this — it seems less wide than one might expect, and shows loose folds; moreover, we know of no woman's portrait from the 1630s that has the bandstrings with their tassels. Finally, it is strange too that there is no trace of any kind of white cap or diadem with lace. It is most improbable that in this first phase the book was already part of the composition; besides it forming a jarring element in the conventional female portrait, one cannot suppose that it would have covered over part of the lace collar. This means, however, that the light background to the left of the figure similarly cannot belong to the first version, as it shows a reserve left for the book. The conclusion that the present background is not the original one is confirmed by the observation that here and there on the left the background paint lies on top of the hair, and occasionally leaves a dark underlying layer exposed. On the right the background must, to judge from the X-rays, originally have been lighter — with the shoulder-line rising somewhat less steeply — and have been overpainted later with the present dark cast shadow. In its original state the background, too, must in its distribution of light and shade have looked like the woman's portrait in Braunschweig.

The question of whether the changes in the costume and headgear were made at the same time as, and by the same hand as, the addition of the book cannot be answered with absolute certainty; but they probably were. The headdress seems to have been done by a Rembrandt-like hand, but the rather graphic and not very sensitive handling of the small patterns in the scarves does not match the careful execution of the face, and the rather amorphous rendering of the shirt and shawl do so even less. The book and the hand resting on it form the least attractive part of the painting, but the differences between the execution of these and that of the costume and headgear do not necessarily point to different hands or phases.

Whether or not the two sets of changes were made by one or two hands, the insensitive treatment gives no reason to ascribe them to the author of the original painting. The question then arises of the status of the clearly unauthentic signature and date placed on the paint of the present background. If (as cannot be ruled out) the background was overpainted in Rembrandt's workshop, the inscription may have been appended by the assistant responsible for doing this. In that case, the date could relate to the year in which he carried out the alteration, and one could look on the original woman's portrait as having been painted in 1633 (like that in Braunschweig) or 1634.

The transformation of a conventional female portrait into a figure in fanciful costume — something like a sibyl — is surprising. One is reminded of the mention of a 'cleine oostersche vrouwen troni, het conterfeisel van H. Ulenburg's huijsvrouwe nae Rembrant' (a small oriental woman's *tronie*, the likeness of H. Ulenburg's wife after Rembrant) in the estate of the painter Lambert Jacobsz. of Leeuwarden in 1637 (Strauss *Doc.*, 1637/4). It is of course impossible to confirm that there was such a link.

5. Documents and sources

None.

6. Graphic reproductions

None.

7. Copies

1. Panel 50 × 39.5 cm, earlier Vienna, coll. Max Ritter von Gutmann. See W.R. Valentiner, *Rembrandt*, Stuttgart-Berlin 1909 (Kl. d. K. II), p. 61; W. Martin, 'Rembrandt-Rätsel', *Der Kunstwanderer* 1921–1922, pp. 31–32). This painting was regarded as an original until no. C 115 became known.

8. Provenance

- Coll. Fitzjames, England.
- Castle Cellamare, Naples.
- Dealer Böhler, Munich.
- Dealer Sedelmeyer, Paris (*Catalogue of 100 paintings* XII, 1913, no. 21).

9. Summary

The X-rays reveal drastic alterations in the painting that must originally have been a conventional female portrait, and only the face can today be regarded as an intact remnant of the original state. The execution of this work, though quite Rembrandt-like, must be attributed to one of his workshop assistants, the same who was responsible for a pair of portraits, dating from 1633, in Braunschweig (nos. C 70 and C 71). A first change, probably made soon afterwards (though very likely by a different hand) resulted in the present fanciful costume, and probably also in the addition of the book and hand resting on it as well as the overpainting of the background. The enlargement of the panel to its present rectangle took place only later.

REFERENCES

1 Br.-Gerson 351.
2 Bauch 260.
3 HdG 317A.
4 W.R. Valentiner, *Rembrandt. Wiedergefundene Gemälde*, Stuttgart-Berlin-Leipzig 1923, 2nd edn (Kl. d. K.), p. 38.
5 Br. 351.

C 116 Landscape with the baptism of the Eunuch

HANOVER, NIEDERSÄCHSISCHE LANDESGALERIE, ON LOAN FROM PELIKAN AG HANNOVER

HDG –; BR. 439; BAUCH 542; GERSON 195

1. Summarized opinion

A reasonably well preserved work that differs from Rembrandt's style in approach and execution and cannot be seen as authentic. Probably painted around 1640 in Rembrandt's workshop; an attribution to Ferdinand Bol is justified by certain similarities with his later work.

2. Description of subject

In a mountainous landscape the shadowed foreground is made up of a relatively flat, bare stretch of ground, with a little vegetation only on the extreme left in front of a riverbank. Behind this a cliff rises to the right of the river; the greater part of this is practically bare and shrouded in shadow, though a slope at the lefthand end, with some trees and bushes, catches sunlight falling from the left. Further to the right a path winds upwards to the top of a bare slope, where there are some trees on the right skyline. At the foot of the sunlit slope, by the riverbank, there is a gnarled tree amidst some bushes. The wall of the cliff is bare above this, while behind it there are larches and other trees. In the far distance on the left is a town with a squat tower, a large round building and an obelisk; beyond this there is hilly country. From the town the river loops towards the front, forms a waterfall and then takes a sharp bend towards the left around a wooded tongue of land seen in shadow, where there is a second waterfall. On the riverbank just in front of the town one can see two horses. The sky is fairly light on the left, with darker clouds on the right above the cliffs.

The Eunuch's retinue occupies the flat terrain in the foreground. He himself kneels by the riverbank, clad in a carmine-red garment, and is being baptised by Philip, who wears an olive-green cloak. Just to the right of them stands a page holding the Eunuch's turban and cloak, while further to the right there is an open coach with a large parasol, drawn by two horses; a negro coachman sits on the driving seat. The coach is surrounded by riders, one of whom is in the shadow close to the bank.

3. Observations and technical information

Working conditions

Examined on 15 January 1969 (J.B., B.H.) in good daylight and artificial light, out of the frame, with the aid of radiographs covering the whole painting; prints of these, together with UV and IR photographs, were received later. Examined afresh on 20 August 1982 (J.B., E.v.d.W.), with the help of a microscope.

Support

DESCRIPTION: Canvas, lined. The original canvas measures 82.6 × 105 cm, and the edges of the lining canvas seen projecting beyond this bring the dimensions up to 84 × 106.5 cm. Cusping along the bottom and lefthand side can be seen extending 18–22 cm upwards and to the right respectively. At the top and right the threads of the weave run perfectly straight. Furthermore there are no marks of a stretcher at the top and right, such as there are to be seen at the bottom and left. It may be deduced from this that the canvas was cut down (by at least 10–15 cm) at the top and right and that this happened only after the marks of the stretcher had formed.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: The cusping already mentioned has a pitch of 8.5–12 cm at the bottom and 11–12 cm at the left. Threadcount: 10.8 vertical threads/cm (10–11.5), 13.4 horizontal threads/cm (13–14.2). The vertical threads show many more thickenings than the horizontal, so the warp probably runs horizontal. Because of the similar weave structure, the canvas used for the Amsterdam *Two dead peacocks and a girl* (no. A 134) may well have come from the same bolt.

Ground

DESCRIPTION: Not seen for certain. A brown-yellow is exposed at places where there has been paint loss in the squat tower.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

Paint layer

CONDITION: The relief of the paint surface was flattened during the lining, and probably so much pressure was used that the weave of the canvas can now be clearly seen at the front. Other than in the most brightly lit part of the cliff area the entire surface has suffered to some extent, most badly so in the brown passages on the right. The craquelure in the sky has an unusual, elongated pattern, perhaps due to long neglect of the stretching of the canvas.

DESCRIPTION: The flat land in the foreground is painted in browns with, on the extreme right, an indication of cart-tracks in black. The vegetation right at the front is done with deft strokes of dark brown and matt green. The coach and riders are in dark and light grey-browns with, especially in the horses and the faces of the men, an orangeish brown, and with some carmine red in the upholstery of the coach, the harness and the cap of the rider furthest to the right. This rather sketchily done group, which differs little in colour from the surroundings, has effectively placed, crisp catchlights and contours in light paint, those of the armourclad rider nearest to the front being the strongest and indeed almost white. In a similar way the colourful figures on the riverbank show vivid yellowish contours on the shoulder of Philip's olive-green cloak, orange highlights on the Eunuch's carmine-red cloak, and almost white accents on the turban held by the page, who wears a greenish blue cloak. About 8 cm to the left of this group a brownish colour shows through, suggesting that there was here a figure that was painted out at a later stage.

The cliff-face, seen in shadow, is painted quite thinly in greens and flattish browns, with an indication of ruggedness and winding paths in black. On the partly-lit face above the coach an underlying layer of black shows through. In the area close to the top of the cliff there are, particularly along the contour, strokes of yellow-brown that lie partly over vegetation indicated in dark paint with orange-brown lights. This cliff area continues beneath the paint of the sky, where it is still visible in relief. Further to the left there are in the sky almost vertical brushstrokes, both showing through as light or dark tints and apparent in relief, that more or less link up with the lit, steep cliff-face; the uppermost strokes reach almost to the upper edge of the canvas, as is also plainly evident in an infrared photograph (fig. 3) (see also *X-Rays* below). Under the microscope one can see ledges of pure white, as well as coarse grains of greyish pigment; one gets the impression that the form now covered over with paint was only ever blocked-out as an underpainting.

The lit slope is painted fluently with mostly quite long and slightly curving strokes, with scant detail, in light yellow and orangeish brown-yellow placed over greyish yellow. The tree and shrubs at the foot of the slope have much more detail, with dabs of light yellow, ochre yellow, white and light green over the branches, which are done in grey-brown with yellow highlights and an occasional touch of pale red. In the deciduous trees and larches further back a thick, pale blue-green is used with a little light blue. On the low bank further up the river, horses are depicted fairly crudely in thick light paint. The river itself is executed in greys on top of which the effect of foaming water is produced with dry, coarse paint applied partly with straight brushstrokes and partly in strangely curving strokes.

The distant vista starts with a scarcely differentiated area of trees painted in brown, merging higher up into a dark yellow-brown in which the outlines of the first roofs of the town are indicated. Above this the buildings are painted more distinctly in greyish greens, with accents of light here and there.

The blue-grey of the distant ridge of hills continues into the

Fig. 1. Canvas 82.6 × 105 cm



sky, where firm strokes of paint of the same colour are placed over a yellowish-white. The latter continues upwards into the lefthand half of the sky, with a patchy appearance. In the centre, roughly above the lit cliff-face, a grey border suggests a shaft of light falling diagonally down to the right. On the right the sky is a dark and now patchy grey.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

X-Rays

The available radiographs show very little distinct drawing other than in part of the sky and the lit slope. What is surprising, however, are the unusually distinct shapes that, adjoining the lit slope, run vertically upwards almost to the upper edge of the picture. Strokes of radioabsorbent paint can also be seen to the right of these vertical shapes, and a little lower down. These forms, which are apparent to the naked eye in relief and as colour that shows through, probably have to be explained as a very steep cliff formation done earlier as an underpainting, adjacent to the lit slope seen today. It is noteworthy that this vertical cliff should have such a contrasty X-ray image, far stronger than that of the lit passages seen now. Equally remarkable is the fact that broader and longer brushstrokes seem to have been used here than anywhere else in the painting. A dividing line that runs diagonally up to the righthand edge, between a light area above and a dark area below, may be connected with this earlier construction of the landscape; this dividing line only partly coincides with the division between light and dark at the present paint surface.

In the foreground area, which yields a vague X-ray image, one can make out dark reserves for some of the figures, clearest for the Eunuch, Philip, the page and the dark area immediately to the right of him.

Local paint loss can be seen here and there, for instance penetrating the head of Philip.

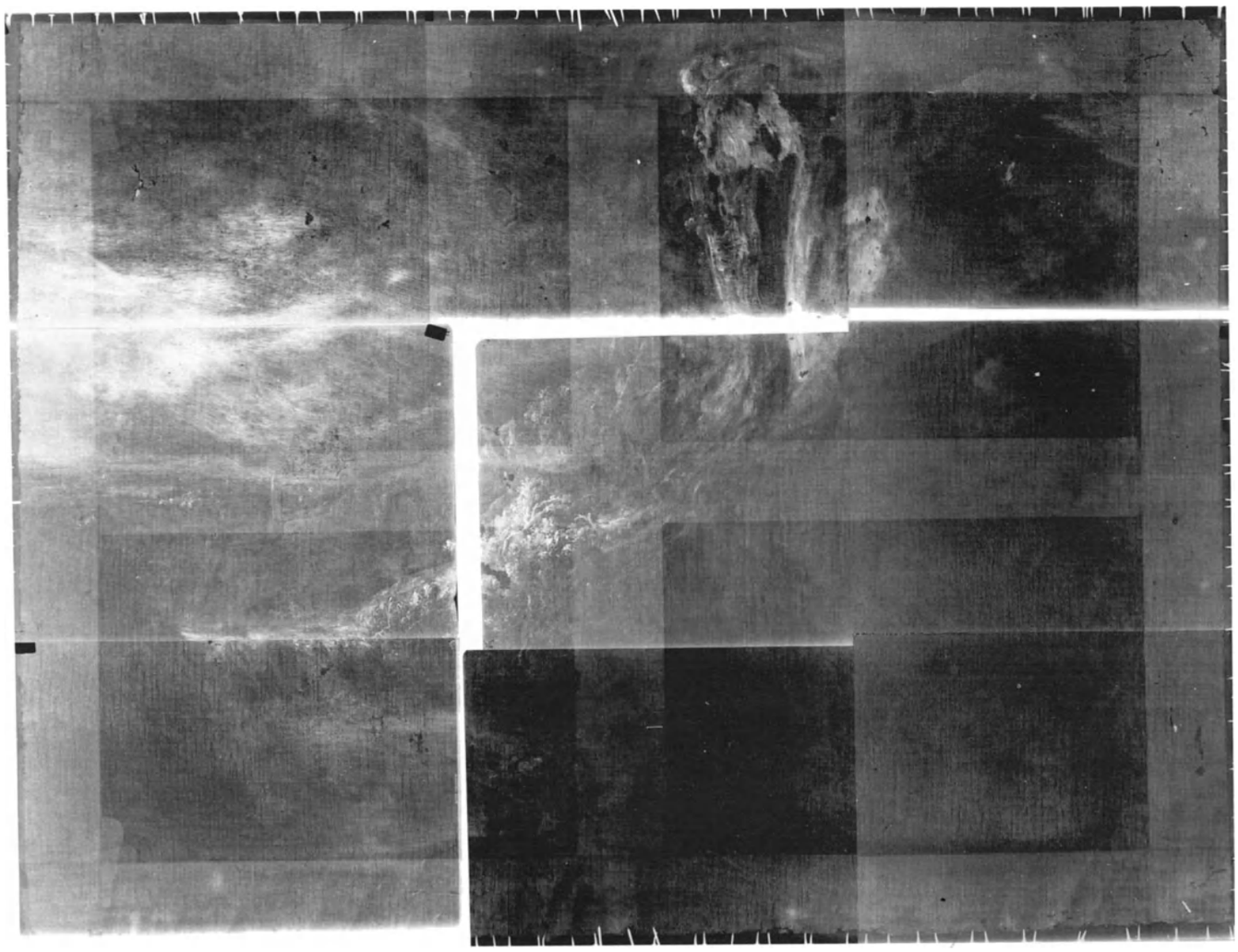
Signature

At the lower right in dark brown paint *<Rembran[..] / f.16.6>*. The inscription appears, under the microscope as well, to have been applied very thinly and to have suffered damage and some overcleaning; the final *6* in particular has been restored, with a reddish colour than runs into the craquelure. The parts that give the impression of being more or less intact – the *R, e, b, f* and *16* (the *6* is partly damaged) — fail because of the lack of spontaneity to make an impression of authenticity.

Varnish

There is a generally somewhat yellowed layer of varnish, which has however been removed at some places by uneven cleaning (as is evident from the ultraviolet photographs).

Fig. 2. X-Ray



4. Comments

The painting became known only when it was sold in 1920 in London with the collection of Lord Ravensworth, formerly in Ravensworth Castle near Durham. (It was not described there by Waagen in the 19th century; cf. his *Galleries and cabinets of art in Great Britain. A supplement volume* ..., London 1857, pp. 485–486.) Valentiner[1] published it soon afterwards as one of Rembrandt's two largest landscapes (the other being *The mill*, now in Washington), and the attribution was generally accepted until Tümpel[2] attributed the picture to Rembrandt's workshop and Foucart[3] proposed Flinck as its author.

Before embarking on the problem of attribution, there are two comments that need to be made. First it must be pointed out that the signature and date do not — leaving aside any damage, wearing or restoration — make an authentic impression. And secondly, it has to be noted that the painting has twice undergone alterations — first at the hand of the painter himself, and then by a subsequent reduction along the top and righthand side. This latter measure, which can be deduced from the absence along these two edges not only of cusping but also of any imprint of the stretcher (see *Support*), may be assumed to have changed the character of the composition to some extent (in particular, the horizon seems to be set unusually high in the picture area). The changes by the artist himself concern primarily the painting-out of a cliff rising high in the centre of the picture, which was probably present only in an underpainting; we can get an idea of what it was like mainly from the X-rays. This alteration in the composition must have changed the character of the mountain landscape quite drastically. It focuses one's attention on what is still a weak point in the composition — the uncertainty in handling depth, apparent in the very uneven extent to which forms are made to appear smaller with distance. The

Fig. 3. Detail (infrared photograph, 1 : 2)



waterfall and gnarled tree in the middle ground look hardly, if at all, smaller than the figures in the foreground, whereas in the corresponding dark area on the right the shapes on the slopes suddenly seem much further away. In itself a rather abrupt jump in depth cannot be put forward as an argument against the Rembrandt attribution — in the 1632 *Rape of Europa* (no. A 47), for instance, there is a very sudden change to a far-off vista; but the extent to which the composition lacks spatial construction is striking.

The feature in the painting that reminds one most of Rembrandt's work is the chiaroscuro and the broad indication of form. The change from a dark foreground painted comparatively thinly in brown to a brightly lit, diagonally arranged middle ground with a more vivid colour and brushwork, which is then followed (after a rather ineffective dark zone) by a sunlit vista, matches in principle a scheme that was repeatedly employed by Rembrandt — in works like the Berlin *John the Baptist preaching* (no. A 106) or the Rotterdam *Concord of the State* (no. A 135), but also in landscapes in the proper sense of the word. And yet comparison with these works reveals such differences in approach and execution that an

attribution to Rembrandt himself has to be ruled out.

Where general approach is concerned, the first difference from the work of Rembrandt that (together with the lack of spatial clarity already referred to) strikes the eye lies in the lability of the system of lines and planes dominating the composition. This does, admittedly, seem to reside in the nature of the subject, yet in Rembrandt one can always trace a stronger link with a horizontal that lends stability to the composition, and gives the forms a more distinct weight than the somewhat arbitrary play of curved lines seen here can provide. This impression of arbitrariness is caused to a large extent by the long diagonal lines in the lit slope on the cliffside and, especially, in the waterfall, where they hinder rather than help a suggestion of three-dimensional depth. Perhaps the feature most unlike an effect invariably achieved by Rembrandt is the even level of lighting that covers the middle ground, where the gnarled tree and the larches form predominantly linear decorative arabesques, offering scarcely any contrast, with light broken colours and edges of light used as decoration. One fails to find here a single trace of Rembrandt's characteristic plastic differentiation based on a chiaroscuro contrast, of the kind seen in, for instance, the lit trees in the Amsterdam *Landscape with a stone bridge* (no. A 136). The use of edgings of light also determines the actually rather vague indication of the distant town on the left as well as, to a large degree, that of the figures in the foreground. In the latter one finds again colours used in a decorative way and set down with meticulous brushstrokes, which are meant to give the impression of sheens of light. In itself this way of showing small figures certainly can be seen in Rembrandt's landscapes, such as that in Amsterdam, but there the edges of light are succinct graphic accents that do not have the variegation of broken colours. The figures are, besides, disposed in an casual way that is almost unthinkable for Rembrandt in front of the ineffectually-modelled, shadowed slope which, like the foreground, has an un-Rembrandtlike emptiness. In the sky, finally, the transition from a light to a darker area is not explained by any kind of cloud structure.

To summarize, one may conclude that there is full reason to reject the Rembrandt attribution, and to suppose, as Tümpel and Foucart did already, that the painting was done in his immediate circle, probably around 1640. This dating finds support in the fact that the canvas used was probably taken from the same bolt as the canvas of the Amsterdam *Dead peacocks* (no. A 134) which we date at about 1639 (see *Support* above). One can probably deduce from this link that the work was indeed produced in Rembrandt's studio. From the forgoing it may be safely assumed that the artist used Rembrandt's own much smaller landscapes on panel from the years 1638–*c.* 1640 as a model, though the painter was incapable of achieving the solidity of structure and atmospheric three-dimensionality of the prototypes as he took over the ideas and motifs. Other prototypes — both from Rembrandt (perhaps a work like the *John the Baptist preaching*) and from others — may also have played a part. One notices, for instance, that in its original composition, including the steeply rising cliff to the right of centre, the painting must have shown a remarkable resemblance to an etching by Hercules Seghers, the *Landscape with a steep cliff* (J. Springer, *Die Radierungen des Hercules Seghers*, Berlin 1910–1912, no. 9a). In 1656 Rembrandt possessed no fewer than eight paintings by Seghers, and the influence of this artist in the *Landscape with the baptism of the Eunuch* has long been a subject of argument. Stechow[4] felt that the painting 'hardly reminds one of Seghers at all', while earlier authors like Valentiner[1] and Weisbach[5] emphasized his influence. It can at all events be said that Seghers' prototype must have been more readily recognizable in the initial state of the painting than in its final form. A drawing in Munich (Ben. C 25), regarded by Benesch as a copy after Rembrandt's lost draft for the figures of Philip and the Eunuch, and by Wegner (*Die niederländischen Handzeichnungen . . .*, Berlin 1973, Kataloge .. München I, no. 1157) as an altered copy after a drawing in Rotterdam (Ben. 360), bears no direct relationship to the figures.

It is not easy to say which Rembrandt pupil attempted, round about 1640, such an ambitious landscape as this. Flinck is the only one from whose hand landscapes from these years are known (see Introduction, Chapter II), but this painting does not show his manner. We know of very competent landscapes by Eeckhout, but they date from a much later period and show a different style. In the case of Bol we know, from an inventory of his own possessions compiled in 1669 (Blankert *Bol*, p. 77), that he had painted more landscapes than the one now usually attributed to him. Both that landscape, now in private ownership (Blankert *Bol*, no. 183; Sumowski *Gemälde* I, no. 185; Chapter II fig. 48), and another painting that lends itself to comparison — the greatly reduced portrait of a couple (probably Bol's later, second wife with her first husband, portrayed as Isaac and Rebecca) in Dordrecht (fig. 6; Blankert *Bol*, no. 167; Sumowski *Gemälde* I, no. 150) — are of somewhat later date, probably the late 1640s or early '50s; yet they offer so many points of similarity with the Hanover painting that it seems quite plausible to attribute the latter to Bol. A first similarity is in the general arrangement, which in both the other paintings shows the same lack of solid structure as the Hanover work, and the same lability resulting from rather arbitrary diagonal lines

Fig. 4. Detail (1 : 2)



unrelated to a clear horizontal. Another close similarity, especially with the smaller, privately-owned landscape, is the way — in the repoussoir of trees in the middle ground and by the cows in the right foreground, and also in the hill repoussoir on the right in the Dordrecht landscape — the light as it were creeps round the forms lost in the half-shadows to produce coloured edges and scattered accents of light; this happens at a number of places in the Hanover painting, particularly in the tree repoussoir on the left and in the figures in the foreground. There is a noteworthy resemblance, between the Hanover and Dordrecht paintings especially (though also in the upper right of the small landscape), in the vaguely articulated, rather indeterminate wavy outline of the hill rising on the right, the modelling of which is given by formless light and dark accents and where the sandy colour, tending towards orange, has the same tonal value as the sky, which is done in unclearly structured shades of grey. The dark cart-tracks that contribute to the perspective in the right foreground and on the slopes in the Hanover painting have the same function in the extreme foreground of the Dordrecht work, in front of the couple's feet (i.e. on a quite different scale, yet identical in appearance). Although both of the works selected for comparison lack the lit middle ground — a motif that was *de rigueur* in Dutch landscapes in the 1630s, but no longer so ten years later — the structure and treatment of all three works offer so many and such typical similarities that an attribution of the Hanover work to Bol seems warranted; all the more so since various of the features described here are in a more general sense typical of his work. The indeterminate modelling that marks his clumps of trees and hillslopes — also to be found in such works as the *Women at the Tomb* in Copenhagen or the *Rest on the flight into Egypt* in Dresden (Blankert *Bol*, nos. 17 and 16; Sumowski *Gemälde* I, nos. 83 and 81), both signed and dated 1644 — appears again in his draperies in works from the 1640s; and the rather heavy edges of light, often done in subdued tints and with an effect that is more decorative than constructive, also occur in signed

Fig. 5. Detail (1 : 2)



works like the *Women at the Tomb* already mentioned and the Utrecht *Gideon's sacrifice* of 1641 (Blankert *Bol*, no. 11; Sumowski *Gemälde* I, no. 79). If the Hanover painting gives the impression of being early compared to these works, this is mostly because of the lit middle ground which in its remarkably decorative rendering of form and use of colour is wholly in line with the character of Bol's work, yet as a motif is found nowhere else in him to such a pronounced extent.

