

IV 9 Self-portrait

1654

KASSEL, STAATLICHE MUSEEN KASSEL, GEMÄLDEGALERIE ALTE MEISTER, CAT. NO. GK 244

HDG 536; BR. 43; BAUCH 324; GERSON 310; TÜRPEL –

Fig. 1. Canvas 72 x 58.5 cm. For a colour reproduction of a detail (1:1) showing the face see Chapter III fig. 274



Fig. 2. X-Ray



1. Introduction and description

Strong doubts as to the authenticity of this painting have been voiced in the recent Rembrandt literature. This issue is seriously complicated by the painting's turbulent material history. However, as will become clear, there are a number of arguments that speak for, rather than against the painting's authenticity.

Rembrandt is depicted in a dark brown gown, under which the collar of a white shirt is just visible. The forehead and eyes are overshadowed by the wavy rim of a black cap. Around his neck hangs a gold chain with a pendant.

Working conditions

Examined on 6 November 1968 (J.B., B.H.) in the frame, with a full set of X-ray films. A cracked yellow varnish hampered the evaluation of the paint layer at that occasion. Following its defacement with sulphuric acid on 7 October 1977, the painting was examined again in March 1978 during its restoration in the Doerner-Institut in Munich (B.H., E.v.d.W.), in good daylight and out of the frame, with the aid of the X-ray films. Re-examined on 16 January 1989 (E.v.d.W.) and again on 25-28 January 1994 (M.F., E.v.d.W.) in good light and out of the frame, with the help of ultraviolet light, a stereomicroscope and the X-ray films.

Support

Canvas, lined, 