That Bol did sometimes paint landscapes with religious figures can perhaps be deduced from the mention of two paintings under his name in an anonymous sale in Amsterdam on 21ff June 1774 (Lugt 2305), nos. 25 and 26: 'Een Kapitaal Landschap; op doek 64 × 43 duim [= 166.4 × 111.8 cm]. Johannes, ziet men in hetzelve, streelende een Lammetje. In 't verschiet hoog Gebergte . . .' (A capital landscape on canvas . . . One sees John, stroking a lamb. In the distance high mountains . . .) and: 'Een dito Landschap . . . In het zelve ziet men verbeeld het Kindeke Jezus, als een getrouwe Herder by zyne Schapen; houdende in zyne linker hand een Staf; en in 't verschiet hoog Gebergte . . .' (A ditto landscape . . . In this one sees depicted the Infant Jesus, as a good shepherd with his sheep; holding a staff in his left hand; and in the distance high mountains). (Information kindly communicated by Dr A. Blankert.)

5. Documents and sources

None.

6. Graphic reproductions

None.

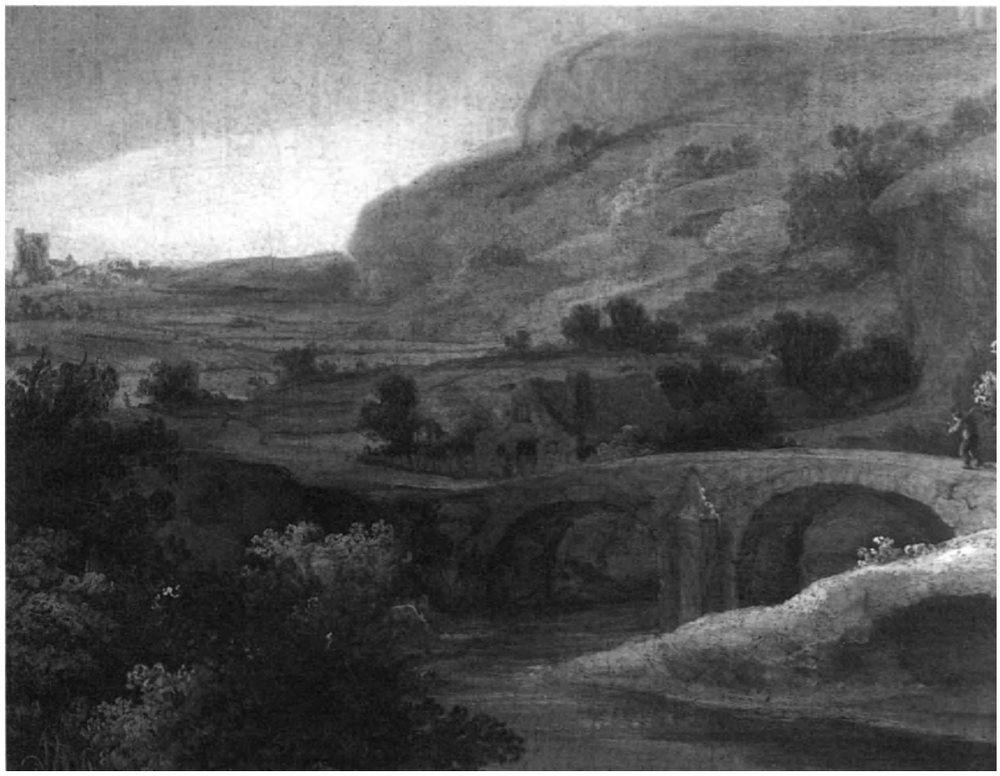
7. Copies

None.

8. Provenance

- Coll. Lord Ravensworth, Ravensworth Castle, Durham, sale 15 June 1920, no. 113.
- Dealer P. & D. Colnaghi, London 1921[1].
- Dealer Agnew, London 1926[3].
- Dealer Matthiesen, Berlin around 1930[4].
- Dealer P. & D. Colnaghi, London (1935).
- Pelikanwerke, Hanover 1935; lent to the Niedersächsische Landesgalerie, Hanover.

Fig. 6. F. Bol, *Portrait of Erasmus Scharlaken and Anna van Erckel as Isaac and Rebecca*, canvas 100 × 92 cm, detail. Dordrecht, Dordrechts Museum



9. Summary

Although the attribution of the painting to Rembrandt has never been placed in doubt since it came to light in 1920, the approach and execution differ to a decisive extent from those found in his work. A lack of structural quality and spatial clarity are coupled with a somewhat flat rendering of form and an almost decorative use of colour. In these respects the painting shows enough similarities with the work of Ferdinand Bol to warrant an attribution to him. It was probably produced around 1640, while he was still in Rembrandt's workshop, as the canvas used probably came from the same bolt as that of no. A 134, datable around 1639.

REFERENCES

1 W.R. Valentiner, *Rembrandt. Wiedergefundene Gemälde*, Stuttgart-Berlin 1921 (Kl. d. K.), no. 41, p.37; A. Bredius, 'Some early Rembrandts', *Burl. Mag.* 45 (1924), p. 159.
2 Tümpel 1986, cat.no. A 120.
3 Exhibn. cat. *Musée du Louvre. Nouvelles acquisitions du département des peintures (1983–1986),* Paris 1987, p. 74.
4 W. Stechow, *Dutch landscape painting of the seventeenth century*, London 1966, p. 135.
5 W. Weisbach, *Rembrandt*, Berlin-Leipzig 1926, pp. 401–404.
6 A. Scharf, 'Rembrandts Landschaft mit der Taufe des Kämmerers', *Cicerone* 22 (1930), pp. 192–193.

C 117 Landscape with obelisk

BOSTON, MASS., ISABELLA STEWART GARDNER MUSEUM, INV. NO. P21W24

HDG 941; BR. 443; BAUCH 546; GERSON 198

1. Summarized opinion

A reasonably well preserved painting that has to be attributed to Govaert Flinck, and bears the date of 1638.

2. Description of subject

From a fairly high viewpoint one looks out over a landscape consisting of an uneven terrain with hills and a fairly steep mountain in the distance. From far off a river meanders on the left through a shelving countryside and through a town at the extreme left where a stone bridge with two arches spans the river and the latter forms a waterfall. Somewhat further downstream a tall obelisk stands on the lefthand bank. The river then forms another, lower waterfall before it finally flows under another stone bridge in the left foreground, forms a rapid and disappears out of the picture to the left. A stone watermill with a wooden millwheel stands beside the rapid on the further bank.

In the right foreground a tall tree has been shattered by storms, and to the right of it a broken treetrunk lies on the ground in front of a shadowy wood. The middle ground, up to the riverbank, is occupied by trees and groves, and part of the terrain is bathed in bright light. A road leads back from the centre foreground, curves left and crosses the stone bridge before looping past the obelisk towards the town. Level with the tall tree a huntsman on horseback rides towards the viewer, accompanied by a servant holding a falcon on his right hand and a staff in his left, and a dog. The men wear bulky clothing and large caps. Further off a man is leading a draught-animal pulling a two-wheeled cart across the bridge; a horse-drawn coach is passing the obelisk.

The sky is filled with clouds, though at some places there are patches of blue to be seen.

3. Observations and technical information

Working conditions

Examined on 12 September 1970 (B.H., P.v.Th.) in good daylight and in the frame. Four radiographs together covering the whole painting were received later. An irregularly shattered layer of varnish made observation difficult (this has since been removed, and photographs taken after cleaning were received).

Support

DESCRIPTION: Oak panel, grain horizontal, 54.5 × 71 cm. Comprises three planks, with approximate widths (top to bottom) of 20 , 20.5 and 14 cm. The back is bevelled on all four sides.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

Ground

DESCRIPTION: A light yellowish brown, presumably the ground itself, shows through in the area of the distant town. Elsewhere, in the whole of the painting except the sky, a light brown with a ruddy tinge shows through, strongest in the dark area to the right of the tall tree. This colour is probably dictated mainly by an underpainting.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

Paint layer

CONDITION: There is slight wearing in the dark areas. The grain of the panel has become apparent through the translucent paint at some places. A few retouches can be seen, including some on the right by the top of the tall tree and at the upper right in the sky. Craquelure: local very fine cracks, in the sky, and some shrinkage cracking.

DESCRIPTION: The landscape, apart from the sky, is dominated by brown tints, in which the ground and underpainting showing through play some part. This is most marked in and to the right of the tall tree in the foreground. The trunk and branches of this are painted with strokes of medium length in ochrish tints, following their length. Strokes and touches in a moss green are placed over this, especially on the left at the foot of the tree but also higher up, in the branches. The foliage is suggested with small spots and dabs in various shades of green and pale ochrish-green tints. At the crown of the tree a flat green base tone has been used, obviously placed partly over the paint of the sky — the brushstrokes of the sky continue beneath the green, and are clearly visible in relief. The area to the right of the tree, alongside and just above the broken treetrunk has fairly bold brushstrokes in browns and ochre tints with a little green, with no really clear definition of forms. Above this vertical strokes of browns and a somewhat opaque green depict trees in a rather primitive fashion; here, the brushstroke is a little less pronounced. The sparse vegetation in the foreground is given lights done with thick spots in greenish and yellowish tints.

The middle ground is dominated by the slate grey of the river and the dull yellow of the lit parts of the left bank. The trees on the right bank are modelled, in the light, in quite thick yellowish and green paint; in the less fully-lit parts the shaping is vague and cloudy, and forms are defined only extremely cursorily.

The waterfall in the centre is painted with broad strokes of grey and light grey, which show the flow of the water while scarcely suggesting the nature of the water itself. The obelisk is done with long brushstrokes that give no clear definition of its form; the lit side is in a fairly thick light yellow, and the shadow side in grey to dark grey paint. The landscape and town behind the obelisk are painted with quite short and broad brushstrokes running horizontally and vertically, mostly in brown and grey through which some of the yellow-brown of the underlying ground shows. The tree-clad slopes below the mountain are painted thickly, while the mountain itself is broadly brushed in greyish tints with a vague pink patch of light and some ochre colour at the top.

In the left foreground the bridge and watermill are drawn weakly and clumsily in dark brown and grey. Here too the water, in dark grey with white detailing to indicate the flow, has not been successfully described as a substance.

The foreground figures are painted in yellow-brown and greenish greys, with the strokes following the forms. The detail is quite casually done, with a varying measure of success. The servant, for instance, has a quite convincing pose, while the legs of the horse are weakly shaped.

The sky is, especially on the left but also above the cliff, painted in quite thick paint, grey in the clouds. Above the town and the cliff long and almost horizontal underlying brushstrokes can be seen in relief. Towards the top the clouds have, through the use of a fair amount of red in the grey, taken on a ruddy glow. To the right, above the trees, a more ochrish tint is added which merges into a dark slate-grey that (particularly on the right) creates a threatening effect. Some light blue can be seen above the cliff, and a rather darker blue at the upper left. In the clouds the paint is mostly opaque, applied with broad and bold brushstrokes running in all directions.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

X-Rays

The radiographic image largely matches what can be expected from the surface, and is easily legible due to the presence of radioabsorbent paint in almost all areas. In the sky, especially, the brushwork is clearly apparent; the strokes run in all directions, forming a rather disordered image in which the cloud formations can only partially be recognized. Long horizontal brushstrokes can be seen running through the sky, and are also recognizable at the surface as belonging to an underlying layer.

The water of the river shows up light. The rapids in the foreground contain more radioabsorbent paint that one might expect from the present dark paint surface. The hills and

Fig. 1. Panel 54.5 × 71 cm



mountain in the distance appear only vaguely, due to the brushstrokes of the sky running through beneath the paint of these features, which have evidently been painted on top of the sky.

The shape of the tree in the foreground has undergone a number of changes. The dead branches on the left were, to judge from the dark image of a reserve, intended first to be a single branch, while the reserve left for the treetop was smaller than its present form.

Signature

At the lower right in dark paint <*R.1638*>. The authenticity of this inscription was already questioned by Hofstede de Groot[1]. To this must be added that before the *R* and through it one can see vague traces of another signature (G....nck f), which cannot all be interpreted with certainty but which are consistent with the signature 'G.flinck.f.' known from that painter's works. The final *f* has been altered to an *R*. The present date could quite well belong to the original inscription. The reconstruction of the signature offered by Cynthia Schneider[2] does not seem really likely; she believes that the *k* of Flinck is beneath the *R* added later, and her reconstruction does not give enough space for either the letters *inck* or for the *f* of 'fecit', which Flinck always added after his name.

Varnish

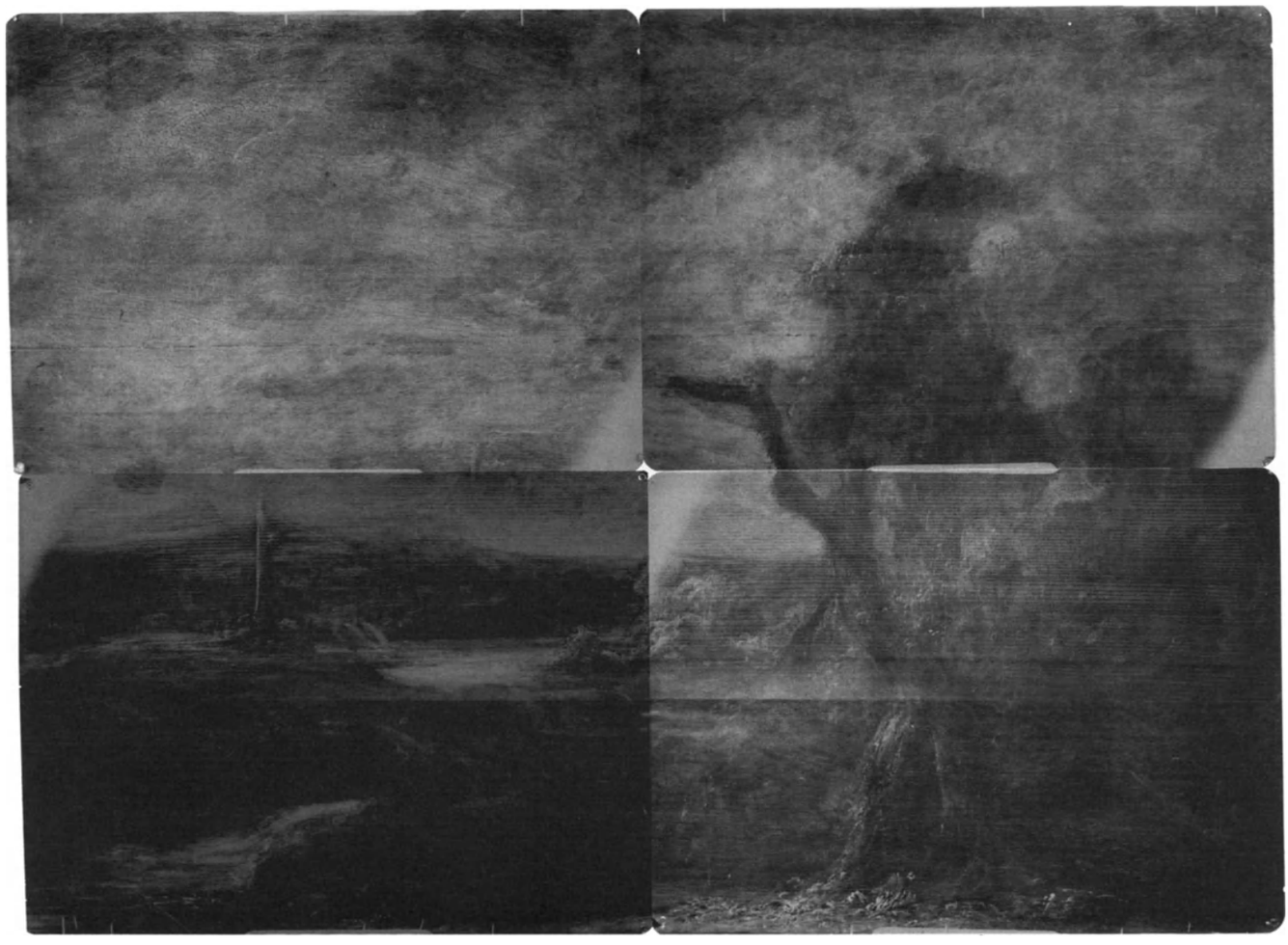
An unevenly shattered layer of varnish that somewhat marred the overall appearance of the painting during examination has since been removed.

4. Comments

In type and composition the painting shows unmistakeable similarities to the landscapes we know from Rembrandt from the late 1630s. The resemblance is greatest to the *Landscape with the Good Samaritan* of 1638 in Krakow (no. A 125). In both paintings the righthand part of the picture area is occupied mainly by a tall, storm-battered tree and a woods shrouded in shadow; the foreground of the valley occupying the lefthand half lies in shadow, and the mid-ground is bathed in light. River, road, bridges and town form the components of the picture, and the staffing with people and animals in the Stewart Gardner picture plays the same role in the whole as it does with Rembrandt.

Yet precisely because of these strong similarities, the differences from Rembrandt's landscapes

Fig. 2. X-Ray



become evident. The most salient difference is in the handling of chiaroscuro. In Rembrandt's landscapes — particularly in the *Landscape with the Good Samaritan* and the probably somewhat later *Landscape with thunderstorm* in Braunschweig (no. A 137) — there are a number of dramatic contrasts that produce a clear three-dimensional structure. Despite a similar distribution of chiaroscuro, this effect has been achieved in no. C 117 to a very much lesser degree, and the spatial cohesion is consequently weak. Moreover, the treatment of the tree in the foreground and of the area to the right of it shows a marked difference in brushwork from the corresponding passages in the Krakow panel; in no. C 117 the brushwork is confused, lacking the bold and varied strokes that give the shapes their structure and the draughtsmanlike detail. The effect of depth, too, is absent in this passage and the rendering has become somewhat indeterminate. Substantial differences can be seen in the use of colour: the *Landscape with obelisk* shows a far greater variety of greens, and more colour has been used in the sky than in any Rembrandt landscape we know of. The sky is also painted almost wholly opaquely, in a way unknown in any of the Rembrandt landscapes done on panel; this difference is also noticeable in the radiographic image. The same can be said of the rendering of water, which in the Boston painting is done with remarkably opaque paint. Although in the shadowed parts of the landscape too the ground and underpainting have been left visible here and there the technique has, compared to the way Rembrandt himself used it, proved rather ineffectual. All these features make an attribution to Rembrandt most implausible; they may also explain why it was already in doubt when the picture, after proving difficult to sell in Paris, was with a Vienna dealer in 1884[3], and was rejected by Dutuit in 1885[4].

As we noticed in 1968, and as Herzog[5] pointed out in 1969, the Boston painting appears in the 1783 catalogue of the collection of the Landgrave of Hesse-Kassel as the work of Govaert Flinck. After having been moved to Paris during the Napoleonic period, it was described as a Rembrandt in various

Fig. 3. Detail (1 : 2)

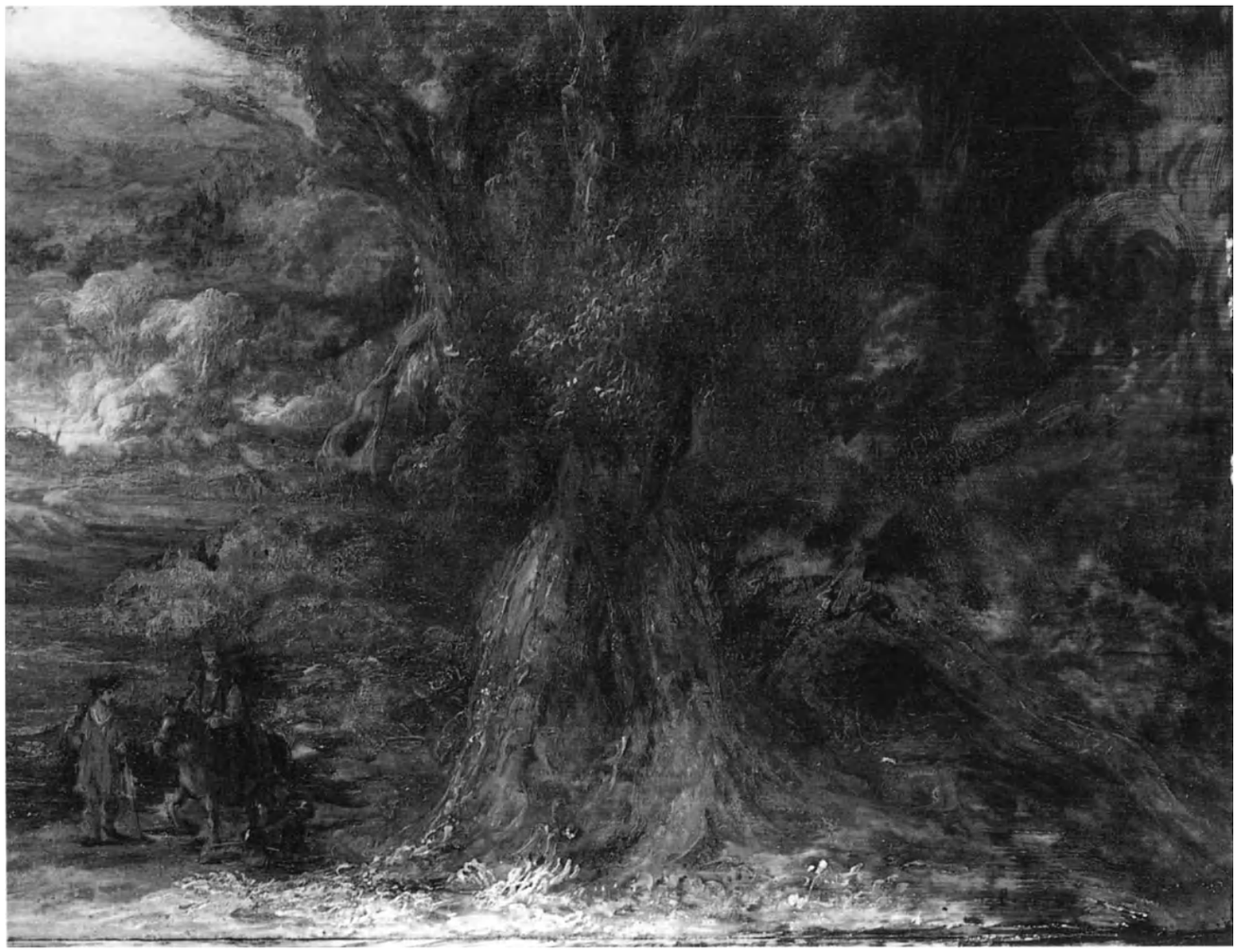


sales; Herzog concluded from this that before that time the work had been wrongly attributed to Flinck. In view of the differences from Rembrandt's work that have been mentioned, plus the vestiges of an old inscription consistent with Flinck's signature (see fig. 6) and recognized as such by Mr Peter Schatborn as well, it can however be confidently assumed that the 18th-century listing was correct. Flinck's authorship has since been accepted by Cynthia Schneider[2] and Sumowski[6]. In view of the date of 1638 inscribed on the picture, one has to suppose that the painting was done immediately after Rembrandt's *Landscape with the Good Samaritan*.

That Flinck painted landscapes (other than as the background for history paintings or portraits) does not come as a surprise. The 1647 inventory of the estate of the Mennonite Amsterdam clothier Jan Pietersz. Bruyningh (1599–1646) lists two landscapes by — and a copy after a landscape by — Flinck, who was likewise a Mennonite. In the division of the estate of one of Flinck's nephews, Ameldonck Leeuw (1604–1647), in Amsterdam in 1653 we also find two landscapes by him (S.A.C. Dudok van Heel in: *Doopsgezinde Bijdragen*, new series 6, 1980, pp. 105–123, esp. 118–120).

The Boston *Landscape with an obelisk* has not been the only extant specimen of Flinck's landscape art. For a summary of how matters now stand in this respect, the reader is referred to Chapter II of the Introduction. In the present context it need only be mentioned that after a signed and dated (1637) *Landscape with a bridge and ruins* in Paris (Sumowski *Gemälde* II, no. 718), the Boston painting signals an appreciable increase in Rembrandt's influence. The latter's *Landscape with the Good Samaritan* of 1638 obviously served as a direct prototype, for both the composition and the 'heroic' mood of the painting. In this phase Flinck, in his striving for dramatic effect, lets himself be led to a rather loose, locally broad but not always totally effective handling of

Fig. 4. Detail (1 : 2)



paint; it lacks the subtlety of both Rembrandt's draughtsmanlike details in the lit areas and his sketchlike treatment, in almost monochrome browns, of the shadows. Furthermore, Flinck seems to have difficulties with the spatial linking of planes, and with relating the proportions of people and objects to each other in a convincing manner. In this respect there is a great similarity to his 1637 landscape and to somewhat later Flinck landscapes, which repeatedly seem directly to mirror successive examples by Rembrandt. The somewhat amorphous small figures and the horse, with their lack of sharply characterized form and action, are also typical of this and other landscapes by Flinck.

The landscape, depicted does not appear to refer to any realistic scene; this is emphasized by the obelisk (which also occasionally occurs in Flinck's biblical pictures), a motif not to be confused with a realistic depiction of one of the 'ban-posts' that were to be found in the outskirts of Amsterdam (marking the jurisdictional boundaries)[2] — these were smaller and of a slightly different shape, as seen in cf. Rembrandt's etching B. 227. Here the motif would seem to appear in the context of an iconographic programme like that found in Rembrandt's landscapes, i.e. of the pilgrimage of life. The foreground in half-shadow represents transient earthly life, as shown by the water flowing past and the battered old trees (see H.J. Raupp in: *Jahrbuch der Staatlichen Kunstsammlungen in Baden-Württemberg* 17, 1980, pp. 85–110, esp. 89–90). As in Rembrandt's *Landscape with the Good Samaritan*, the distant town would seem to be the 'continuing city' (Hebrews 13:14), an image of eternal bliss. The obelisk — or pyramid, as it was generally called in the 16th and 17th centuries — can, among many other interpretations, be taken as a symbol of death, because it is seen as a sepulchral monument closed with a stone (P. Picinellus, *Mundus symbolicus*.., book 16 no. 168, Cologne 1695 edn, II, p.71); this may be

Fig. 5. Detail with signature (reduced)



linked with the mediaeval belief that the Vatican and Capitoline obelisks in Rome marked respectively, the graves of Caesar and Augustus (E. Iversen, *The myth of Egypt and its hieroglyphs in European tradition*, Copenhagen 1961, p. 59). In the context of this 'paysage moralisé' the meaning of the figures becomes clear — the hunter in the foreground with his servant and dog is, as an exemplar of idleness, part of the sinful world, while the cart on the bridge and the coach by the obelisk are (just as they are in Rembrandt's landscapes in Krakow and Braunschweig) vehicles that, carefully guided, carry the soul along the path of the righteous into eternity.

5. Documents and sources

None.

6. Graphic reproductions

None.

7. Copies

None.

8. Provenance

*- Coll. Landgrave Friedrich II of Hesse-Kassel (reigned from 1760–85). Already described (as Flinck) in *Inventarium B* of about 1775, no. 390 (Schneider op.cit.[2], p. 9 and note 17); *Verzeichnis der Hochfürstlich-Hessischen Gemälde-Sammlung in Cassel* 1783, p. 177 no.46: 'III in den untersten Zimmern des Rez de Chaussée der Academie: Govert Flinck. Eine Landschaft, mit einer Brücke. In einiger Entfernung steht ein Obelisk; und auf dem Vorgrunde ist ein Mann zu Pferde, der sich mit einem Fussgänger unterredet. Auf Holz, 1 Fusz 10 Zoll hoch, 2 Fusz 4 Zoll breit [= 57.4 × 73.2 cm]'.
*- Coll. Jérôme Bonaparte, King of Westphalia, according to a note 'Hieronymus Bonaparte' in the 1st Supplement to the *Haupt-Catalogus* compiled *c.* 1817–19 (no. 390), when the picture had already left for Paris (ibid).
Further as by Rembrandt:
*- Coll. Woodburn, sale London (Christie's) 15–19 May 1854, no. 77 (£9).
- Coll. Baron E. de Beurnonville, sale Paris 9–16 May 1881, no. 434 (bought in for 16 500 francs).
- Coll. Baron E. de Beurnonville, sale Paris 21–22 May 1883, no. 84 (withdrawn).
- Coll. Baron E. de Beurnonville, sale Paris 3ff June 1884, no. 292 (acquired by the Vienna dealer A. Posonyi for 4690 francs).
- Coll. Georg von Rath, Budapest.
- Around 1900 sold to dealer P. & D. Colnaghi, London.
- Acquired in March 1900 by Mrs Gardner through B. Berenson[7].

Fig. 6. Signature on Flinck's *Portrait of a little girl*, 1640 (reduced). The Hague, Koninklijk Kabinet van Schilderijen, Mauritshuis



9. Summary

In its composition and the components from which it is assembled the painting shows a great similarity to landscapes by Rembrandt, and in particular with his 1638 *Landscape with the Good Samaritan* in Krakow (no. A 125). In execution, colour-scheme and effect of lighting there are however such differences that it cannot be accepted as a genuine Rembrandt. The non-authentic inscription is written partly over the traces of another; the date, readable as 1638, appears authentic. When one adds to this the fact that the painting was already around 1775, and again in 1783, catalogued in Kassel as being by Govert Flinck, then it is clear that this is a work by that artist, who according to old inventories must have painted a number of landscapes. The resemblances to a signed landscape by that painter dated 1637 are, for all the differences in mood and tempo, unmistakeable. No. C 117 must have been painted not long after this, under the immediate influence of Rembrandt's Krakow painting of 1638. Flinck took over the 'heroic' mood of the Krakow work, as well as the iconographic programme of the landscape.

REFERENCES

1 HdG 941.
2 C. Schneider, 'A new look at *The landscape with an obelisk*', *Fenway Court*, Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum 1984, pp. 6–21; idem, *Rembrandt's landscape paintings* (to be published shortly), cat. no. R 1.
3 W. von Bode, 'Rembrandts Landschaft mit der Brücke', *Jb. d. Pr. Kunsts.* 46 (1925), pp. 159–163, esp. 159.
4 E. Dutuit, *Tableaux et dessins de Rembrandt: Catalogue historique et descriptif*, Paris 1885, p. 22.
5 E. Herzog, *Die Gemäldegalerie der Staatlichen Kunstsammlungen Kassel*, Harrau 1969, p. 42 and note 45.
6 Sumowski *Gemälde* II, no. 719.
7 P. Hendy, *European and American Paintings in the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum*, Boston 1974, pp. 205–206.

C 118 Landscape with a seven-arched bridge

BERLIN (WEST), STAATLICHE MUSEEN PREUSSISCHER KULTURBESITZ, GEMÄLDEGALERIE, CAT.NO. 1932

HDG 951; BR. 445; BAUCH 544; GERSON 197

1. Summarized opinion

A reasonably well preserved, though slightly reduced painting that reveals a thorough knowledge of two of Rembrandt's landscapes and may be attributed to Govaert Flinck.

2. Description of subject

To the left of a wooded hill lies a valley through which a wide river meanders. A stream coming from the right joins this river in the foreground. On the right a path runs alongside the stream, and on it stands a group of houses all or some of which are recognizable as an inn because of a pergola and a hanging sign. In front of this stands a horse and cart, with a few passengers. Further off there are more figures and a few cows. A hill rises behind the trees on the right. On the other side of the stream a small wooden bridge leads to a hill bordering the river, on which a farm is half-hidden among trees and bushes. At the foot of the tallest group of trees there is a wooden fence; here, too, there are figures and grazing cattle, and close by at the water's edge there are two figures one of whom is fishing.

In the valley on the left, at some distance down the river, is a seven-arched stone bridge with, on the right, a bridge-keeper's lodge. To the left the approach is hidden by a thick group of trees, mirrored in the water of the river. Beyond the bridge the valley glows softly; it is divided by the river, which splits into two branches and disappears to the left. In the far distance there are low hills. There are rowing-boats on the river, and the masts of moored boats can be seen just past the bridge.

The sky is light on the left, becoming more clouded upwards and to the right and darkest on the far right. The landscape lies for the most part in shadow; the trees on the hill in the middle are brightly lit from the left, and the land behind them also catches the light, though less brightly.

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. An X-ray film covering the whole painting was received later from the museum.

Support

DESCRIPTION: Oak panel, grain horizontal, 28.4 × 39.2 cm (top) to 39.5 cm (bottom). The thickness varies at the top from 0.25 to 0.7 cm, and at the bottom from 0.8 to 0.9 cm. Single plank. The back shows bevelling on the right that is very narrow at the top and widens downwards to about 3 cm. Bevelling along the bottom is *c.* 1.5 cm wide on the left and *c.* 2.5 cm on the right; some of the original panel appears to have been planed away. The top, where the panel is very thin, has no bevelling, nor has the lefthand side, where there are traces of (later?) sawing, which may account for the slightly irregular shape of the panel.
SCIENTIFIC DATA: Dendrochronology (Prof.Dr J. Bauch and Prof. Dr D. Eckstein, Hamburg): 200 annual rings heartwood + 2 rings counted on the core side. No sapwood. Dated 1404/1406–1605. Earliest possible felling date 1614; given the age of the tree (more than 202 years) a felling date after 1620 is likely.

Ground

DESCRIPTION: A yellowish underlying ground shows through in numerous places.
SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

Paint layer

CONDITION: Generally reasonably good. In the top and righthand parts of the sky there are numerous darkened retouches. Many retouches can also be seen in the hill in the centre, in the wooded areas to the right and in the sandy path. Craquelure: none seen.
DESCRIPTION: A brown underpainting is visible to a varying degree in thinly painted places, and may be glimpsed here and there in the more opaque passages as well. In the shadowed parts of the landscape small, opaque strokes of grey and brown placed over this brown tone define the shapes of the terrain, the trees and the houses. The group of houses on the right has, besides distinct internal detail done in brown, flacks of light along the roofs and chimneys and on climbing plants. The same applies to the bridge with its bridge-house.

In the brightly lit parts of the landscape there is some impasto in the highest lights. The lit branches, the most strongly lit foliage and the ridges in the terrain that catch the light are painted with fine blobs and streaks of paint in light yellow and an ochre colour; between these the brown of the underpainting contributes to the effect. The distant vista is painted opaquely in grey-green, sometimes smoothly and at other times rather coarsely; these variations in the colour and application of paint lend it pictorial vivacity and an impression of depth. The water of the river in the left foreground is done with fine horizontal strokes in grey; here, too, the brown underpainting is apparent. To the right some green is used, very thinly, to show the reflexion of the landscape on the surface of the water.

The figures of humans and animals are shown summarily; here and there — especially in one of the anglers in the foreground — the contours catching the light have been accented with light paint.

The sky above the distant view on the left consists of quite bold, long horizontal strokes of white and a light blue-grey. Upwards the colour becomes more grey, and the brushstrokes indicate the rounded shapes of the clouds. Towards the right the paint, in shades of grey, becomes gradually thinner and practically ceases to cover. Above the hill on the right brushstrokes in relief indicate that it was initially higher. Similarly, traces of underlying brushstrokes above the central group of trees give the impression that there were originally taller trees at this point; there is no sign of this in the X-ray.
SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

X-Rays

In line with what one might expect from the paint surface, only the few light and thickly painted passages show up clearly in the X-ray image, which is otherwise dominated by the grain of the panel as shown by concentrations of the radioabsorbent components of the ground. The sole change of composition apparent in the radiograph occurs on the right, where an earlier and higher version of the hill — already observed in relief in the paint surface — shows up quite light.

Signature

None.

Varnish

No special remarks.

4. Comments

Because of observations made on the panel (see under *Support*) one cannot be entirely sure that it is complete on the left and along the lower edge. At the bottom the composition does not bear out the thought of a reduction — given the vegetation alongside the water, the present edge might very well be the original. On the left one cannot be so certain, as the composition shows a certain emptiness; the traces of (apparently later) sawmarks could easily indicate some reduction, and iconographic considerations

Fig. 1. Panel 28.4 × 39.3 cm

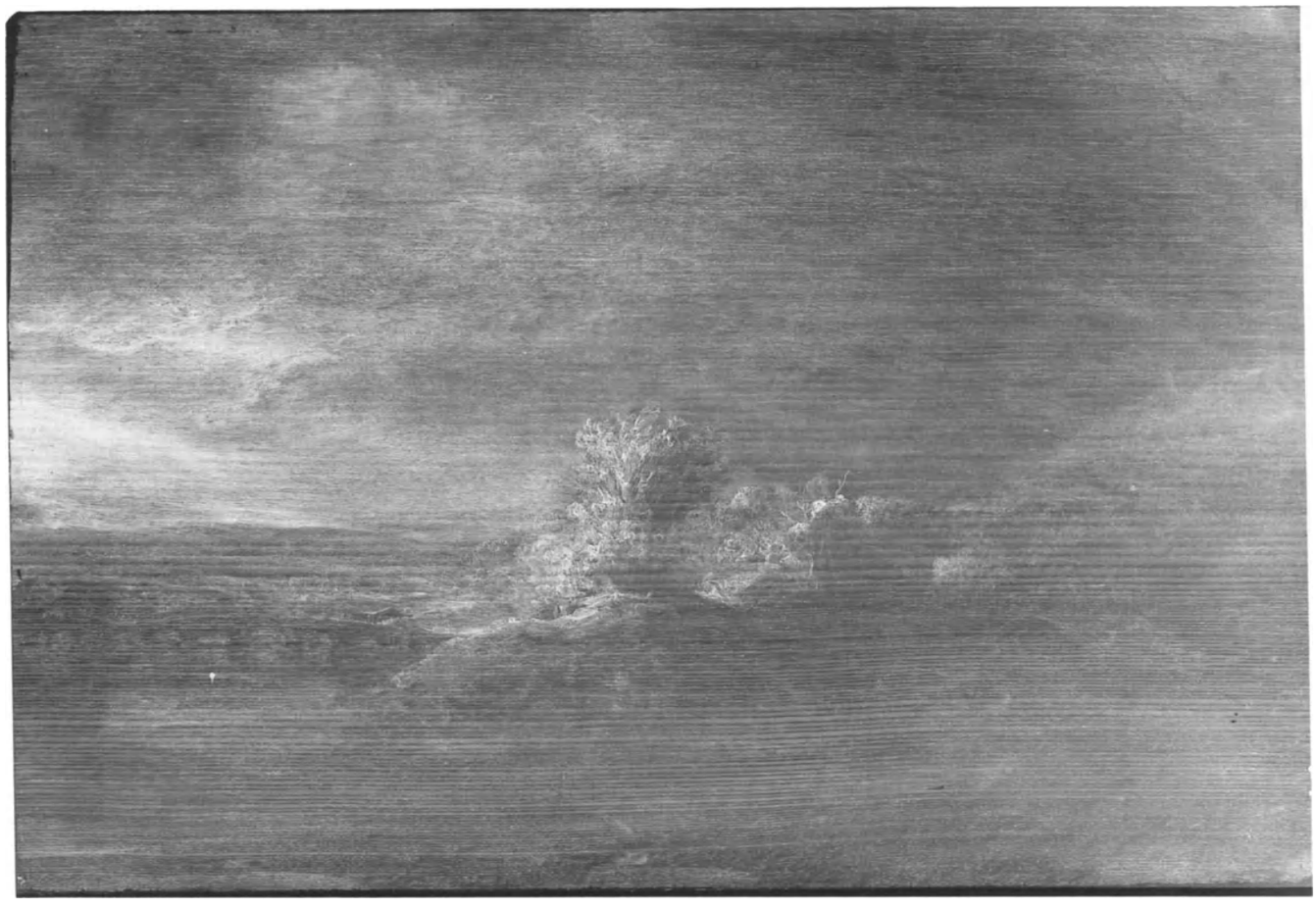


(see below) also point in this direction. Despite some local wearing, the manner of painting can be readily assessed. With its clear stratified structure, an underpainting that contributes to the tone in thin places, and the use of more or less thick and almost graphic highlights to work the painting up, it offers the image familiar to us from the work of Rembrandt and his school. In both composition and handling of paint the similarity to Rembrandt's landscapes in Krakow, of 1638 (no. A 125), and Amsterdam, which we put in the late 1630s (no. A 136), is remarkable. In judging it, therefore, the decision to be made is whether one has to see this similarity as evidence that the Berlin painting is from the same hand, or whether it was done by an imitator who knew the other two paintings well.

Especially if one takes into account that in the centre a considerably taller group of trees is hidden underneath the present paint layer, the composition is very like that of the Krakow *Landscape with the Good Samaritan*. That painting too has a low-lying valley on the left and (albeit much closer) a central group of trees. The cart-track and inn on the right in the Berlin landscape strongly resemble (in reverse) a motif in the Amsterdam *Landscape with a stone bridge*, and the distant bridge on the left reminds one of the corresponding motif in that same picture, though shifted backwards into depth. Moreover, the treatment of the lit trees in the centre, with whimsical light brushstrokes reproducing the dead branches and shorter, curved streaks of paint representing the leaves, is very close to that of the corresponding part of the Amsterdam painting. The staffing with numerous human and animal figures, incorporated unobtrusively in the landscape, is very similar in all three works. Working from these similarities one might see the Berlin landscape being by Rembrandt, holding the midway between the *Landscape with the Good Samaritan* with its dramatic structure and lighting and the *Landscape with a stone bridge* with an admittedly scarcely less dramatic lighting but less imaginary in its motif.

An attribution to Rembrandt is however open to objections. For each of the resemblances to his landscapes that have been mentioned one has to enter certain reservations as to the effectiveness of the matching element in the Berlin painting and, consequently, to the quality of the whole. When the

Fig. 2. X-Ray



structure of the Berlin painting is compared with that of the Krakow work, one realises that the spatial structure of the latter shows a far more distinct articulation; the contrasts between a lit zone and more shadowy areas contribute to this, as does the brushwork in both the darker, thin parts of the valley and the thick parts, almost modelled in the relief of the impasto. In the Berlin painting the matching passage is marked by a broad and even monotonous treatment, which leaves the effect of the water and riverbanks, and even that of the bridge with its edgings of light, rather flat and empty. The vista stretching out beyond is, it is true, not devoid of atmospheric effect; but compared to the Krakow work it lacks the wealth of suggested forms, simultaneously detailed and stylized in the brushwork.

In the central area with the trees and the part to the right of this, as well as in the execution of the figures, the Berlin painting reminds one more of that in Amsterdam. The inn alongside the road with a cart outside it is almost a mirror-image; yet in this very feature one can see how successful Rembrandt was in the Amsterdam painting in individualizing with a few accents a shape almost lost in shadow, while in the Berlin work a rather finicky treatment of the buildings and figures — though less in shadow, and given more detail — results in a weak form and a less crisp image. The treatment of the lit trees in the middle is far more successful, and remarkably like that of the corresponding trees in the Amsterdam landscape; but here again one could say that the resemblance is more in the formula than in the way it is applied — the streaks of light paint take on greater graphic independence than in the Amsterdam work and moreover continue into trees further off, whereas Rembrandt is in the latter work careful to have them become more and more vague as increasing distance has to be suggested. The Amsterdam figures, one with a sharp edging of light, are already not all that clearly articulated in the dark foreground; but in the Berlin work they are, on the bank and in the boats, decidedly weak – even the fisherman, who has been given a coarse rim of light. The sky, finally, which (so far as these often rather worn areas can usefully be compared) does in its distribution of lighter and darker tints resemble that in the Amsterdam painting, is unable to compensate for a certain lack of coordinated three-dimensional

Fig. 3. Detail (1 : 1)



depth in the lefthand half of the composition and between the two halves.

In view of these weaknesses it is understandable that Rostworowski[1], undoubtedly basing himself on his great familiarity with the 1638 painting in Krakow, was unable to accept the attribution of the Berlin work. He was, in fact, the first to reject it; Gerson[2] had still looked on the painting as a Rembrandt and placed it, together with the Amsterdam *Landscape with a stone bridge*, before the 1638 painting; both Cynthia Schneider[3] and Tümpel[4] maintained the Rembrandt attribution. If however one accepts the view that no. C 118 cannot be from Rembrandt's hand, then it is obvious that its author must have known well both the painting in Krakow and that in Amsterdam (which we put somewhat later), and that he must have based his execution of various passages directly on the latter.

It now seems possible to answer the question of who the painter was. The first piece of evidence for this is in the changes that can be seen in the composition, i.e. the lowering of the hill closing off the picture on the right (which in its original form and function could have been roughly a mirror-image of the hill on the left in the Krakow painting) and the drastic reduction in the size of the central tree or group of trees. The latter change in particular betrays considerable uncertainty on the part of the artist in laying out his composition in respect of volume, distances and spatial relationships — an uncertainty that has not been entirely overcome even in the final result. (One might even think that he changed over from the Krakow formula to the Amsterdam formula partway through the work.) It strikes one that a very similar kind of change can be seen in the earliest signed and dated landscape by Govaert Flinck, the Paris *Landscape with a bridge and ruins* of 1637 (see Introduction, Chapter II, fig. 36; Sumowski *Gemälde* II, no.718). This painting was according to the X-rays initially designed with, on the righthand side, a much taller and broader tree than can be seen today (C. Schneider in: *Fenway Court*

Fig. 4. Detail (1 : 1)



1984, Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum, Boston 1985, p. 14). In itself, encountering the same change twice does not of course mean that the same hand was involved in both instances; but the Berlin landscape does in fact turn out to fit in quite well with Flinck's landscape production as this is now beginning to emerge (see further Chapter II of the Introduction). It certainly does very much seem that from one phase to the next this production was determined by consecutive prototypes from Rembrandt's hand, even though Flinck had probably already left the latter's workshop in 1634 (and, on the evidence of his signed and dated works, by 1636 at the very latest). In 1638 Rembrandt painted his *Landscape with the Good Samaritan*, now in Krakow, which formed the starting point for Flinck's *Landscape with obelisk* of 1638 in the Stewart Gardner Museum (no. C 117). In the Berlin landscape these impressions are (in the figurative and the literal sense !) superseded by that of the Amsterdam *Landscape with a stone bridge*, which we date after 1638. It does not yet (unlike no. C 119 in the Wallace Collection) betray any knowledge of Rembrandt's Braunschweig *Landscape with a thunderstorm* (no. A 137).

Besides a continuing use of Rembrandt's example, one also finds however in Flinck's work sufficient constantly-recurring features to demonstrate a certain measure of unity within the work from his rembrandtesque period. Such features also occur in the Berlin landscape, although the paint is here in general thinner than in the landscapes in Paris and the Stewart Gardner Museum; this may have to do with the small size, but is also connected with the impression of the *Landscape with a stone bridge* that was apparently used as a model. Taking that into account, there are a number of resemblances of both a more general and a more specific kind to the preceding Flinck landscapes. All three works share a certain lack of certainty about spatial relationships in the middle ground; the chiaroscuro, which ought to provide clarity, fails to offer a clearcut structure; instead of this there is a spatially indistinct zone,

kept in half-tones, that in a vague way forms a transition to the distant vista. The similarity in this respect is striking, especially to the *Landscape with obelisk*. As to the trees, they show in every instance a similar kind of shape, reminding one somewhat of waving feathers and recognizable in other, signed works by Flinck — the *Portrait of Dirck Jacobsz. Leeuw* dated 1636 (Amsterdam, Verenigde Doopsgezinde Gemeente), the *Double portrait of Dirck Graswinckel and his wife* in Rotterdam, datable around 1640 (see Chapter II figs. 34 and 35), and the Kiev *Elias in the wilderness* dated 1640 (Sumowski *Gemälde* II, nos. 685, 713 and 620). Sometimes worked up with highlights and sometimes not, these trees often have more of a repoussoir-like appearance than a three-dimensional structure — something that is true to only a limited extent of the Berlin painting, but here too the featherlike character appears again and the effect of depth gets no really effective help from the lighting. In the skies, Flinck has in the paintings in Boston and Berlin adapted himself to the varying Rembrandt models he used; but in neither instance do they play the prominent role that, with their subtle shading and predominantly heavy tint, they have in Rembrandt. And finally the rendering of the small human figures and animals is in every plane, especially in the middle ground where the scale becomes extremely small, marked by meticulous care coupled with inadequate execution showing a certain stiffness of just the kind one meets in the *Landscape with obelisk* (in the small figures on the bridge and next to the obelisk). All things taken together, typical peculiarities of form and weaknesses, alongside the use of one Rembrandt landscape prototype after another, point unmistakably to the hand of Flinck. There is documentary evidence that he not infrequently did landscapes (see Introduction, Chapter II and the comments on no. C 117), and one cannot avoid the conclusion that even after he had left Rembrandt's workshop he remained very familiar indeed with not only Rembrandt's history paintings but with his landscapes as well.

Various motifs that occur in the Berlin landscape — especially the inn with a cart — mark the country depicted as the sinful world, just as in Rembrandt's *Landscape with a stone bridge* from which they are taken in reverse. The consequence is that the world typified as sinful is on the right in Flinck, so that the iconographic programme has to be read in the opposite direction. Nonetheless the pilgrimage of life seems to form the theme here too (cf. no. A 136 under *4. Comments*). There is no obvious protagonist to be seen following the road from right to left. The road leads in front of (in Rembrandt, behind) the bridge and along the trees and fence, which seem to contain hints of death. The number of arches in the bridge is, certainly not by chance, the sacred figure of seven, and the bridge can just as in Rembrandt be seen as a 'transition from this world,/ into the blessed realm of Heaven', as Jan Luyken was still describing it in 1711 (*De Bykorf des Gemoeds ..*, Amsterdam 1711, p. 10). One thus gets a very strong impression that there ought still to be some indication of heavenly bliss to the left of the bridge. In view of the traces of sawmarks along precisely this edge, mentioned earlier, it may be assumed that at this point an equivalent for the church seen on the far right in Rembrandt has been lost.

5. Documents and sources

None.

6. Graphic reproductions

None.

7. Copies

None.

8. Provenance

- Purchased for the Groszherzogliche Galerie in Oldenburg in 1801 (cat.no.1890, no.197)[5].
- Acquired by the Kaiser Friedrich-Museum, Berlin, 1924.

9. Summary

The clear resemblances that this painting offers with Rembrandt's landscapes, especially the Krakow *Landscape with the Good Samaritan* dated 1638 (no. A 125), and the Amsterdam *Landscape with a stone bridge* which we date rather later (no. A 136), have up to now been enough to maintain the attribution to Rembrandt. Closer inspection however shows the effect achieved to be so far behind that of those two paintings that it has to be assumed that they served as a model for an imitator, with (on the evidence of a change in composition) the Krakow work predominating in an early stage and the Amsterdam painting in a later one. This imitator can be identified as Govaert Flinck on the grounds of characteristic weaknesses and typical approaches to form that the work shares with signed landscapes from his hand. The iconographic programme that (in reverse) is very like that of Rembrandt's *Landscape with a stone bridge* makes us suspect that a church or some other representation of heavenly bliss was on a strip sawn off on the left.

REFERENCES

1 M. Rostworowski, *Rembrandta przypowieść o milosiernym Samarytaninie* (Rembrandt's parable of the Good Samaritan), Warsaw 1980, p. 140 note 8.
2 Gerson 197; Br.-Gerson 445.
3 C.P. Schneider, *Rembrandt's landscape paintings*, [to be published shortly], chapter 2.
4 Tümpel 1986, cat. no. 261.
5 W. von Bode, 'Rembrandts Landschaft mit der Brücke', *Jb.d.Pr.Kunsts.* 46 (1925), pp. 159–163.

C 119 Landscape with a moated castle

LONDON, THE WALLACE COLLECTION, CAT. NO. P. 229

HDG 948; BR. 451; BAUCH 550; GERSON 266

1. Summarized opinion

A well preserved painting that can be attributed to Govaert Flinck and dated around 1640.

2. Description of subject

In the middle ground on the right lies a castle, surrounded by a wide expanse of water in which it is reflected; it comprises a crenellated keep, various living quarters with a cupola-like tower, and a forecourt surrounded by a wall with battlements on which there are a number of cannon. On the right a drawbridge and gateway give access to the castle; on the left a small wooden bridge provides a link with a road which bends to the right between trees and disappears behind the castle. The ground then rises to some fairly high hills on which, on the extreme right, there are buildings and a square tower. Between the trees, at the foot of the hills, there is a brightly lit patch of land where a man walks with a dog and, alongside fencing, a farmer drives a cow.

In the extreme foreground on the right a gentleman stands on a hillock, clad in a red cloak and wearing a cap with a tall plume. He holds a stick in his left hand, and a sword hangs on his right side. Behind him is a servant with two greyhounds, holding a staff in his right hand. The master and servant are looking towards the left over a rolling terrain with meadows and fields. From behind the hillock on which they are standing a road runs to the left and then winds lazily into the distance. A coach is driving along this road, drawn by two horses; a coachman sits on the driver's seat, and a passenger can be seen between the curtains; a boy is running along behind the coach. Between the road and the water are a field with shocks of corn and a fenced-off parcel of land where goats are grazing. Swans, and a punt-ferry carrying cattle, can be seen on the moat. To the left of the road, and running parallel with it, a ditch is spanned by a small wooden bridge, with a woman with a yoke and milk-pails crossing it. A cow drinks from the ditch in the extreme foreground.

A little to the left of centre the road divides: on the lefthand branch a waggon piled high with hay is pulled by two horses. Further to the left this road disappears behind a farmhouse with a few trees, beside which cows are grazing. The righthand arm of the road, on which there are a rider and a man on foot, curves alongside the water and joins the road mentioned earlier, which then disappears behind the castle.

On the left the middle ground is formed by fields and meadows, while further off there is a wide expanse of water with a boat on it. On the further bank is a town, with walls and numerous tall, straight towers. Hills are vaguely visible in the far distance.

The cloudy sky is lightest on the left and at the horizon. Dark clouds lower to the right and upwards. The foreground lies in shadow, and only the hillock on the extreme right with the figures catches a little light. The lighting on the middle ground varies, with the patch of land between the trees on the right, the tops of the trees behind the castle and the road and fields on the left the most strongly lit.

3. Observations and technical information

Working conditions

Examined in May 1968 (B.H., E.v.d.W.) in good daylight and out of the frame. Two X-ray films were received later from the Courtauld Institute of Art, London, covering the whole painting apart from a strip a few centimetres wide along the top. Seen again on several occasions, including after cleaning in 1981/82.

Support

DESCRIPTION: Oak panel, grain horizontal, 46 × 64 cm. Single plank. Back bevelled along all four sides.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: Dendrochronology (Prof. Dr J. Bauch and Prof. Dr D. Eckstein, Hamburg) showed on the left 119 annual rings of heartwood measured; not so far datable, but comes from the same trunk as the panel of the *Portrait of a man* of 1633 in Dresden (no. C 77) and the *Self-portrait in a cap* of 1633 in Paris (no. A 72).

Ground

DESCRIPTION: An ochre brown shows through in many places.
SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

Paint layer

CONDITION: Good. Craquelure: hardly any seen. In the foreground, to the left of a drinking cow, there are a few shrinkage cracks, which show that paint was here placed over another layer before it was dry; this crackle is evidently in the top layer, and is not apparent in the X-ray.
DESCRIPTION: In the foreground a translucent brown has been used over the ground; this was followed by thicker paint in black, dark brown, dark olive-green and an ochrish yellow to show the structure of the terrain and to draw the houses, shocks of corn and fencing, the waggons, people and animals. In general, the figures are depicted rather broadly and quite clumsily. The coach and horses in the foreground are drawn with fairly thin, dark lines, with little suggestion of depth. Only the figures in the right foreground are done with a thickish paint, with details defined. The bright red of the gentleman's cloak is applied thickly, most so in the highest lights, and the same is true of the paint used for the two greyhounds and the servant's staff. The foreground vegetation has thick dots of a yellowish paint.

In the more fully lit middle ground a light ochre tint has been used, in fine strokes and touches of the brush, to create the effect of sunlight on the fields, trees and buildings. In the castle this has led to an over-meticulous detailing of the masonry, cross-bar windows and the barrels of the cannon. The details continue in the shadow parts of the castle, though there the effect is more satisfactory. The trees behind the castle, too, have fine detail — individual trunks and branches are shown quite distinctly, the foliage is depicted with fine, elegant lines, and the lit treetops are done in a relatively thick yellowish paint.

At the rear trees and buildings are painted in a blue-green, here and there placed directly over the ground. The distant vista is shown rather broadly, in a mainly brown-yellow colour.

In its lighter areas the sky is painted quite thickly and opaquely. Towards the top, applied with broad, long brushstrokes, there is a thinner light grey paint, on top of which lie numerous small edges of a thicker paint that has evidently been pushed aside somewhat by the brush; in among these the ground can be partly seen, giving a patchy appearance. Further to the right the clouds are in part again more opaque, as is the very dark cloud along the upper edge of the painting. The whole of the sky has a confused character, with little power of suggestion.
SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

X-Rays

The radiographic image virtually matches what can be expected from the surface. Only the highest lights show up very light; less light areas include the water, where there are no reserves for the boats and animals but only — between two rather lighter patches — for the upper body of the gentleman in the bottom righthand corner. The buildings on the hill to the right appear a second time about 3 cm lower than their present position. The peculiar pattern of the grey paint in the lefthand half of the sky is seen quite clearly.

Signature

At the bottom right in dark brown <*Rembrandt.*>. Below this there are possibly the remains of a date. The final letters of the name are hard to read. The letters rise slightly to the right and

Fig. 1. Panel 46 × 64 cm



are shakily and clumsily placed. The initial *R* is not (no longer?) closed on the left, while the *b* has a closed loop to the ascender. This signature, which became more easily visible as a result of the cleaning of 1981/82, was mentioned for the first time by Schneider who read the date as 1637[1]. The inscription does not make a reliable impression.

Varnish

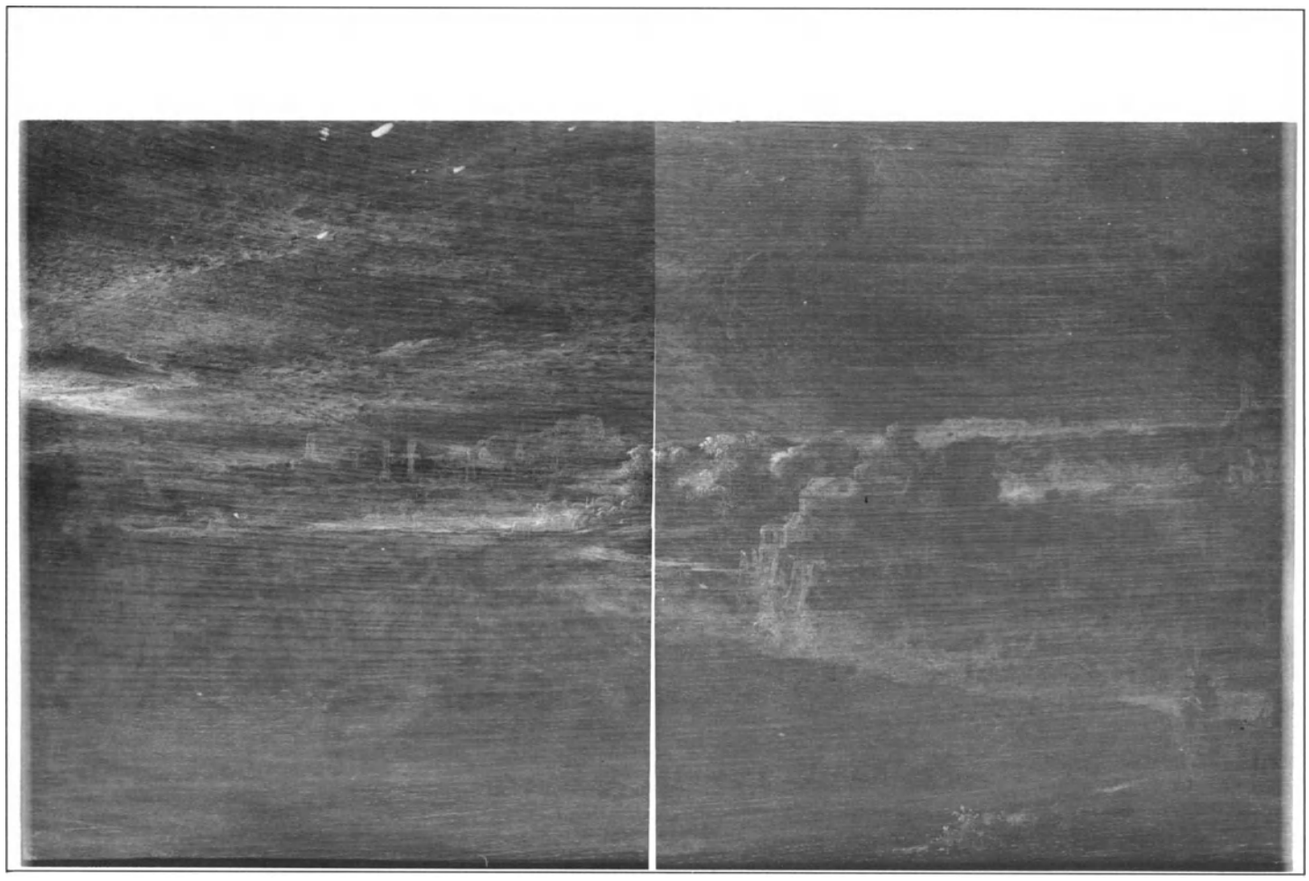
No special remarks.

4. Comments

In execution this painting is, broadly speaking, in line with Rembrandt's landscapes. In the shadow areas an opaque dark paint has been used to sketch over a translucent brown, while lighter areas are done opaquely with some impasto on the highest lights. The X-ray image, where only the lighter passages show up and the shadow areas contain virtually no radioabsorbent paint, is roughly what can be expected from Rembrandt's use of paint and way of applying it. In type and design — the lighting and effect of depth this is intended to produce, and the inclusion of minute detail in the whole — the resemblance to Rembrandt is unmistakeable. As a result the attribution to him has until now been generally accepted in the literature, most recently by Cynthia Schneider who reads the date as 1637[1]. However, Tümpel voiced uncertainty about the attribution[2] and Foucart proposed one to Govaert Flinck[3].

Alongside the similarities no. C 119 has many features that make a Rembrandt attribution unacceptable. These involve first of all the composition, and more particularly the treatment of light in the various planes. Unlike the chiaroscuro contrasts suggestive of depth in Rembrandt's landscapes since the Krakow *Landscape with the Good Samaritan* of 1638 (no. A 125), these planes flow gradually one into the next, linked by vaguely curved linear elements such as roads and riverbanks, which result only in a rough and scarcely articulated indication of space. This is most intrusive in the rather lame lefthand border to the water in the middle ground, where the perspective effect is far from satisfactory. The absence of a clear articulation takes its toll, however, in the whole structure of the landscape — the expanse seems to stretch out as a somewhat concave surface from the foreground to the middle ground in a way one does not meet in Rembrandt, and at most somewhat like the *Landscape with a walled town* in the Coll. Duke of Alba (no. C 120) the attribution of which to Rembrandt cannot be

Fig. 2. X-Ray



accepted. In the distance the articulation of planes and forms is, despite the indication of all kinds of detail, vague and the general appearance rather indeterminate. In the castle the handling of light is marred, in a way unthinkable for Rembrandt, by the draughtsmanlike detail in the lit areas, while the whole somewhat clumsy detailing gives the building a shaky structure. There is a similar clumsiness in the reflexion in the water of the castle and trees behind it, which are strangely overemphatic seen in relation to the broad and rather awkward drawing of the motifs in the lowlying foreground. The latter all lack a convincing form; in the little group on the far right, alone, the drawn detail is taken almost to the point of absurdity (in the headgear of the gentleman!) and the bright red of the clothing offers an overcolourful accent in a generally subdued colour-scheme. The lack of a convincing spatial construction is offset to some extent by the chiaroscuro effect, but not enough. The sunlight in the middle ground is spread too wide for this, and the chiaroscuro contrasts are aimed too much at achieving minor local effects and too little at creating the wider cohesion that Rembrandt knew how to obtain. Most of the trees and hills standing out against the skyline suffer from a certain lack of characteristic shape. The sky, with a singular treatment on the lefthand side — numerous small edgings of grey paint that the brush seems to have produced in the wet paint — , contributes little to the spatial dynamic of the whole.

These differences between the painting in the Wallace Collection and the landscapes attributable to Rembrandt can in part be seen as discrepancies in quality; they can however be pinpointed as signs of a different and less firm conception of the three-dimensional space to be rendered than one finds in Rembrandt, and of a tendency to finicky rather than suggestive detail in the lit middle ground (something Rembrandt invariably avoids). In spite of the generally rembrandtesque design and execution, these features lead to the conclusion that the painting cannot come from Rembrandt's own hand (as has always been assumed, certainly since the middle of the 18th century), though it must have been produced in his immediate circle. The signature, which inspires little confidence, must indeed be regarded as unauthentic.

The dendrochronology findings appear to support the belief that the painting was done in Rembrandt's circle; they show that the panel came from the same

Fig. 3. Detail (1 : 1.5)



tree (and thus probably from the same batch of wood) as that of the autograph Rembrandt *Self-portrait in a cap* dated 1633 in the Louvre (no. A 72), and the *Portrait of a man* in Dresden also dated 1633 (no. C 77) that is from the hand of a workshop assistant, possibly Govaert Flinck. One has to consider whether this finding must lead to dating no. C 119 in or around 1633 as well, and whether such an early date as this might explain the presence of weaknesses in an autograph painting. There is however not enough to warrant this latter idea. There is no evidence at all in Rembrandt's work for his having been interested in this type of landscape around 1633, and the nature of the painting with its strongly tonal colour-scheme interrupted only by the bright red of the foreground figure on the right does not fit in with the general character of Dutch landscape production in those years. What is more, the idea of the artist embarking on a genre so far unknown to him is far too simplistic to explain the shortcomings that have been mentioned. A date in or soon after 1633 must therefore be regarded as out of the question and the panel must, if it was already in the studio in 1633, have lain unused for several years. The painting is plainly based on Rembrandt's landscape style as this can be seen in the 1638 Krakow painting and, even more clearly, in the Braunschweig *Landscape with a thunderstorm* of *c.* 1640 (A 137); the arrangement of light is in general based on this, and the lastnamed work is recalled especially in the way the light skims from one side across the treetops in the middle ground, and the way a lit area of land standing out against the hills on the right contrasts with the dark trees in front of it. The hint of lit vegetation in the right foreground, coupled with the lowlying farmstead on the other side sketched in dark tints, again suggests familiarity with the Braunschweig painting (where the high

Fig. 4. Detail (1 : 1.5)



foreground is on the left).

One may go further and venture an opinion as to which of Rembrandt's pupils was responsible for this painting. The unsatisfactory spatial construction of the whole, the excessive detail in some areas — the foreground figure, and the castle — , the over-broad treatment of most shapes and the rather floating appearance of the distant vista are all features that can be found in landscapes signed by Govaert Flinck and in works that can be grouped as attributions to him. His *Landscape with a bridge and ruins* dated 1637, in Paris (Sumowski *Gemälde* II, no. 718; cf. Introduction, Chapter II, fig. 36), though in a different tradition as far as composition is concerned, shows very similar details such as the farmstead sketched in the lower lefthand corner, the hazy vista and, particularly, the rather overemphatic, dilapidated architecture on the right, which foreshadows the 'moated castle' in the Wallace Collection painting. The somewhat inadequate definition of form in the unexpectedly numerous figures of people and animals, invariably lacking the succinctness they have in Rembrandt, can be found in both the signed Stewart Gardner *Landscape with obelisk* of 1638 (no. C 117) and the unsigned Berlin *Landscape with a seven-arched bridge* (no. C 118). In both works one is struck by how Flinck, even though he was obviously using Rembrandt prototypes as his models — the 1638 Krakow *Landscape with the Good Samaritan* (no. A 125) and the Amsterdam *Landscape with a stone bridge* (no. A 136) respectively — still used a rather unclear treatment of chiaroscuro in his own manner, so that the division into planes lacks the structural quality of Rembrandt's landscapes. In this respect, too, the *Landscape with a moated castle* fits perfectly into Flinck's landscape production, assuming that in the meantime Rembrandt's Braunschweig *Landscape with a thunderstorm* had

Fig. 5. Detail with signature (enlarged)



become known to him and that he based his treatment of the features mentioned above (especially the trees in the mid-ground) on this. A motif one can describe as characteristic of Flinck is the use of a piece of architecture, generally in a ruinous state, as an important feature in the centre of the composition — see the example illustrated in Chapter II fig. 39 — , together with a lack of certainty about how to close off the composition on the righthand side: in the 1637 landscape a tree at this point has been drastically altered, in the Berlin landscape a hill has been lowered, and in no. C 119 a building on a hilltop has been moved up.

As suggested already by Foucart[3] the painting in the Wallace Collection thus joins convincingly a group of landscapes from Flinck's hand. It was already known from a variety of inventories that he did paint landscapes (cf. Introduction, Chapter II note 113 and the comments on no. C 117). In particular, one can imagine that a 'stuck van Flinck, sijnde een koeywey naer 't leeven gedaen' (a work by Flinck, being a cattle pasture done from life) described in 1653 (P. van Eeghen in: *O.H.* 68, 1953, p. 173) must have looked more or less like no. C 119. This specimen confirms a conclusion already reached earlier, viz. that even after he had left Rembrandt's workshop — probably in 1634 but at the latest (on the evidence of signed and dated work) in 1636 — Flinck continued to use successive works by Rembrandt as a prototype. If we can assume that his *Landscape with obelisk* betrays a fresh knowledge of Rembrandt's 1638 *Landscape with the Good Samaritan*, that his *Landscape with a seven-arched bridge* is based on the same painting but subsequently mostly on Rembrandt's *Landscape with a stone bridge*, and that the Wallace Collection painting is modelled on both these prototypes plus Rembrandt's *Landscape with a thunderstorm*, then we may perhaps deduce the order in which both Rembrandt's and Flinck's were produced. As has been said above, the *Landscape with a moated castle* can on the grounds of this connexion be dated *c.* 1640 or soon after. It must be noted that Flinck used a panel coming from the same tree as panels that were painted on in 1633, and moreover that even after setting up as a master on his own account he must have used a panel that might be thought to have lain unused for years either in Rembrandt's studio or perhaps in the panelmaker's or printer's shop. There is a further link, of secondary importance, with Flinck — the greyhounds accompanying the figures on the right are very like those in a drawing, attributable to Flinck, of *Diana with two greyhounds*, formerly in coll. Tobias Christ in Basle (Ben. 116 as Rembrandt).

Like Rembrandt's landscapes, this Flinck landscape too contains an unmistakeable reference to the futility of human activities and wealth (in the farmstead and the coach), most clearly so in the figure on the right wearing a plumed cap who, to judge also from the enormous ostrich-feather and his fanciful attire, must be seen as a pure Vanitas figure.

5. Documents and sources

None.

6. Graphic reproductions

1. Engraving by Joseph C. Maillet (Paris 1751–1811) inscribed: *Rembrandt pinx - J. Maillet Sculp / Du Cabinet de Mr. le Duc de Choiseul / De la grandeur de 25 pouces sur 17.* No. 97 in: [P.F.] Basan, *Recueil d'estampes gravées d'après les tableaux de Monseigneur le Duc de Choiseul*, Paris 1771. Reproduces the original in reverse, except for the uppermost part of the sky. Various details have not been properly understood, e.g. in the castle, or rendered differently, as in the haycart which becomes a covered waggon.

7. Copies

None.

8. Provenance

*– Possibly sale Amsterdam 23 May 1764 (Lugt 1388), no. 188: 'Rembrandt [crossed out in ink in the RKD copy]. Een Landschap met een Koets en Paarden, kragtig geschildert, hoog 20 duim, breed 27 duim [= 51.4 × 69.4 cm, Amsterdam feet]. (8 guilders to Koeling).

For some time the painting was made to form a pair with a landscape attributed to Rubens, which to judge from the print in Basan's *Recueil* (no. 82) was not by that artist:

– Coll. De Julienne, sale Paris 30 March–22 May 1767 (Lugt 1603), no. 138: 'Rembrandt van Ryn. Deux Tableaux en pendants; l'un, peint par Rembrandt, représente une campagne très étendue, diverses maisons proche de deux bras de rivière, plusieurs figures & animaux : dans le coin du Tableau à droite, on remarque un homme portant un plumet à son chapeau, suivi d'un autre & de deux levriers. L'autre, de Rubens, représente des vues de maisons & Abbayes dans un très riche paysage, avec figures. Chacun de ces Tableaux est peint sur bois de 16 pouces 6 lignes de haut, sur 24 pouces 6 lignes de large [= 44.5 × 66.1 cm]' (2071 livres to the Duc de Choiseul).

– Coll. Duc de Choiseul, sale Paris 6–10 April 1772 (Lugt 2020), no. 11: 'Rembrandt. Ce Tableau représente un riche paysage orné de fabriques entourées de belles eaux & éclairées d'un coup de soleil; on voit sur le devant un Carosse & plusieurs autres figures; L'effet de ce Tableau est des plus piquans. Il porte 26 pouces de large sur 16 pouces & demi de haut [= 44.5 × 70.2 cm] B.' (2401 livres to Boileau, together with no. 3, companion-piece by Rubens).

– Coll. Prince de Conti, sale Paris 8 April — 6 June 1777 (Lugt 2671), nos. 291 and 292: 'Rembrandt & Rubens. Deux paysages très riches de composition: l'un, par Rembrandt, nous fait voir des fabriques entourées de belles eaux, & éclairées d'un coup de soleil; sur le devant, un carosse & plusieurs figures: l'autre, de

Rubens, représente un effet d'orage. Ces deux tableaux sont très connus; ils ont appartenus à M. de Jullienne, & ensuite à M. le Duc de Choiseul, no.3 & 11 du Catalogue de ce dernier Cabinet' (1720 livres to L'Anglier. 'Ils avoient couté chez M. de Jullienne 2071 livres, chez M. le Duc de Choiseul 2401 livres').
*– [Coll. Prince de Conti and others], sale Paris 15ff March 1779 (Lugt 2975), no. 127: 'Rembrand van Rhim. Ce Tableau représente une riche campagne ornée de fabriques entourées de belles eaux & éclairées d'un coup de soleil: on voit sur le devant un carrosse & plusieurs figures. L'effet de ce Tableau est des plus piquants. Il fait pendant avec le no. 103 de ce Catalogue [Rubens]. Hauteur, 16 pouces; largeur, 25 pouces [= 43.2 × 67.5 cm]. B. no. 292 du Cat. de M. le P. de C.' (sold 1720 to Langlier with its pendant).
– Coll. Conte de Vaudreuil, sale Paris 24–25 November 1784 (Lugt 3797), no. 30: 'Rembrandt & Rubens. Deux Paysages fort rares & très riches de composition: l'un par Rembrandt, offre des fabriques & bâtimens entourés de belles eaux & éclairés d'un coup de soleil. Sur le devant, l'on voit plusieurs figures & un carrosse attelé. Le Pendant, par Rubens, offre un site pittoresque éclairé par un ciel d'orage. Ces deux Tableaux viennent des Cabinets de MM. de Julienne, no. 138 vendu 2071 liv. le Duc de Choiseul, no. 3 vendu 2401 liv, & M. le Prince de Conty, no. 291 & 292 vendus 1720 liv. Hauteur 16 pouces, largeur 24 pouc. [= 43.2 × 64.8 cm]. T. [sic!]' (1801 livres to Lebrun (Langlier)).
– [Coll. Ch. Al. de Calonne], sale Paris 21–30 April 1788 (Lugt 4304), no. 40: 'Rembrant van Ryn. Il offre des fabriques & bâtimens entourés de belles eaux & éclairés d'un coup de soleil; sur le devant l'on voit plusieurs figures & un carosse attelé. Ce Tableau rare & très-riche de composition, est du plus beau faire de Rembrant; il vient des ventes de M. de Julienne, no. 138, du Duc de Choiseul, no. 3, de M. le Prince de Conti; no. 291, & de celle de M. de Vaudreuil, no. 30 de mon Catalogue [i.e. that by Lebrun]. Hauteur 16 pouces, largeur 24 p. B.' (1499 livres 19 sous).
– Coll. Ch. A de Calonne, sale London 23–28 March 1795 (Lugt 5289), 4th day no. 28: 'Rembrandt. A Landscape View in North Holland, very fine' (£53-11s-0d to Taylor).
– Coll. G. Watson Taylor, sale London (Christie's) 13–14 June 1823, 2nd day no. 57 (£367-10s to Lord Hertford).
– Coll. the 3rd Marquess of Hertford, London; by descent to Sir Richard Wallace, illegitimate son of the 4th Marquess. Bequeathed by Lady Wallace to the nation as part of the Wallace Collection in 1897.

9. Summary

The general approach and execution place no. C 119 in Rembrandt's immediate circle. Both in the somewhat unarticulated spatial structure and lighting and in the uneven detailing (excessive in the middle ground and rather formless in the shadow part of the foreground) the painting however differs so strongly from Rembrandt's landscapes that one has to assume it was done by another hand though with knowledge of his work, soon after Rembrandt's Braunschweig *Landscape with a thunderstorm* of *c.* 1640 (no. A 137).

Similarities to signed and attributed landscapes by Govaert Flinck justify an attribution to that artist, who even apparently after he left Rembrandt's workshop continued to model his work on the latter.

REFERENCES

1 C. Schneider, 'A new look at *The landscape with an obelisk*', *Fenway Court 1984*, Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum, Boston 1985, pp. 6–21, esp. 12, 14; idem. *Rembrandt's landscape paintings* (to be published shortly), cat. no. 3.
2 Tümpel 1986, cat. no. 263*
3 Exhibn. cat. *Musée du Louvre. Nouvelles acquisitions du département des peintures (1983–1986)*, Paris 1987, p. 74.

C 120 Landscape with a walled town

MADRID, COLL. DUKE OF BERWICK AND ALBA

HDG 949; BR. 446; BAUCH 549; GERSON 265

Fig. 1. Panel 42.2 × 60.5 cm



1. Summarized opinion

A reasonably well preserved painting that shows similarities to landscapes by Rembrandt and even more so to landscapes by Flinck. The weak execution makes an attribution to a follower of the latter the most likely.

2. Description of subject

In the middle ground, in the light, is a walled town with a gateway flanked by two round, crenellated towers with a lifting bridge in front of it. To the left, outside the walls, there are trees behind a decrepit fence. Behind the gate, rising high above the other buildings, is a church with two towers topped by cupolas. On the right there is a bastion with earth walls, covered with trees and bushes among which stands a cannon on a gun-carriage. The town is surrounded by a partly-visible moat, which on the extreme right is spanned by a bridge leading to a gateway with towers.

Behind the town there is a plain with a river meandering through it; on the left this is bordered by a high cliff with trees at its foot.

The shadowy foreground comprises a sparsely grown and hilly terrain; on the left, by some trees, is a well with a small span roof. From the left, a path winds forward to the lifting-bridge; on this, in the extreme foreground, a hunter clad in an orange-yellow jacket and red hat, with a sword at his side, is seated on a horse preceded by a dog and followed by his servant; the latter, wearing a green jacket, turns to face the viewer, and holds two dogs on leashes and the spoils of the hunt over his shoulder. On the bridge there is an open horsedrawn coach, accompanied by footmen. In the middle foreground, to the front, a traveller with a staff sits to the right of a plant with red flowers. The brightest light falls on the ground around the lifting-bridge and on the trees and bushes of the bastion. The sky, lightest above the cliff, is filled with clouds.

3. Observations and technical information

Working conditions

Examined on 14 March 1972 (B.H., P.v.Th.) in moderate daylight and in the frame. One X-ray film covering part of the picture was received later.

Support

DESCRIPTION: Oak panel, grain horizontal, 42.2 × 60.5 cm. Single plank, of very uneven thickness. Back very roughly worked, with bevelling at the bottom and righthand side and (very narrow) at the top. The suspicion that the painting may have been larger at the top and especially on the left is not confirmed by the present composition, at least at the left where the hunter on horseback and his servant form a typical corner-filler. It is still possible that the composition was originally larger at the top, with the horizon less high up in the picture area.

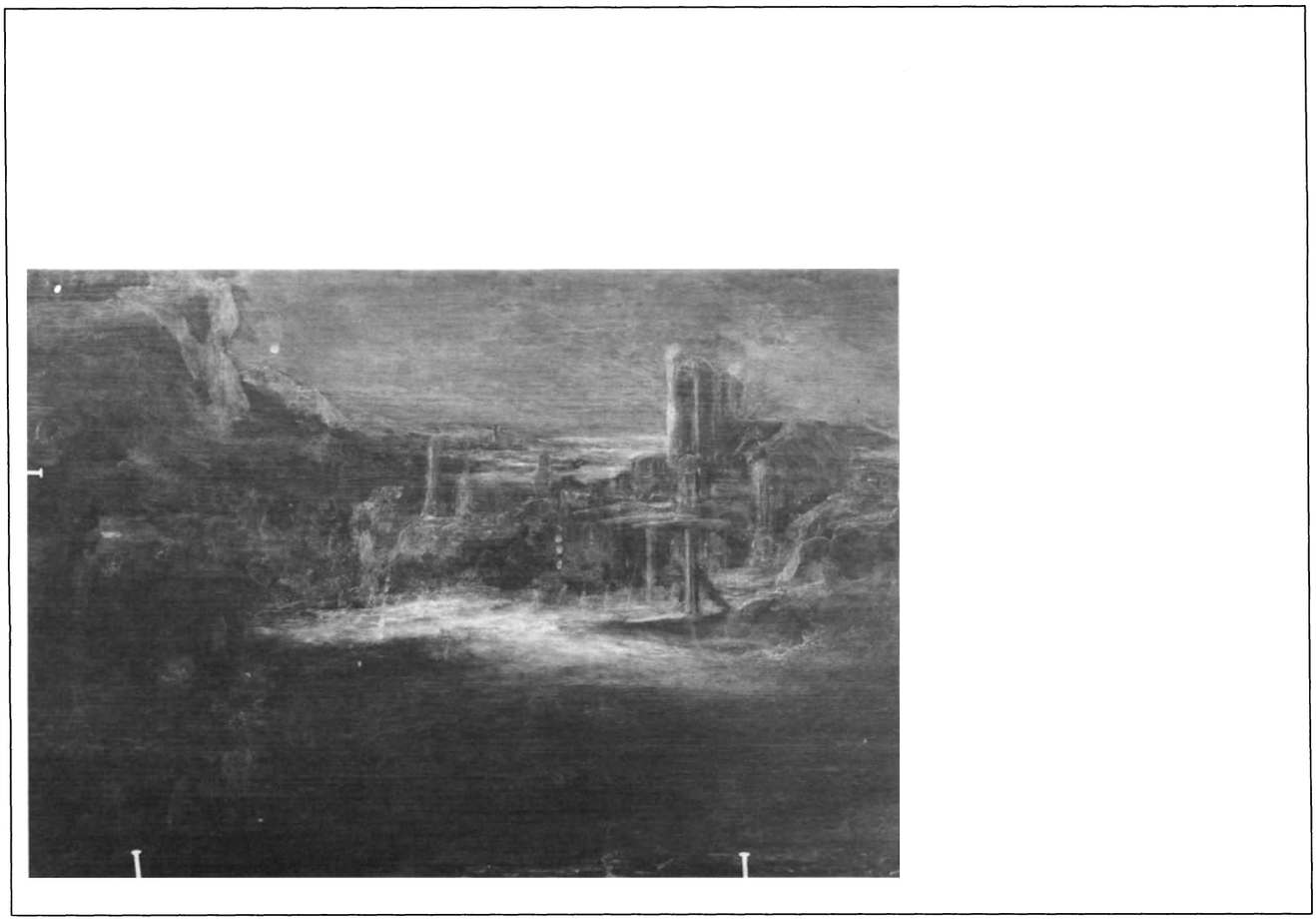
SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

Ground

DESCRIPTION: A light, yellowish layer shows through the brown paint, especially in the left and right lower corners and in the trees at the foot of the cliff.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

Fig. 2. X-Ray



Paint layer

CONDITION: So far as could be seen in the circumstances, and allowing for the varnish, in good condition apart from the areas in the sky at the top left, which have probably been locally overpainted with a bluish and somewhat thick paint. Craquelure: very fine cracks can be seen here and there, most marked in the quite dark olive-green paint in the foreground. It is not entirely clear whether this crackle is in the varnish or in the paint.

DESCRIPTION: The treatment is thorough in the lit areas. The highest lights are placed in finely brushed yellowish and brownish white, and the trees, fencing and structure of the terrain are set out, over a sketchy underpainting. The edges of light on the trees and the bastion are shown with small strokes and dabbing touches of the brush. The lit side of the bastion itself is done with relatively broad brushstrokes, set partly one over the other, while the shadow side is painted more thinly, in brown, and has broad detail done with small lines of black.

The buildings of the town are painted in browns and greys and the church in slate grey, with the structure indicated with straight lines; an underlying layer of brown contributes to the overall effect. The lifting-bridge has straight and rather unimaginative outlines and edgings of light.

The cliff on the left is done with quite thick, fluid paint, often applied with a dabbing touch, in grey and tints of ochre with a little whitish grey; the extensions of this into the distance are in a slate grey, while the plain with the river is rendered with alternating fine slate grey and greenish grey strokes and small, reddish brown-grey horizontal lines that create a strong suggestion of depth.

The foreground is in fairly wide range of ruddy brown and dark olive green and grey paint, applied with a variety of brushstrokes. Short strokes predominate in the centre, while towards the corners the strokes become more fluid and the paint is applied more thinly. The foliage of the plant in the foreground is done with curling strokes of impasto green paint.

The foreground figures are set down quite cursorily in fluent strokes, and described with tellingly-placed lines. Some details are more fully, and even meticulously worked up — for example the sword the rider wears on his back, which is given fine highlights, as well as the spoils on his servant's back and the dogs' leashes.

The group by the lifting-bridge is drawn effectively but with no great amount of detail, in lively shades of grey and yellow, and a conspicuous red (for the man in the coach).

The sky is painted quite opaquely, with often visible and mainly horizontal brushstrokes, plus a few placed crosswise. The dark grey of the clouds shows rather more varied brushwork. To the right of the church the sky above the horizon is a blue-grey, while to the left of it there is light grey with yellowish white higher up. The paint of the sky is everywhere set carefully against the contour of the distant horizon.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

X-Rays

The radiographic image corresponds to what the paint surface leads one to expect.

Signature

None (the lower edge of the painting was beneath the frame, and thus could not be inspected).

Fig. 3. Detail (1 : 1.5)



Varnish

A quite badly yellowed varnish somewhat hampers observation.

4. Comments

Compared to the landscapes by Rembrandt known to us, the painting shows on the one hand close similarities to these in general design and treatment — most strikingly in the way details are set over a brown underpainting in the shadow parts, while in the lit areas they are done in lighter and opaque paint — , and on the other a clear difference in the intensity and dynamic of the effect thus achieved. The shadowy foreground takes up a relatively large amount of space, more than is usual in Rembrandt, and has very little pictorially-interesting indication of terrain or vegetation. Rembrandt's landscapes in Krakow (dated 1638, no. A 125) and Braunschweig (no. A 137) demonstrated how the artist avoided such emptiness at the extreme foreground of a picture, even though the red blooms in the foreground of the latter painting do offer an analogy with the single plant with red flowers in no. C 120. It is moreover striking that the foreground in this work acts as a slope down which the viewer looks, as from a height, onto the town — a perspective effect that does not occur in any painted landscape by Rembrandt and can be compared only with that in the *Landscape with a moated castle* in the Wallace Collection in London (no. C 119), which we consider to be by Flinck. The way the trees in the light have been given small curved and looplike highlights is somewhat reminiscent of Rembrandt's manner of working in the landscape in Amsterdam (no. A 136), but the effect of this treatment is here lacking in a suggestion of depth. The rendering of the lifting-bridge, with its lines drawn dead straight, and of the buildings in general is rather timid and does not have the succinctness usually seen in Rembrandt's shorthand in details like these, even in his landscape backgrounds (cf., for example, the Buckingham Palace *Christ appearing to Mary Magdalene* of 1638, no. A 124, where comparable architectural elements occur).

All things taken together, no. C 120 contains, alongside stylistic and technical similarities with Rembrandt's landscapes, and in comparison with the latter, a rather disappointing quality that could be described as an occasionally over-timid rendering of detail and a certain lack of dynamic.

Where there has so far been doubt expressed as to the attribution of no. C 120, this has been prompted by the 1956 Amsterdam Rembrandt exhibition where various art historians had the singular idea that Rembrandt might have painted it over a perhaps uncompleted work by Hercules Seghers[1]; Gerson[2] even looked on it as being 'nearer to Seghers than to Rembrandt'. Though the shape of the cliff on the left, and possibly also the treatment of the distant vista, do show some resemblance to works by Seghers, it can — given the degree of visibility of underpainting applied directly to the ground — be regarded as doubtful in the extreme that more than one hand worked on the painting.

And this hand had very little to do with Seghers; the similarity to the *View of Brussels* in Cologne (Wallraf-Richartz-Museum, Dep. 249) lies solely in a superficial resemblance in the motif of a church with twin towers. It is obvious that the painter must have been familiar with Rembrandt's manner of landscape painting in the late 1630s. Apart from the general similarities already mentioned there seems in particular to be a certain resemblance in the way trees in the light are treated with Rembrandt's *Landscape with a stone bridge* at Amsterdam, except that in no. C 120 the edges of light and highlights have a certain monotony the effect of which is quite unlike the highly differentiated structure seen in Rembrandt in passages like these. A stage partway between the two treatments can be found in the Berlin *Landscape with a seven-arched bridge* (no. C 118), which we attribute to Govaert Flinck and where the graphically-handled highlights still show a greater degree of vitality. As has been mentioned, there are also links with another landscape that can be ascribed to Flinck, i.e. the *Landscape with a moated castle* in the Wallace Collection, London, datable around 1640 or soon after. Besides the perspective effect of the sloping ground that has already been mentioned, and associated with this a relatively high-set horizon (in the Wallace Collection landscape not quite as high as here), there is also a figure placed in one corner of the foreground, looking diagonally into the scene. One is also reminded of this work by the use of an architectural motif around the centre of the composition, and of a path running alternately along various diagonals which, where it makes a sharp bend towards the bridge, catches the brightest light. The fact that all these motifs are not to be found in Rembrandt but are in Flinck can be interpreted as evidence that the painting is more likely to come from the latter's studio. It seems out of the question that Flinck's own hand can be detected — the timidity and feeble forms with which architectural features, trees and terrain are indistinctly rendered betrays a different and weaker hand. The date of the painting will be not long after 1640.

5. Documents and sources

None.

6. Graphic reproductions

None.

7. Copies

None.

8. Provenance

– Sale Amsterdam 22 April 1771 (Lugt 1921), no. 20: 'Rembrandt. Een Bergagtig Landschap. In het zelve ziet men, op de voorgrond, een Jager te Paard, en agter dezelve een te Voet, welke een Haas op de schouder heeft en van twee Honden verzeld is, op de tweede grond vertoont zich een Stad, en verders hoog Gebergte. Kragtig van Koloriet, en natuurlyk op Paneel geschilderd; hoog 16½, breed 23½ Duim [Amsterdam foot of 11 inches, = 41.4 × 60.3 cm]'. (Rembrandt. A mountainous landscape. In this one sees in the foreground a hunter on a horse, and behind him another on foot carrying a hare over his shoulder and accompanied by two dogs, in the middle ground there is a town, with beyond it high mountains. Vigorously coloured, and painted naturally, on panel . . .) (900 guilders).
– Acquired by Don Carlos Miguel, 14th Duke of Alba, in 1818[3].

9. Summary

In conception and execution no. C 120 both resembles and differs from Rembrandt's landscapes. The differences relate mainly to an unsatisfactory coordination of the components in a perspective that is unusual for Rembrandt, a rather timid rendering of detail and a lack of dynamic effect in the composition. In some respects the composition and treatment are closer to the *Landscape with a moated castle*, attributed to Govaert Flinck, in the Wallace Collection, London (no. C 119). One cannot however see Flinck's own hand in it, and the idea of an imitator of him is more likely.

REFERENCES

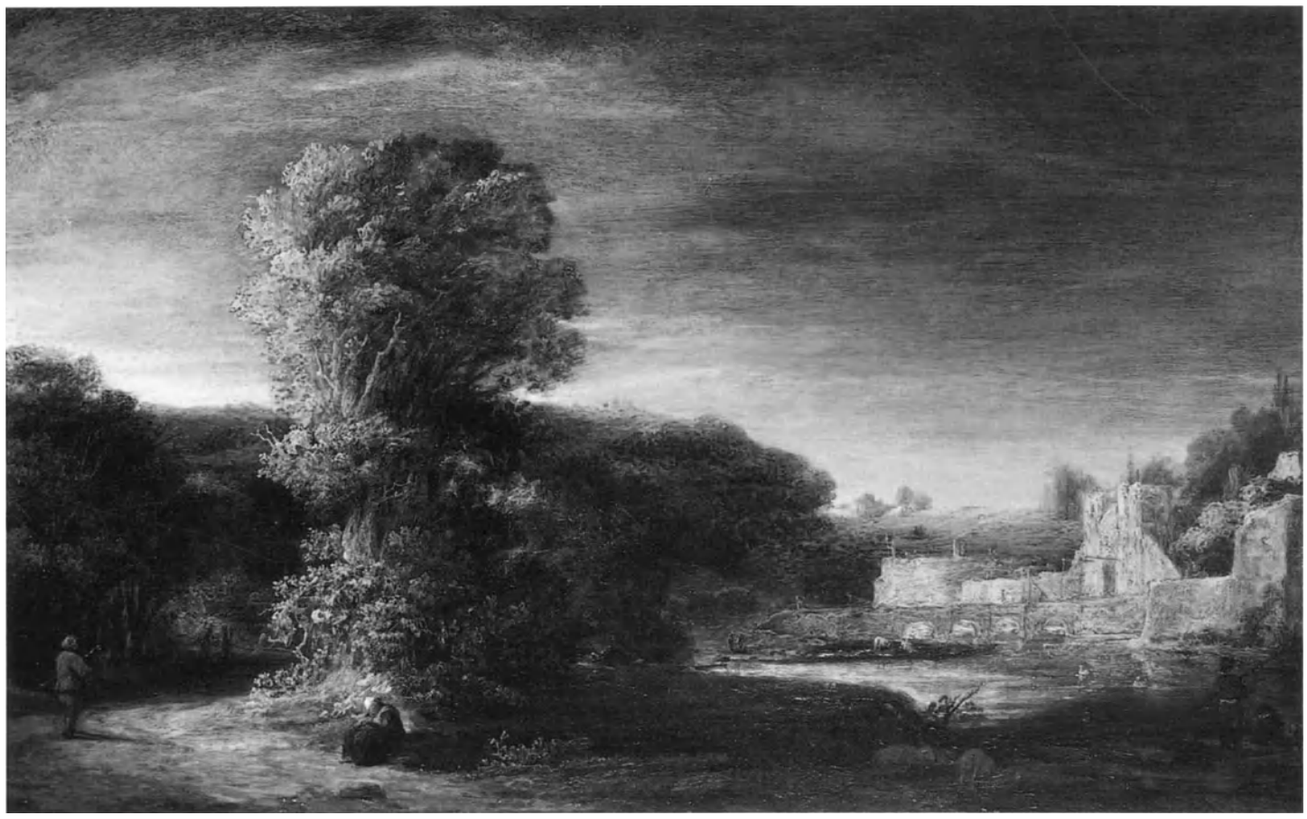
1 'Die Rembrandt-Forschung im Lichte der Ausstellungen des Jahres 1956. Bericht über die vom Zentralinstitut für Kunstgeschichte in München veranstaltete wissenschaftliche Arbeitstagung (7.–9. März 1957)', *Kunstchronik* 10 (1957), pp. 117–153, esp. 145.
2 Gerson 265; Br.-Gerson 446.
3 HdG 949. Exhibn. cat. *El arte en las collecciones de la casa de Alba*, Madrid 1987, no. 9.

C 121 Wooded landscape with a castle

WHEREABOUTS UNKNOWN

HDG 946; BR. 444; BAUCH 548; GERSON 201

Fig. 1. Panel 31.3 × 45.2 cm



1. Summarized opinion

A reasonably well preserved work, inspired by Rembrandt's landscapes though differing significantly from them in manner of painting and handling of depth. It may be attributed to Ferdinand Bol, and dated around 1650.

2. Description of subject

A curving road runs from the left foreground into the middle distance where it leads into a wood. A woman sits, apparently reading, on the righthand side of the road at the foot of a tall tree lit from the left; a man holding a gun (?) walks along the opposite side. There are sheep in the right foreground, in shadow, and on the far right on the bank of a stream, where some swans are swimming, are the figures of two anglers — one standing, the other sitting. On the other, lit bank there are a few figures and cows. A stone bridge with four arches leads, via a drawbridge, to a castle lying in the full light; behind this there are low and occasionally wooded hills. The sky is quite light at the horizon, with patches of bright blue especially on the left. Long, thin lines of cloud show light yellow and pink rims of light; towards the top the clouds become darker.

3. Observations and technical information

Working conditions

Examined on 30 October 1973 (J.B., S.H.L.) in good artificial and UV light and out of the frame, with the aid of an X-ray film covering virtually the whole painting.

Support

DESCRIPTION: Oak panel, grain horizontal, 31.3 (±0.1) × 45.2 cm. Single plank. The two sides are uneven, and the height is slightly less on the right than on the left. This irregularity may be connected with a reduction of the panel after it had been painted for the first time (see *X-Rays* and *4. Comments*). Back planed down to a thickness of *c.* 0.6 cm, and cradled.
SCIENTIFIC DATA: Dendrochronology (Prof. Dr J. Bauch and Prof. Dr D. Eckstein, Hamburg) showed 110 annual rings of heartwood measured, datable as 1509–1618. Earliest possible felling date is 1627.

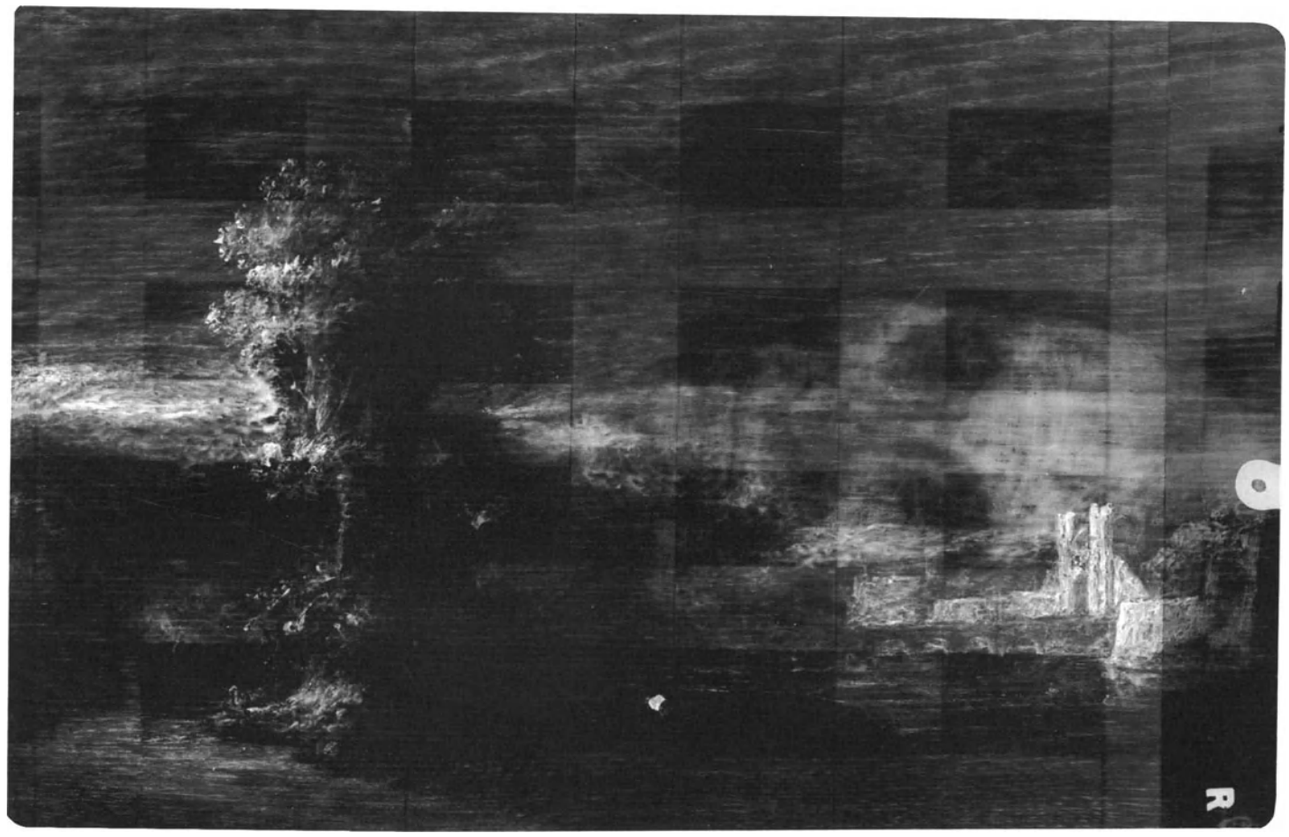
Ground

DESCRIPTION: Not seen. Where in brown passages light appears to show through a translucent brown, this proves on closer inspection to be an opaque light brown paint.
SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

Paint layer

CONDITION: Moderately well preserved, though with some restored paint loss at the lower left. The paint has moreover been retouched at numerous places, apparent under UV light; this is particularly so in the sky to either side of and above the tall tree, mostly in the lighter parts. There are further retouches on the right in the shadow side of the tree, level with and just below the outline of the wood in the middle ground, and at various places in the landscape and castle. Craquelure: a fine, irregular pattern of cracks in the sky to the left of the tree, and some very fine craquelure in large parts of the sky and foreground.
DESCRIPTION: The foreground is done with mostly opaque, thick paint, varying from a dominant dark brown in the shadows to a

Fig. 2. X-Ray



yellow brown in the lit areas. In the light the tall tree is painted in a lumpy impasto with squiggly strokes of a thick light brown and light yellow, at the left placed over the already quite thick paint of the sky. In the shadows the branches are done in dark brown, and the foliage in browns and a greenish grey set over an opaque flat brown. The line followed by the contours on the right lacks suggestion, and they are set on top of the paint of the sky.

The trees in the middle distance are painted with strokes and touches of a fairly thick dark brown, with on top of this dabs of a cool grey. The outlines, here again painted over the sky, do not really suggest the tops of trees. The building on the right is executed in a rather syrupy paint with short, straight brushstrokes in a yellowish brown with pink, and the bridge in grey with pink. The forms offer no suggestion of plasticity, and because of illogically placed nuances of light the bridge gives the impression of having been misdrawn. The hill behind the castle is done with parallel horizontal strokes of a dull yellow and greyish paint over an opaque brown that occasionally lies exposed. The water is done with horizontal strokes of a somewhat blueish grey and some white.

The sky, in vague colour transitions, is painted with practically horizontal brushstrokes in opaque greys, with a little light blue-grey on the left and at the horizon. The fairly flatly painted clouds show edges of light in a light pink and some yellow. Thick white is used along the contour of the wood.

The small figures are shown in fairly thick paint with mostly flat strokes, and other than in the red coat of the hunter on the left there is little colour.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

X-Rays

The image is somewhat impaired by the cradling, as well as by an underlying painting that interferes with the landscape.

The lit tree, the bridge and the castle show up distinctly; the sky in the distance, giving a light image, is seen to continue beneath the contours of the wood, as was already observed at the paint surface.

An area above the castle, which shows up vaguely and light through being done with radioabsorbent paint is seen to be part of a head that was painted on the panel before the landscape was done (this head can be read when the panel is turned through 90 degrees anticlockwise). The skull is intersected by the present righthand side; the head, beardless and with no moustache, is turned a little to the left, and evenly lit. No pronounced brushstrokes can be seen, and the eyes — standing slightly askew — show up dark. The excentric placing of the head in the present picture area, and the fact that the skull is intersected by the edge, show that the panel was reduced on the right (and therefore possibly also at the bottom) before it was used for the present landscape.

Signature

At the bottom right in brown paint <*R*?..> followed by illegible marks and, more black, <*f*>; the latter is painted on top of an overpainted craquelure, and is followed by the remnants of a date that with the greatest reservation may be read as 1651. There is not enough space between the *R* and the *f* for the letters '*.embrandt*'; the signature cannot be regarded as authentic. Without further investigation one cannot say how far the inscription is original and might be the remains of a different one (see *4. Comments* below).

Varnish

No special remarks.

4. Comments

This painting has, until fairly recently, been generally accepted in the literature as a Rembrandt work, and dated in the later 1630s; Gerson[1], for example, included it without comment. Rostworowski[2] however already voiced doubts about the attribution, and Tümpel[3] spoke of Rembrandt's studio; Sumowski[4] and Foucart[5] saw it as a work by Govaert Flinck. There is in fact, despite the broadly rembrandtesque appearance, ample reason to reject the Rembrandt attribution. When it is compared with landscapes acceptable as autograph, it becomes obvious how little contribution the somewhat arbitrary handling of light makes to a composition built up in a succession of planes — of the kind we know in Rembrandt — and how indistinctly the shapes are characterized in both the trees (especially those in the middle ground and seen against the sky) and the architecture and figures. The brushwork shows a certain uniformity in the sky, architecture and hills; in the paint surface it does indeed produce the pronounced relief typical of Rembrandt and his school, but it lacks entirely the crisp detail and incisiveness in suggesting form that is so characteristic of Rembrandt's landscapes. If one adds to this the evident unreliability of the signature in its present form, there is every reason to see the painting as coming not from Rembrandt but rather from his circle. Unfortunately the head in the underlying painting seen in the X-ray offers no evidence of date or author, and dendrochronology of the panel will allow any date after about 1630.

The alternative attribution to Flinck, mentioned by Sumowski and Foucart, is unsatisfactory. The generally rather unclear rendering of form and the resulting almost romantic effect of the road into the wood on the left and of the hazy riverbank on the right cannot be found in any of the group of landscapes attributable to Flinck (see no. C 117 and Chapter II). The unmistakeable resemblances there are with a work like the Berlin *Landscape with a seven-arched bridge* (no. C 118) stem from the common Rembrandt prototype — in particular his *Landscape with a stone bridge* in Amsterdam (no. A 136) — but comparison shows that Flinck's trees are slimmer and done more graphically, while his paintwork is thinner, the tonal values are less contrasty and the total effect does not have the romantic feeling of the present work. There are however, in this latter respect and in execution and motifs as well, links with the landscape style of Ferdinand Bol, as we know this from a small number of works datable around 1650 and presenting a relatively strong rembrandtesque character. These involve mainly the Leningrad *Dismissal of Hagar* and the related *River landscape with cattle* previously in a private collection in Boston (Blankert *Bol* nos. 3 and 183; Sumowski *Gemälde* I, nos 92 and 185; see Chapter II figs. 49 and 48). The present work shares a similar kind of treatment with the latter, a somewhat larger panel measuring 38.5 × 53 cm; there too a (to judge from the reproduction) coarsish handling of paint leads to an indeterminate indication of shapes standing out against the sky, such that despite a different arrangement of the perspective there is a similar effect of a darkening late afternoon with — equally — inexplicable effects of the lighting. Moreover the small figures in the foreground (again including a woman reading!) done with flattish brushstrokes are very similar. The likenesses with the setting of the *Dismissal of Hagar* are even greater; here one finds the same broad spread of chiaroscuro, and in the wood on the right a very similar treatment that extends to tortured branches standing out light against dark and treetrunks shown in bands of dark and light. As in no. C 121 this area is wholly closed off to the right by the silhouette of a towering shape (like that of a poplar or cypress). Among the animals shown on a slope on the right leading down to the woods — very like those in the *River landscape with cattle* — there is a sheep that recurs unmistakeably (albeit smaller and less distinctly) on the bank on the right in the present work. The cubic shapes of Abraham's house, finally, are found again not only in various works atributable to Bol — e.g. the drawing of *The three angels appearing to Abraham* in Vienna (Sumowski, *Drawings* I, no. 259), and the *Departure of the Shunamite woman* in the Victoria and Albert Museum, London (no. C 85) — but also in the present painting where they appear at a smaller scale in the castle on the further side of the water. Considering these resemblances of differing kinds one has to conclude that no. C 121 is from the same hand as the other two, and can thus be attributed to Ferdinand Bol. Though one cannot tell for sure in what sequence the three paintings were produced, it seems reasonable to assume that this *Wooded landscape with a castle* ought like the other two works to be put in the years around 1650. The remnants of the signature and date certainly do not contradict this conclusion; the first letter, currently read as an *R*, may well have formed part of the signature Bol used *c.* 1651/52, *fB* (in monogram) *ol* (called type B by Blankert *Bol*, pp. 32–33), and the conjectural reading of the date as 1651 would fit in well.

The connexion between the three works we have just been comparing lies more in a common approach to form, in the motifs used and mood aroused than in any unequivocally homogeneous landscape formula. The degree of variety is even higher if one adds to Bol's small landscape oeuvre the Hanover *Landscape with the baptism of the Eunuch*

(no. C 116) — certainly done earlier, probably while he was still in Rembrandt's workshop — and the overpainting of the *River landscape with a windmill* in Kassel (no. B 12), which must probably be dated after 1650. In these works too however, despite all their differences (especially in the amount of rembrandtesque detail), one finds such a similarity of intent that one person may be seen as responsible for the whole group (see further Chapter II of the Introduction).

5. Documents and sources

None.

6. Graphic reproductions

None.

7. Copies

1. Oak panel 34 × 47.5 cm, signed at lower right '*Rem...*'. Private Swiss collection; known to us only from a photograph by the Schweizerisches Institut für Kunstwissenschaft (no. 2377). The dimensions make one suspect that it is this copy (and not the original) that was described in the *Historische Erklaerungen der Gemaelde, welche Herr Gottfried Winkler in Leipzig gesammlet*, Leipzig 1768, no. 501: 'Paul Rembrand van Ryn. Auf Holz. 1 Fuss 3 Zoll hoch, 1 Fuss 8½ Zoll breit [= 35.4 × 48.3 cm]. In einer trüben Landschaft wandern zur Linken einige Figuren auf dem sandichten Wege, worüber sich das düstere Gebüsch wölbet. Ein Blick der abgeschiedenen Sonne beleuchtet, vom Horizonte her, das zur Rechten gelegene Thor einer Festung; welches mit einer bewehrten Bastion gesichert ist. Schwanen schwimmen auf ihrem Graben unter der Brücke her, und wachsame Hirten verspäten sich noch in der Abenddämmerung bey ihren Schafen am Ufer.' One has to assume that this painting, like the *Raising of Lazarus* now in Los Angeles (no. A 30, see *8. Provenance* under that entry), came into the Comte de Morny's collection via that of J.F.A. Duval in S. Petersburg, subsequently Geneva; coll. De Morny, sale Paris 24 May 1852, no. 19: 'Rembrandt (Attribué à). Paysage. Une femme est assise au pied d'un grand arbre placé à l'entrée d'une forêt dans laquelle entre un homme: à droite sur le devant, deux figures, des moutons, de l'eau, des canards, plus loin une forteresse. Bois (de la galerie Winckler)'.

8. Provenance

- Coll. Freiherr von Ketteler, Schloß Ehrlingerfeld, Westphalia[6].
- Coll. Mrs J. Goekoop-de Jonghe, Harderwijk, subsequently Wassenaar. On loan to the Mauritshuis, The Hague, 1948–49 and 1969–79.
- Sale Zurich, Galerie Koller, 31 October–1 November 1980, no. 5170.

9. Summary

The painting is on a panel that had already been used before. Though obviously inspired by Rembrandt's landscapes from the late 1630s, it differs from them so much in manner of painting, lighting and spatial structure that it cannot be seen as the work of Rembrandt or of an artist in his immediate circle during those years. It does on the other hand offer such similarities in treatment and general approach to works by Ferdinand Bol datable around 1650 that an attribution to him is justified. A date in the same period is the most likely.

REFERENCES

1 Gerson 201; Br.-Gerson 444.
2 M. Rostworowski, *Rembrandta przypowieść o miłosiernym Samarytaninie*, Warsaw 1980, p. 85 note 8.
3 Tümpel 1986, cat. no. A122.
4 Sumowski *Gemälde* II, p. 1042.
5 Exhibn. cat. Musée du Louvre, *Nouvelles acquisitions du département des peintures (1983–1986)*, Paris 1987, p. 74.
6 HdG 946.

C 122 A slaughtered ox

GLASGOW, ART GALLERY AND MUSEUM, INV. NO. 600

HDG 971; BR. 458; BAUCH 561; GERSON 290

Fig. 1. Panel 73.5 × 51.4 cm

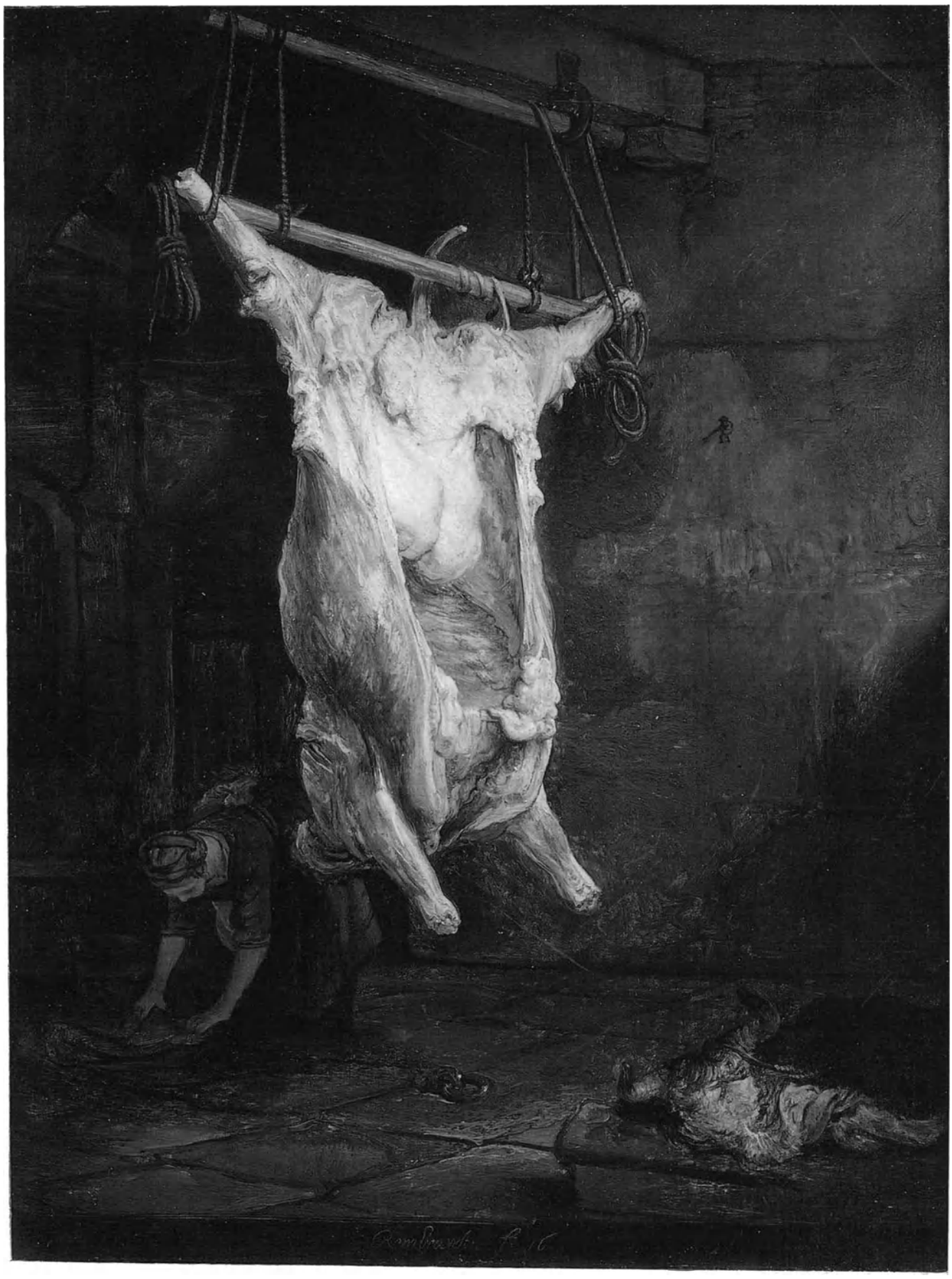
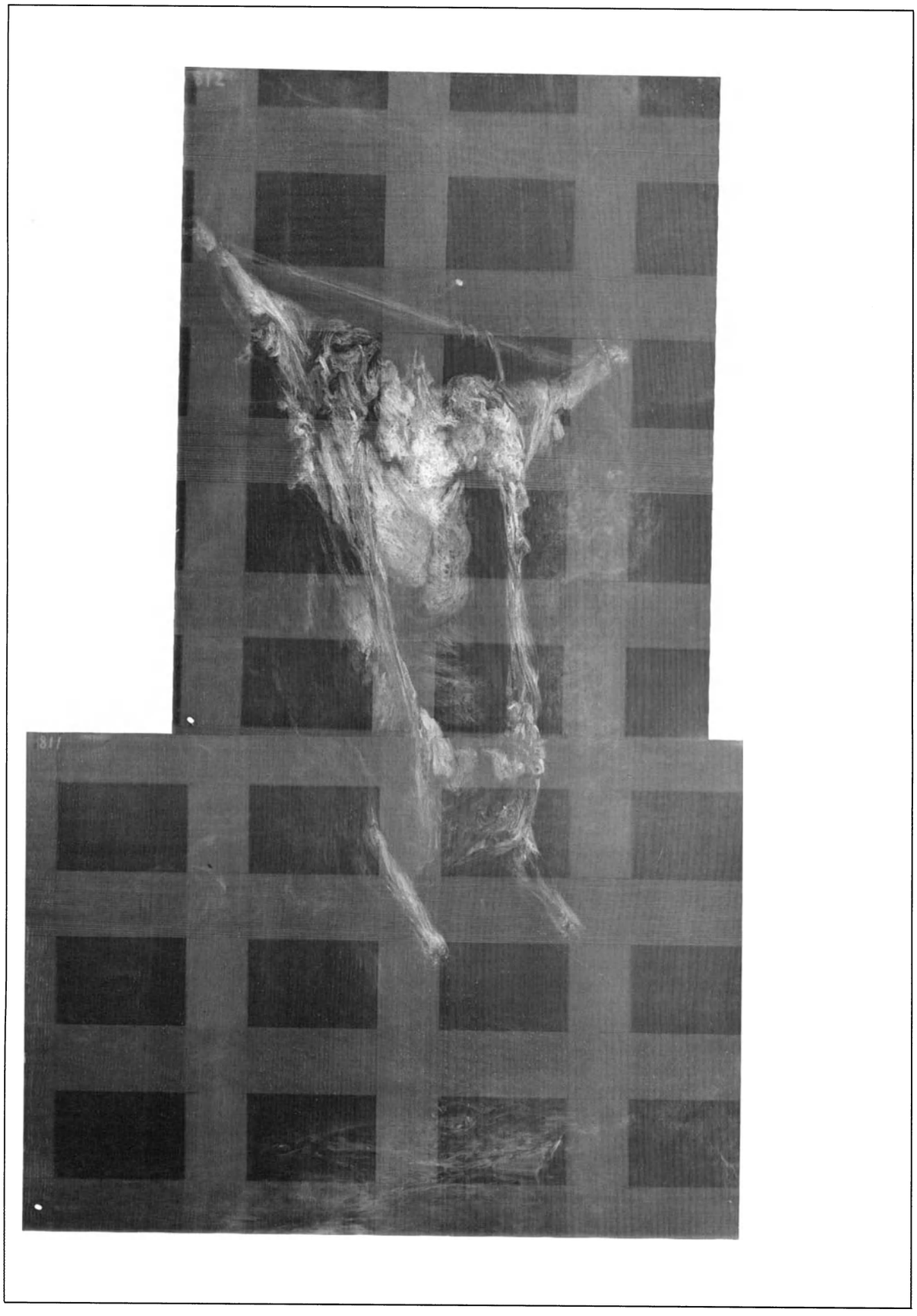


Fig. 2. X-Ray



1. Summarized opinion

A well preserved work, probably done in Rembrandt's workshop shortly after 1640 and possibly by Carel Fabritius.

2. Description of subject

Near the corner of a dark room a slaughtered ox with the abdomen opened hangs in light that falls from the right. The hindfeet are attached to a wooden bar, and on the right and left ropes are bound round this bar, up over another bar attached to a beam, and back round the animal's hindfeet; there is a ringbolt in the floor below the carcass. On a raised slab in the right foreground there is a piece of skin with the beast's horns. On the left, behind the hanging ox, a woman bends forward beside a bucket, mopping the square stone slabs of the floor. To the extreme left parts of the construction of the side wall can be made out, with a closed door and window and, at the top, the underside of a winding staircase. On the rear wall, painted with a layer of grey, there is on the right a child's drawing of a man wielding a fork.

3. Observations and technical information

Working conditions

Examined on 1 June 1971 (B.H., P.v.Th.) in good daylight and out of the frame. Two X-ray films, together covering a large part of the painting, were consulted subsequently.

Support

DESCRIPTION: Oak panel, grain vertical, 73.5 × 51.4 cm. Back planed and cradled. Single plank; there is a crack at about 7 cm from the bottom.
SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

Ground

DESCRIPTION: A light brown shows through almost everywhere in the thinly-painted background, and can also be seen in the bottom part of the ox.
SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

Paint layer

CONDITION: Good. No craquelure to be seen.
DESCRIPTION: The manner of painting is marked partly, in large parts of the background, by a thin, free application of paint in which the shapes — in the floor-slabs and other architectural features — are sometimes emphasized with dark contours, and partly by the use of thick paint in browns and red and yellowish-pink tints applied with free brushstrokes and in a variety of layers.

The rear wall is done on the right in freely-brushed thin greys, with the rather ruddy colour of the ground showing through; along the contour of the carcass the paint is occasionally thicker, the grey darker and the brushwork more chaotic. To the right, the background merges into an area of shadow done in thicker, opaque dark grey. On the left the indication of the architecture is given with broad, dark lines in the translucent grey, as are the bucket and the main lines of the woman washing the floor; her coat is a reddish brown with some grey glaze, the skirt in grey, and the flesh areas in an ochre brown with a grey glaze. In the floor, freely-painted translucent greys predominate, with dark grey to black lines showing the gaps between the stone slabs.

The lit part of the animal is given lively modelling in dark and light ochres, dark and light red flesh colours and white, applied thickly and mostly in streaks and edges of paint; the shadows are in effortlessly-applied greys. The outer edge on the left is done mainly in red tints, tending to the opaque, with at the shoulder a few broad strokes of red between which the ground lies exposed. The edge of the neck is marked with dark red. The beam and ropes are given a fair degree of detail, in cool and warm greys with black lines marking the shadowed edges.

Along the bottom there is a band almost 3 cm wide painted black and apparently belonging to the original paint layer. The brushwork of the floor does not continue beneath this.
SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

X-Rays

The available X-rays show clearly the light image of the areas of impasto, the light tints in the lit carcass as well as rather thicker parts of the background that at the paint surface are darker then the rest. Only a few, fuzzy accents of the woman can be made out.

Signature

In the middle of the black band along the bottom just described, and scratched in the wet paint <*Rembrandt. f. 16*>. Remarkably, the last two figures of the date are missing. The script shows none of the firmness one knows from Rembrandt's autograph signatures, and there is a quite different manner of writing in the *m, a* and *n*, where the stems are entirely separated from the upstrokes. See further under *4. Comments.*

Varnish

No special remarks.

4. Comments

As reported by Gerson[1], Bredius already had doubts about the authenticity of this painting, though he did include it — without comments — in his 1935 book[2]. Gerson himself questioned whether the black band with the signature might not be a later addition, but like Miles[3] looked on the work as 'an autograph work, despite some evident weaknesses of execution'. Bauch[4], Schwartz[5] and Tümpel[6] likewise counted it among the autograph works. There was however a lack of agreement as to its date — Hofstede de Groot[7] placed it around 1655, Gerson dated it ('if Rembrandt') in the late 1630s and Bauch in the late 1640s, while the other authors just named were content to put it close to the version of the same subject by Rembrandt, dated 1655, in the Louvre (Br. 457). The uncertainty evident in the literature about dating rather than about attribution is easy to explain. The first factor that causes confusion is the existence of the Louvre version just mentioned. The resemblance between that painting and the one is Glasgow is unmistakeable, but at the same time it is clear that one is not a copy — not even a free copy — of the other; the angle at which the dead animal is seen is admittedly the same (and rests, one must assume, on an older pictorial tradition), but the detail shown is everywhere different.

The manner of painting, too, may have given rise to some confusion. The 'evident weaknesses' of which Gerson spoke relate mainly to the rather unclear indication of the room's construction, especially on the left, but otherwise the manner of painting may be termed bold. This is true both for the great firmness with which forms in the gloom are indicated, and for the coloristically interesting

Fig. 3. Detail (1 : 1.5)



treatment given to the dead ox where it catches the full light; in both instances extensive use has been made of the device of allowing the ground to show through — here and there it is even entirely exposed. This is a style of painting that, particularly because of the way it serves a very definite chiaroscuro treatment, could certainly be called rembrandtesque and yet cannot be readily attributed to Rembrandt himself. It is not all that simple to say from what stylistic phase in Rembrandt's own development this style of painting has been derived. The most likely prototype is work like the *Dead bittern held high by a hunter* in Dresden (no. A 133), which probably dates from 1639; for all the differences in subject and execution, one could well imagine the painter of the Glasgow picture basing himself on the contrast that that work shows between the lit passage in the centre and the sparsely-lit figure further back, and on the noticeably linear and rather flat treatment of all the shapes in half-shadow. At the same time he shows a tendency to give colour in the lit areas a remarkable brightness and independence that one does not find to the same extent in Rembrandt himself around 1640.

In these features, which one can see as idiosyncracies of style, the Glasgow painting shows certain similarities with what are probably the first known history paintings by Carel Fabritius, the signed *Mercury and Argus* in the Richard L. Feigen collection in New York, and the unsigned (and until

Fig. 4. C. Fabritius, *Mercury and Aglauros*, canvas 72.4 × 91 cm. Boston, Museum of Fine Arts



recently attributed to Flinck) *Mercury and Aglauros* in Boston (fig. 4; on the former see C. Brown in: *Burl. Mag.* 128, 1986, pp. 797–799; on the attribution of the latter see F.J. Duparc in: ibid., pp. 799–802). The *Slaughtered ox* shows a number of remarkable resemblances to the latter painting in particular — in the free use of bright colours (note Hermes' clothing and hands), and in the treatment of the floor-slabs and other shapes contoured with strong, dark lines. The perspective too, with transverse lines running just not parallel to the picture plane, is a singular feature shared by both paintings. Against these resemblances there are unmistakeable differences. The strong rhythm with which the brushwork distributes the variegated paint in the two Fabritius works is not seen in the Glasgow painting, where the rendering of form both of the architecture and of the woman is markedly linear. The motif of a woman bending forward though it also occurs in very similar fashion in the Boston work, is handled there in a more painterly manner. If one seeks to attribute all three works to the same hand, then the fairly substantial stylistic differences have to be explained by a difference of date. One would then have to assume the Glasgow painting to have been done by Carel Fabritius in Rembrandt's workshop in the early 1640s, even earlier than the two history paintings mentioned, of which at least the *Mercury and Argus* was, to judge from the signature on that painting, done under his own name.

The inscription 'Rembrandt.f.16' on the Glasgow painting is remarkable in being incomplete and scratched in the wet paint of a black painted band along the bottom which is hard to explain. And yet it does appear to be original, and the script — with the stems of the *m, a* and *n* separated from the upstrokes — shows some similarity to the writing of Carel Fabritius as we know it from a signature scratched in wet paint on the Rotterdam *Bust of a young man (self-portrait?)* (see Introduction Chapter III, fig. 25) and from a number of documents (see C. Brown, *Carel Fabritius*, Oxford 1981, pl. 9). It is interesting in this context that the inventory of the estate of Carel's young deceased wife drawn up on 24 April 1643 (Brown op. cit. p. 147) includes the description 'een do. van een geslagen varcken' (a ditto [i.e. a painting] of a slaughtered pig), proving that in his early period Fabritius did indeed paint such a subject.

It does not seem necessary to suppose the Glasgow work to be based on one by Rembrandt. It is remarkable, of course, that Rembrandt himself repeated the main features of the composition in his painting dated 1655 in the Louvre. There is no direct connexion with a painting in the Szépmùvészeti Muzeum in Budapest (inv. no. 51.2880) that is sometimes attributed to Rembrandt; this work, which bears the probably accurate date 1639 (and, besides traces of a vanished signature, carries a false *R* signature) belongs to the same type as the Glasgow work but has no close links with Rembrandt's workshop.

In subject matter, the paintings in Glasgow, Paris and Budapest are by no means on their own. Identically gutted and hung ox (and pig) carcasses were depicted time and again in Netherlandish paintings from the mid-16th-century on. On the basis of the great reputation that Rembrandt's 1655 painting was to enjoy, Emmens[8] pointed out that the significance of the picture was connected with an iconographic tradition and ought perhaps to be sought in the occurrence of a slaughtered ox in Bruegel's allegory of Prudentia. Müller[9] and De Jongh[10] introduced the idea of a *momento mori*, among other things because of the repeated occurrence — e.g. in a 1566 painting by Maerten van Cleve in Vienna (Kunsthistorisches Museum, inv. no. 1970) and one by Barent Fabritius dated 165(2?) in Rotterdam (Museum Boymans-Van Beuningen, inv. no. 1214) — of the motif of children blowing up the bladder of a dead animal (an ox and a pig, respectively); comparable to the proverbial soap-bubble that represents the transience of human life — *homo bulla*. Craig[11] suggested a connexion with the fatted calf that was killed on the return of the Prodigal Son. This idea was based on the one hand on the way the fatted calf was depicted in illustrations of the parable - especially by Maerten van Heemskerck — , and on the other on a comparison drawn by the fathers of the church and in sermons based on their writings between the fatted calf and Christ himself, as an element in the parable of the Prodigal Son, which of course represents divine mercy. Craig therefore saw the picture of a slaughtered ox as 'a kind of warning against death and a promise of salvation wrapped up in one'. However, the allusion to the parable assumed by Craig seems — as Winner[12] and Tümpel[6] observed — not really obvious. It would be more natural to take the theme of the painting to be solely a *momento mori*. Within this interpretation, too, one can take the remarkable graffito on the wall (comparable with similar motifs in the work of Hendrick Avercamp and Pieter Saenredam) as alluding to the insignificance of human endeavour. One may doubt whether one can indeed see in this (with Craig) a man urinating on a crescent moon, which would be an illustration of a proverb that occurs in Bruegel and means something like 'human enterprise is doomed to failure'. One cannot make out a crescent moon for certain, and the child's drawing is probably no more than an equivalent of the playing children in the pictures by Marten van Cleve and Barent Fabritius, which characterize life on Earth — and in particular preoccupation with material things or even fleshly pleasures as expressed in the slaughtered ox — as the play of children. This judgment may perhaps also apply to the activity of the woman, clearly busy cleansing the stone floor of blood.

Fig. 5. Detail with signature (reduced)



5. Documents and sources

On 6 October 1661 the possessions that a certain Christoffel Hirschvogel of Nuremberg had left behind in the house of the pastor Theodorus Ketjes when he departed from Amsterdam on 31 July were stated to include 'Een schilderije affbeeldende een geslachte os van Rembrant' (a painting showing a slaughtered ox by Rembrant) valued at 30 guilders. A marginal note shows that Hirschvogel hiumself had on the preceding 29 July valued the work at 72 guilders (Strauss *Doc.*, 1661/10). One cannot tell whether this mention relates to no. C 122 or to another painting such as that in the Louvre (Br. 457).

6. Graphic reproductions

None.

7. Copies

None.

8. Provenance

*- Coll. Jan Maurits Quinkhard, painter, sale Amsterdam 15ff March 1773 (Lugt 2138), no. 11: 'Rembrand. Een geslagte hangende Os, daar het Ingewand uitgenoomen is. waar agter een Vrouw die het Bloed op[d]veild, en op de Voorgrond legt de Huid, extra natuurlyk wegens het licht, en bruin, hoog 29 duim, breed 20 duim [= 74.5 × 51.4 cm (Amsterdamsche Voetmaat)]. P[aneel].' (Rembrand. A slaughtered hanging ox, gutted behind which a woman mopping up the blood, and in the foreground the skin, extra natural in the light, and dark).
- Coll. Jan van Dijk, sale Amsterdam 14ff March 1791 (Lugt 4688), no. 49: 'Rembrant. op Paneel, hoog 28, breed 20 duim [= 71.9 × 51.4 cm]. In een Binnenhuis, hangt een geslagte, open gehakte Os aan den Balk, op de voorgrond legt de afgehaalde Huid: verder ziet men een Vrouw de grond fylen; zeer natuurlyk, fraay en kragtig gepenceelt' (... In an interior a slaughtered and opened ox hangs from the beam, in the foreground lies the removed skin: one also sees a woman cleaning the floor; very natural, finely and vigorously painted) (460 guilders to Ten Katen).
*- Coll. Jan Wubbels, sale Amsterdam 16ff July 1792 (Lugt 4938), no. 276: 'R. van Rhyn, hoog 28, breed 20 duim [= 71.9 × 51.4 cm], P. In een Binnenhuis ziet men een geslagte Os aan een Balk hangen; op de voorgrond legt de afgehaalde huid, verders een Vrouw die de grond schoon maakt; alles zeer natuurlyk en kragtig gepenseeld' (...In an interior one sees a slaughtered ox hanging from a beam; in the foreground lies the removed skin, and a woman cleans the floor; all very naturally and vigorously painted) (130 guilders to Ten Kate).
*- Sale Amsterdam 14-15 August 1793 (Lugt 5100), no. 106 (described in almost identical terms) (to Schot).
- Dealer Woodburn, London (according to Smith, 1836); S. Woodburn sale, London 16 May 1854, no. 173.
- Mrs John Graham-Gilbert Bequest, 1877.

9. Summary

Because of its rembrandtesque execution, though with a use of colour differing from that of

Rembrandt's own work, the painting may be regarded as having been done in his studio by another hand. The style seems based on that of Rembrandt around 1639/40, and there is a possibility that Carel Fabritius was responsible for the execution. This idea is based on similarities with Fabritius's two earliest history paintings which, unlike no. C 122, appear to have been done after he left Rembrandt's workshop (in 1643?). The unmistakeable differences between the present painting and the other two would have to be explained by the difference in date.

The scene shown in this and similar paintings was probably intended as a *momento mori.*

REFERENCES

1 Gerson 290.
2 Bredius 458.
3 [H. Miles], *Dutch and Flemish, Netherlandish and German paintings*, Glasgow Art Gallery and Museum 1961, p. 109.
4 Bauch 561.
5 Schwartz 1984, no. 293.
6 Tümpel 1986, cat. no. 125.
7 HdG 971.
8 J.A. Emmens, 'Reputatie en betekenis van Rembrandt's "Geslachte os" ', lecture given at the annual meeting of the Nederlandse Vereniging van Kunsthistorici in Leiden on 17 December 1966; published in abridged form in: *Museumjournaal* 12 (1967), p. 81, and in : J.A. Emmens, *Kunsthistorische opstellen* II, Amsterdam 1981 (Collected works, vol.4), pp. 133–138.
9 J.-E. Müller, *Rembrandt*, New York 1969, p. 173.
10 E. de Jongh in: exhibn. cat. *Rembrandt en zijn tijd*, Brussels 1971, p. 170; cf. exhibn. cat. *Tot lering en vermaak*, Amsterdam 1976, no. 24.
11 K.M. Craig, 'Rembrandt and *The slaughtered ox*', *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 46 (1983), pp. 235–239.
12 [M.] Winner in: *Neue Beiträge zur Rembrandt-Forschung*, Berlin 1973, pp. 135–136 (discussion).

Corrigenda et Addenda

Corrigenda et Addenda

CORRIGENDA ET ADDENDA TO VOLUME I

A 28 Jeremiah lamenting the destruction of Jerusalem

AMSTERDAM, RIJKSMUSEUM, INV. NO. A 3276

To be added to *7. Copies*:

4. Drawing, pen and brown ink with white wash, 40.6 × 30.4 cm, Cincinnati, Ohio, Cincinnati Art Museum (acc. no. 1953.72; attributed to Bol). See Sumowski *Drawings* 9, no. 2136, where the drawing is convincingly attributed to Willem de Poorter on the basis of the signed *Susanna* in Berlin (no. A 117 fig. 5). It reproduces the original summarily and in reverse.

CORRIGENDA ET ADDENDA TO VOLUME II

Professor W. Froentjes kindly drew our attention to the fact that in a few cases our revised opinion on the authenticity of a signature was not incorporated in the text of the *Summarized opinion* (in no. A 51, the *Anatomy Lesson of Dr Tulp* in The Hague) or the *Summary* (in no. A 75, the Amsterdam *Bust of a young woman*). The signature in no. A 40, *The artist in oriental costume* in the Petit Palais, Paris, the authenticity of which is doubted on p. 840, is wrongly cited as an example of an authentic one with the spelling *Rembrant* in nos. A 64, A 67, A 68 and A 94.

A 43 Portrait of Nicolaes Ruts

NEW YORK, N.Y., THE FRICK COLLECTION, INV. NO. 43.1.150

The copy in watercolours by A. Delfos mentioned under *7. Copies*, 3 is preserved in the Amsterdam Rijksprentenkabinet.

A 67 Daniel and Cyrus before the idol Bel

ENGLAND, PRIVATE COLLECTION, ON LOAN TO THE NATIONAL GALLERY, LONDON

Since the picture entered the National Gallery as a loan in 1987, an X-radiograph and IR photograph were taken. The latter is especially interesting as it clearly shows the firm brushwork that belongs in part to a sketchy lay-in.

A 67 *Daniel and Cyrus before the idol Bel*, England, private collection (on loan to the National Gallery, London). Infrared photograph (reduced)



Fig. 1. Canvas 142 × 153 cm



A 94 Sophonisba, receiving the poisoned cup

MADRID, MUSEO DEL PRADO, CAT. NO. 2132

X-Rays kindly made available to us by the Prado Museum — a number of prints and one partial film (covering the middle of the bottom edge) — prompt the following additions and corrections.

Support

DESCRIPTION: The canvas is made up of two strips. Of the two horizontal marks described earlier, that just above the centre is seen to be a seam marking the join between the two strips, which are 69 cm and 73 cm wide respectively.

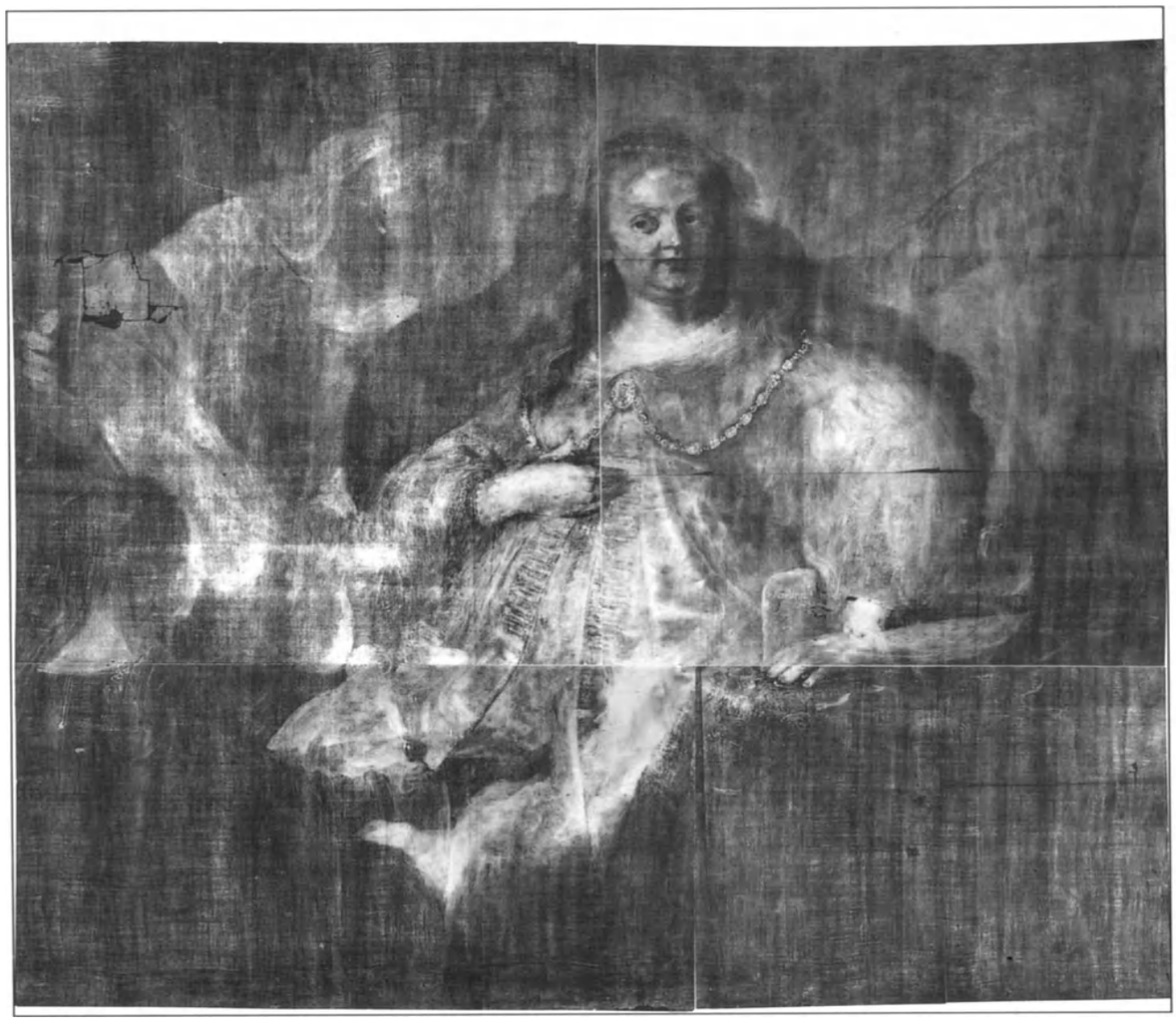
SCIENTIFIC DATA: Cusping can be seen along all four sides, with a pitch varying from 12.7 to 19.8 cm along the top edge, from 13.9 to 16.2 cm on the right, 13.5 to 15.9 cm along the bottom and 13.9 to 15 cm on the left. Along the top the distortion extends only some 20 cm into the canvas, compared to *c.* 28 cm along the other three edges. Assuming that (as the horizontal seam suggests) the warp is horizontal, one can from this and from the difference in width between the two strips just stated deduce that the canvas was originally a little larger at the top; a strip-width of *c.* 70 cm (= 1 ell) was found in nos. A 46, A 98 and A 99 (see Vol. II, pp. 38–39).

Threadcount, based on the available X-ray film of the lower strip: 13.2 vertical threads/cm (12–16.5), 15.3 horizontal threads/cm (13.5–16.5). Because the horizontal threads are more regular, one may take it that the warp does indeed run in that direction.

X-Rays

The radiographic image, though marred slightly by roughly vertical traces of varying radioabsorbency (probably due to a material used for lining the canvas), can provide some idea of the course of the painting's production. To the right of the main figure one can see the folds and fringe of a curtain already faintly apparent at the paint surface. The main figure's head and shoulders are flanked by dark reserves with quite sharp, sinuous edges, the righthand one roughly coinciding with the woman's hair while that on the left is considerably wider than the hair on that side. Further to the left, where in the painting in its present state there is an indication of a figure in the semi-darkness, there are clear traces of a woman lit from the left, leaning towards the main figure and with a scarf over her head; she holds an object in her outstretched right hand. This object may form part of a long shape, showing up light, that extends diagonally to the lower right and is partly overlapped by the head of the servant girl on the left. This shape is intersected by the very light image of a horizontal form that penetrates the head of the girl on the

Fig. 2. X-Ray



left and the elbow of the main figure on the right; one wonders whether at an early stage the lit top of a table may have been shown at this point. An earlier version of the servant girl's right arm, holding the drinking vessel, seems to have extended further to the right; this is suggested by a reserve in the light paint of the embroidered undergarment of the main figure, which is however partially filled in at the top with the radioabsorbent paint used to execute the white, sleeveless overgarment again at this point, this time round the drinking vessel in its second position.

An irregularly-bordered, highly radioabsorbent area along the hanging tablecloth gives the impression of there having been an alteration that it is impossible to interpret. There must have been changes on the table as well: the book was painted over the woman's hand only at a late stage, and the pearls of the bracelet were originally lower down, resting on the back of the hand. The signature, done in yellow paint on the front edge of the righthand armrest, shows up distinctly.

4. Comments

The uncertainty we expressed in the description and comments about the state of the background, and in particular about the status of the summarily-done figure in the semi-darkness, was not emphatic enough. The X-rays received since then show that Rembrandt designed and, probably, completed the picture differently from how it appears today. One may assume the background to have been very largely overpainted by a later hand, and the shadowy figure to have been executed at the same time.

It is obvious that, however one interprets the various traces of alterations to be seen in the X-rays, Rembrandt's original composition was dominated by the seated main figure and an old woman leaning over her from the left. In this respect the work must have borne a remarkable resemblance to the Ottawa *Young woman at her toilet* of *c.* 1632/33 (no. A 64), although this — with its less marked contrast and the greater distance from which the figures are seen full-length — represents a somewhat earlier stylistic phase. It is not entirely clear whether the very

generous reserves left to either side of the main figure's head were in fact intended for her hair; but in the Ottawa painting too the hair area was prepared with noticeably large and sharply-edged reserves.

It is even less clear what kind of object the old woman is holding in her right hand — perhaps a dish on which she has proffered the drinking vessel? It is unfortunate that there can be no certainty on this point; the detail could be important in deciding whether the painting shows Sophonisba (who preferred the poisoned cup sent by her husband to being unfaithful to him) or Artemisia (who drank in her wine the ashes of her dead husband, and then died). While we opt for the first, Tümpel (1986, pp. 182–185, cat. no. 97) — on the basis of the pictorial tradition as represented in two small prints by Georg Pencz, and because of what he (perhaps rightly) read as a pouch in the hands of the present shadowy figure — prefers Artemisia, into whose drink her hushand's ashes are poured from a pouch. It seems difficult, however, to see the light area below the arm of the woman visible on the left in the X-rays as being a pouch. It is quite conceivable that when the background was overpainted the newly-introduced figure was given a pouch in her hands to provide a link with the traditional Artemisia iconography.

Where and why this overpainting was carried out it is hard to say; it is not impossible that it was done as early as the 17th century. The strange manner of painting of the figure in the darkness comes closest to the execution (likewise scarcely rembrandtesque) of the figures appearing in semi-darkness in the Leningrad *Return of the Prodigal Son* (Br. 598).

C 67 Portrait of a couple in an interior

BOSTON, MASS., THE ISABELLA STEWART GARDNER MUSEUM, INV. NO. P 2159

The infared photograph reproduced in fig. 7 unfortunately does not show the clearly legible traces ('Ryn') of the underlying inscription. They can be seen in the accompanying detail.

C 67 *Portrait of a couple*. Boston, Mass., The Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum. Detail with signature, infrared photograph (slightly reduced)



C 68 Portrait of a man

NEW YORK, N.Y., THE METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART, ACC. NO. 29.100.3

Comments

The English wording of the following sentence on p. 750 has given rise to misunderstanding: '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'.
Read instead: It seems certain that the two New York portraits can be looked on as *the product* of a workshop in which a large number of hands were involved.

C 70 Portrait of a man and C 71 Portrait of a woman

BRAUNSCHWEIG, HERZOG ANTON ULRICH-MUSEUM, CAT. NOS. 232 AND 233

These portraits may be attributed to the same studio assistant who was responsible for the first version of the *Bust of a woman with a book* in the Wight Art Gallery, University of California, Los Angeles (no. C 115).

C 6 The rest on the Flight into Egypt

U.S.A., PRIVATE COLLECTION

Pp. 849–851: for Jacob Dircksz. Leeuw, read: Dirck Jacobsz. Leeuw.

CORRIGENDUM TO VOLUME III

p. 62 **Notes on the Catalogue** read:
Nos. C 83-C 122
Paintings Rembrandt's authorship of which cannot be accepted, including those that are usually associated with his work of 1635–1642 but were probably executed at a later date. The paintings are arranged in iconographical order, irrespective of their status as works by contemporary artists, schoolpieces, copies, old imitations or later imitations. For convenience sake the following works are singled out for special mention:
C 83: attributed to Willem Drost
C 117, C 118 and C 119: attributed to Govaert Flinck
C 84, C 85, C 87, C 88, C 113, C 116, C 121 and (the completion of) no. B 12: attributed with a varying degree of plausibility to Ferdinand Bol
C 97, C 106, C 107 and (possibly) C 122: attributed to Carel Fabritius
C 104 (and C 105?) to the same hand as C 72, C 73 and **C 82**
C 90 and C 91: attributed to one anonymous follower
C 108 and C 112: attributed to one anonymous studio assistant
C 86, C 88, C 93 and C 94: copies after lost originals

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, as far as they were available during work on the present book, are included in the text of catalogue entries. Data which could not be obtained in time to be discussed are listed in brackets. Other than for the dendrochronological data (listed on pp. 783–787) and the threadcounts (surveyed in Volume II, Chapter II Table B, pp. 26–29), 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. A question mark indicates that the number of photographs or 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 for Objects of Art and Science
Cambridge	Hamilton Kerr Institute, University of Cambridge
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)
Leningrad	The Hermitage Museum
London	National Gallery Research Laboratory
Munich	Doerner-Institut/Dr. Hermann Kühn, Deutsches Museum
Oberlin	Intermuseum Laboratory
Stuttgart	Institut für Technologie der Malerei

	support		ground and paint			photographic documents					remarks
	dendrochronology	canvas research	research institute	number of paint samples	number of cross-sections	complete — X-radiographs	partial	neutron activation autoradiographs	infrared photographs	U.V. fluorescent photographs	
A 105 *Entombment*, Glasgow, Hunterian Art Gallery						+					
A 106 *John the Baptist preaching*, Berlin	+	+*				+					*canvas on panel
A 107 *Lamentation*, London	–	+*	London	12 (9)	12 (7)	+			+	+	*paper and canvas on panel
A 108 *Abraham's sacrifice*, Leningrad		–*					+				*no threadcount possible because of lining adhesive
A 109 *Samson threatening his father-in-law*, Berlin		+				+					
A 110 *Belshazzar's feast*, London		+		13 (9)	13 (14)	+					
A 111 *Prodigal son in the tavern*, Dresden		+	Munich	9		+					
A 112 *Flora*, London		+	London	13 (15)	9 (11)	+					
A 113 *Rape of Ganymede*, Dresden			Munich	5	1						
A 114 *Minerva*, Tokyo, private coll.		+				+					
A 115 *Philips Lucasz.*, London	+		London	3 (7)	3 (5)	+					
A 116 *Blinding of Samson*, Frankfurt-am-Main		+				+					

	support		ground and paint			photographic documents						remarks
	dendrochronology	canvas research	research institute	number of paint samples	number of cross-sections	X-radiographs: complete	X-radiographs: partial	neutron activation autoradiographs	infrared photographs	U.V. fluorescent photographs		
A 117 *Susanna*, The Hague	+		The Hague	12		+			+	+		
A 118 *Ascension*, Munich		+	Munich	1		+						
A 119 *Danae*, Leningrad		+	Leningrad*	?	?	(+)	+					*extensive scientific research is being carried out but as yet not published
A 120 *Standard-bearer*, Paris, private coll.												
A 121 *Raphael leaving Tobit*, Paris						+			+			
A 122 *Man in 'Polish' costume*, Washington	+					+	+					
A 123 *Wedding of Samson*, Dresden		+	Munich	5	1		+					
A 124 *Christ appearing to Mary Magdalene*, London, Buckingham Palace						+						
A 125 *Landscape with the Good Samaritan*, Krakow						+			+			
A 126 *Entombment*, Munich		+	Munich	1		+						
A 127 *Resurrection*, Munich		+	Munich	1		+						
A 128 *Man in oriental costume*, Chatsworth	−*					+						*poplar (?)
A 129 *Man standing*, Kassel	−	+	Munich Stuttgart	3 (4)	1 (4)	+						
A 130 *Man holding a hat*, Los Angeles, Armand Hammer Collection						+						
A 131 *Portrait of a young woman*, Amsterdam	−*					+						*poplar
A 132 *Aletta Adriaensdr.*, Rotterdam	+	+				+						
A 133 *Dead bittern*, Dresden	+		Munich	4					+			
A 134 *Dead peacocks and a girl*, Amsterdam		+				+						
A 135 *Concord of the State*, Rotterdam	+		Amsterdam	20	10	+			+	+		
A 136 *Landscape with stone bridge*, Amsterdam	+					+						
A 137 *Mountain landscape*, Braunschweig	+					+			+*			*IR photograph of signature
A 138 *Visitation*, Detroit	−*					+						*Spanish cedar
A 139 *Self-portrait*, London		+	London	(6)	(6)	+						
A 140 *Herman Doomer*, New York	+					+						
A 141 *Baertje Martens*, Leningrad						+						
A 142 *Saskia as Flora*, Dresden	+		Munich	4			+					

	support		ground and paint			photographic documents					remarks
	dendrochronology	canvas research	research institute	number of paint samples	number of cross-sections	X-radiographs: complete	X-radiographs: partial	neutron activation autoradiographs	infrared photographs	U.V. fluorescent photographs	
A 143 *Cornelis Claesz. Anslo and his wife*, Berlin		+				+			?		
A 144 *Nicolaes van Bambeeck*, Brussels		+				+			+		
A 145 *Agatha Bas*, London, Buckingham Palace		+					+				
A 146 *Night watch*, Amsterdam		+	Amsterdam	53	53	+			+*		*detail with the cartouche
B 9 *Ahasuerus condemning Haman*, Bucharest		+				+			+	+	
B 10 *Bust of Rembrandt*, Paris	+					+					
B 11 *Youth in a cap and gorget*, Florence	−*					+					*poplar
B 12 *River landscape*, Kassel	+		Munich	5					+		
C 83 *Manoah's sacrifice*, Dresden		+	Munich	5	1		+				
C 84 *David's parting from Jonathan*, Leningrad						+					
C 85 *Departure of the Shunammite woman*, London, Victoria & Albert Museum						+					
C 86 *Tobias healing his blind father*, Stuttgart			Munich	1		+					
C 87 *Holy Family with S. Anne*, Paris						+			+		
C 88 *Labourers in the vineyard*, Leningrad	+					+					
C 89 *Old woman*, Vienna	+					+					
C 90 *S. Francis at prayer*, Columbus									+	+	
C 91 *Scholar*, Budapest	+										
C 92 *Half-length figure of Rembrandt*, England, private coll.						+					
C 93 *Half-length figure of Rembrandt*, Woburn Abbey, The Duke of Bedford		+				+					
C 94 *Half-length figure of Rembrandt*, Ottawa		+				+					
C 95 *Young woman in fanciful costume*, private coll.											
C 96 *Bust of Rembrandt*, London, Wallace Collection	+		Cambridge	3	3	+			+*		*detail
C 97 *Bust of Rembrandt*, Pasadena, Norton Simon Museum of Art							+				
C 98 *Man in plumed cap*, The Hague	+		Munich The Hague	1 8		+			+	+	

	support		ground and paint			photographic documents					remarks
	dendrochronology	canvas research	research institute	number of paint samples	number of cross-sections	X-radiographs: complete	X-radiographs: partial	neutron activation autoradiographs	infrared photographs	U.V. fluorescent photographs	
C 99 *Bust of a man*, São Paulo						+					
C 100 *Man with dishevelled hair*, prev. New York, Acquavella Galleries											
C 101 *Oriental*, Amsterdam	+					+					
C 102 *Rabbi*, Hampton Court Palace	−*						+				*cordia gerascanthus (Spanish elm)
C 103 *Bust of a young woman*, Washington	−*					+			+	+	*poplar
C 104 *Portrait of a man*, U.S.A., private coll.	−*					+					*transferred from panel to canvas
C 105 *Portrait of a woman*, Cleveland			Oberlin	1			+				
C 106 *Portrait of a man*, The Duke of Westminster	−*		Cambridge	5	5		+		+		*Honduras mahogany
C 107 *Portrait of a woman*, The Duke of Westminster	−*		Cambridge	2	2	+			+		*Honduras mahogany
C 108 *Antonie Coopal*, U.S.A., private coll.	−*					+					*unidentified tropical wood
C 109 *Old man*, Mertoun, The Duke of Sutherland											
C 110 *Man in a doorway*, private coll.	−*					+		+			*poplar
C 111 *Petronella Buys*, formerly coll. Mr. André Meyer											
C 112 *70-Year-old woman*, New York		+					+				
C 113 *Anna Wijmer*, Amsterdam, Six Collection	−*		Amsterdam	7	7	+					poplar?
C 114 *Seated woman*, Toronto		+				+			+	+	
C 115 *Woman with a book*, Los Angeles, Wight Art Gallery						+					
C 116 *Landscape with the baptism of the Eunuch*, Hanover		+				+			+	+	
C 117 *Landscape with obelisk*, Boston, Stewart Gardner Museum						+			+*		*detail with signature
C 118 *Landscape with bridge*, Berlin	+					+					
C 119 *Landscape with castle*, London, Wallace Collection	+					+			+*		*detail with signature
C 120 *Landscape with walled town*, Madrid, The Duke of Berwick and Alba							+				
C 121 *Wooded landscape with castle*, whereabouts unknown	+					+					
C 122 *Slaughtered ox*, Glasgow							+				

Table of dendrochronological data

Since the surveys of the results of dendrochronology examination of oak panels were published in the last two volumes, there has been some change in the interpretation of these data resulting from a re-thinking of the country of origin of the wood used. What follows is a concise account of this change and the considerations that led to it; see further P. Klein, D. Eckstein, T. Waznyt and J. Bauch, 'New findings for the dendrochronological dating of panel paintings of the 15th to 17th century', *ICOM Committee for Conservation. 8th Triennial Meeting Sydney, Australia, 6–11 September, 1987. Preprints*, Los Angeles 1987, pp. 51–54, from which the quotations below are taken.

After measurements taken on panel paintings by Philips Wouwerman had initially shown a strong similarity with a Southern German reference chronology, a different pattern emerged; 'During the analysis of oak panels used by Rembrandt, Rubens and numerous other painters who worked between the 14th and the middle of the 17th century, a new tree-ring pattern appeared which did not cross-match with any of the then existing oak chronologies. Since most of the tree-ring series of these panels matched each other extremely well, a floating chronology spanning 530 years was established, and this new tree-ring pattern, initially thought to be characteristic for the Netherlands, was called Netherlands Type II. (. . .) It was striking, however, that no paintings from later than about 1650 had the Type II tree-ring pattern . . .'. Attempts at dating Type II produced no more than a provisional and inconclusive result. The discovery that the tree-ring pattern of this type also occurred in Lübeck and Hamburg prompted the idea that wood of this kind might have come from Poland and Lithuania, and led to research being carried out in northern Poland. This resulted in a new chronology matching the Type II chronology very closely. 'Thus it was shifted by six years towards the present from our original tentative placement.' The export of Baltic oak timber was brought to an end by the war between Sweden and Poland from 1655 to 1660.

The research done in Poland subsequently led to a revision of the allowance to be made for sapwood rings. It 'resulted in a median value of 15 rings with 50% of all values lying between 13 and 19 rings'.

Notes on the table

In view of the foregoing, we show below the results not only of dendrochronology investigation of the panels discussed in this volume, but also in revised form of the panels in Volumes I and II.

The first column gives the date of the latest annual ring of heartwood according to the new thinking, i.e. six years later than was given in the previous volumes.

The second column gives the number of sapwood rings, where sapwood is found.

Only if the boundary between heart- and sapwood is known is it possible to provide, in the third column, an estimate of the statistical average felling-date — 15 years (+4 or −2) after the latest heartwood ring. If it is not known, one can only give the earliest possible felling-date, i.e. the date that can be assumed with an extremely small number of nine rings of sapwood. It must be commented that where the tree is very old — over 200 years — such a small number of rings (and hence such an early felling-date) is unlikely. In a number of cases where it is in fact possible to give the statistical average felling-date this is found to lie after the moment at which we believe the panel — after drying for a couple of years or more — was painted on (see nos. A 19, A 57 and A 136); in such cases the number of sapwood rings was, one may conclude, lower than the statistical average. (Here it may be commented that 'there is an indication of a west-east gradient of decreasing sapwood rings.') Felling-dates shown in square brackets are based not on study of the panel in question but on that of another panel coming from the same tree.

Acknowledgments

We are indebted to Prof. Dr J. Bauch, Prof. Dr D. Eckstein and Dr P. Klein of the Ordinariat für Holzbiologie, University of Hamburg, who have generously put their material at our disposal. Dr Klein moreover assisted us in compiling the tables below. We also thank Mr J.M. Fletcher of the Research Laboratory for Archaeology and History of Art, Oxford University, who examined no. C 36.

		last dated annual ring of heart-wood	number of annual rings of sap-wood present	conclusion as to felling date		other information	date panel was painted	
				earliest possible	statistical average		as inscribed on picture	as accepted
A 3	*Tobit and Anna*, Amsterdam	1608	5	1617	1623	because of dense structure after rather than before 1623	1626	1626
A 5	*Baptism of the Eunuch*, Utrecht	1604	8	1613	1619	because of age of tree after rather than before 1619	1626	1626
A 6	*History painting*, Leiden	1602	–	1611			1626	1626
A 7	*Musical allegory*, Amsterdam	1599	–	1608		because of age of tree after rather than before 1614	1626	1626
A 10	*Rich man*, Berlin	1600	–	1609			1627	1627
A 12	*Simeon in the Temple*, Hamburg	1599	4	1608	1614	because of age of tree after rather than before 1614; from same tree as nos. A 38 and B 7	–	1627/28
A 13	*Two old man disputing*, Melbourne	?	–	?		radial board	1628 (formerly)	1628
A 14	*Self-portrait*, Amsterdam	?	–	?			–	1628
A 14	Copy 1, Kassel	?	–	?			–	?
A 19	*Self-portrait*, Munich	1616	5	1625	1631		1629	1629
A 21	*Self-portrait*, The Hague	1601	–	1610		probably a few rings lost through later reduction in size	–	1629
A 24	*Samson and Delilah*, Berlin	1609	6	1618	1624		1628	1629/30
A 25	*David playing the harp to Saul*, Frankfurt	?	7		?		–	1629/30
A 28	*Jeremiah*, Amsterdam	1615	–	1624			1630	1630
A 31	*Andromeda*, The Hague	1609	–	1618		some rings lost through later reduction in size	–	1630/31
A 34	*Simeon in the Temple*, The Hague	1595	–	[1605]		from the same tree as no. A 37, from which date is derived	1631	1631
A 37	*Old woman reading*, Amsterdam	1596	–	1605		from the same tree as no. A 34	1631	1631
A 38	*Minerva*, Berlin	1599	8	1608	1614	because of age of tree after rather than before 1614; from same tree as nos. A 12 and B 7	–	1631
A 39	*Abduction of Proserpina*, Berlin	?	–	?		radial board	–	1631
A 40	*The artist in oriental costume*, Paris, Petit Palais	1615	–	1624			1631	1631
A 42	*Half-length figure of an old man*, Chicago	1605	–	1614		from the same tree as no. C 71	–	1631
A 57	*Maurits Huygens*, Hamburg	1618	1	1627	1633		1632	1632
A 59	*40-Year old man*, New York	?	–	?			1632	1632
A 71	*Self-portrait*, Paris	1606	–	1615		because of age of tree one has to allow for 15 or more sapwood rings	1633	1633

		last dated annual ring of heart-wood	number of annual rings of sap-wood present	conclusion as to felling date		other information	date panel was painted	
				earliest possible	statistical average		as inscribed on picture	as accepted
A 72	*Self-portrait in a cap*, Paris	?	–	?		from the same tree as nos. C 77 and C 119	1633	1633
A 73	*Man in oriental dress*, Munich	1617	–	1626			1633	1633
A 76	*Young woman smiling*, Dresden	1614	–	1623			1633	1633
A 82	*Maertgen van Bilderbeecq*, Frankfurt	1613	–	1622			1633	1633
A 83	*Portrait of a woman*, New York	?	1		?		1633	1633
A 96	*Self-portrait in cap and cloak*, Berlin	?	–	?		from the same tree as no. C 96	1634	1634
A 106	*John the Baptist preaching*, Berlin	?	–	?		radial board, comes from the same tree as nos. A 132, A 140 and Br. 566	–	*c.* 1634/35
A 115	*Philips Lucasz.*, London	?	–	?		radial board	1635	1635
A 117	*Susanna*, The Hague	?	–	?			163(.)	1636
A 122	*Man in 'Polish' costume*, Washington	[1620]	3	[1629]	[1635]	radial board, comes from the same tree as nos. A 135 and B 12, from which date is derived	1637	1637
A 132	*Aletta Adriaensdr.*, Rotterdam		7	?		radial board, comes from the same tree as nos. A 106, A 140 and Br. 566	1639	1639
A 133	*Dead bittern*, Dresden	1622	–	1631		given the age of the tree (over 227 years) a felling date after 1637 is likely	1639	1639
A 135	*Concord of the State*, Rotterdam	[1620]	–	[1629]	[1635]	radial board, comes from the same tree as nos. A 122 and B 12, from which date is derived	164(.)	later 1630s
A 136	*Landscape with stone bridge*, Amsterdam	1627	7	1636	1642	given the age of the tree (over 203 years) a felling date after 1642 would seem likely	–	late 1630s
A 137	*Mountain landscape*, Braunschweig	[1610]	–	[1619]		from the same tree as no. C 101, from which date is derived	–	*c.* 1640
A 140	*Herman Doomer*, New York	–	–	?		radial board; comes from same tree as nos. A 106, A 132 and Br. 566	1640	1640
A 142	*Saskia as Flora*, Dresden	–	–	?		radial board	1641	1641
B 7	*Old man*, The Hague	1575	–	[1608]	[1614]	comes from the same tree as nos. A12 and A 38, from which date is derived	–	soon after 1630?
B 10	*Bust of Rembrandt*, Paris	1622	–	1631		given the age of the tree (more than 200 years) a felling date after 1637 is likely	1637	*c.* 1639
B 12	*River landscape*, Kassel	1620	5	1629	1635	radial board, comes from the same tree as nos. A 122 and A 135	164(.)	*c.* 1640
C 1	*Samson and Delilah*, Amsterdam	1613	–	1622			–	1627

		last dated annual ring of heart-wood	number of annual rings of sap-wood present	conclusion as to felling date		other information	date panel was painted	
				earliest possible	statistical average		as inscribed on picture	as accepted
C 7	*Tribute money*, Ottawa	1616	–	1625		given the age of the tree a felling date after 1631 is likely	1629	not before 1631
C 12	*Travellers resting*, The Hague	1636	1	1645	1651	the painting is on paper stuck on wood	–	*c.* 1700?
C 14	*Man reading*, London	1600	–	1609			–	*c.* 1700?
C 15	*Scholar*, Braunschweig	1612	–	1621			–	*c.* 1630?
C 16	*Hermit*, Paris	?	–	?			163(0?)	early '30s
C 20	*Old man with arms crossed*, Boston	?	1	?	?		–	soon after 1631
C 23	*Man in plumed cap*, priv. coll.	1607	–	1616			1629	1629?
C 24	*Old man*, Kassel	1607	1	1616	1622		1632	early 1630s
C 25	*Old man*, Leipzig	1558	–	1567		from middle of trunk, numerous rings thus lost	–	between 1629 and '33?
C 26	*Old man wearing a cross*, Kassel	?	6	?	?	radial board	1630	?
C 29	*Old man*, Cambridge (Mass.)	?	–	?			–	?
C 30	*Old man*, Kassel	1579	–	1588			–	?
C 32	*Man wearing a gold chain*, Leiden	1619	–	1628			–	?
C 34	*Young man laughing*, Amsterdam	?	8	?	?		–	early 1630s
C 35	*Young man*, Cambridge (Mass.)	1620	–	1629		the wood examined is that of a narrow framing, not of the panel proper	1629	?
C 36	*Bust of Rembrandt*, whereabouts unknown	1616	–	1625			–	1630/40
C 37	*Bust of Rembrandt*, priv. coll.	?	–	?			–	?
C 38	*Young man*, New York	1599	13	1608	1614		–	well after 1630
C 41	*Old woman*, The Hague	1602	4	1611	1617		–	after 1631
C 41	Copy 12, Braunschweig	1591	–	1600			–	after 1631
C 48	*Good Samaritan*, London, Wallace Collection	?	–	?			1630	after 1632
C 51	*Old man in interior with staircase*, Paris	?	–	?			1632	1632 or later
C 53	*Old man*, Kassel	1604	4	1613	1619		1632	?

		last dated annual ring of heart-wood	number of annual rings of sap-wood present	conclusion as to felling date		other information	date panel was painted	
				earliest possible	statistical average		as inscribed on picture	as accepted
C 56	*Bust of Rembrandt*, Berlin	1617	2	1626	1632	given the age of the tree one has to allow for 15 or more sapwood rings	–	in or soon after 1633
C 70	*Portrait of a man*, Braunschweig	1619	4	1628	1634	idem	1632	1632
C 71	*Portrait of a woman*, Braunschweig	1603	–	[1614]		centre plank comes from same tree as centre plank of no. A 42, from which date is derived	1633	1633
C 72	*Man in broad-brimmed hat*, Boston	1619	–	1628		righthand plank comes from same tree as righthand plank of no. C 73	1634	1634
C 73	*Portrait of a woman*, Boston	1610	–	1619		see no. C 72	1634	1634
C 75	*47-Year old man*, Paris	1616	9	1625	1631		1632	early 1630s
C 77	*Portrait of a man*, Dresden	?	–	?		from the same tree as nos. A 72 and C 119	1633	1633
C 79	*Cornelia Pronck*, Paris	1618	2	1627	1633		1633	1630/31
C 88	*Labourers in the vineyard*, Leningrad	1616	1	1625	1631	panel extends almost to the border of heart- and sapwood	1637	1637
C 89	*Old woman*, Vienna	1622	–	1631		given the age of the tree (more than 235 years) a felling date after 1637 is likely	1639	1639
C 91	*Scholar*, Budapest	1615	–	1624		given the age of the tree (more than 216 years) a felling date after 1630 is likely	1642	1640s
C 96	*Bust of Rembrandt*, London, Wallace Collection	1606	–	1615		from the same tree as no. A 96	–	*c.* 1637
C 98	*Man in plumed cap*, The Hague	?	5	?			–	mid-1630s
C 101	*Oriental*, Amsterdam	1610	11	1619	1625	given the age of the tree (more than 329 years) a felling date after 1625 is likely; comes from the same tree as no. A 137	1635	*c.* 1635
C 118	*Landscape with bridge*, Berlin	1605	–	1614		given the age of the tree (more than 202 years) a felling date after 1620 is likely	–	*c.* 1640
C 119	*Landscape with castle*, London, Wallace Collection	?	–	?		from the same tree as nos. A 72 and C 77	–	*c.* 1640

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121			A 17	C 69
122	A 36			A 59
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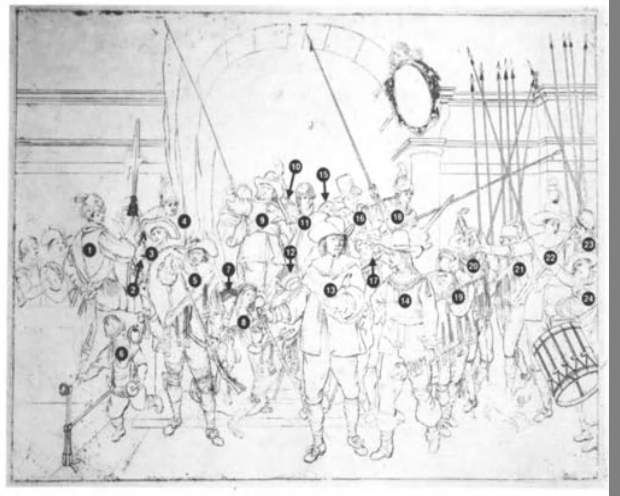
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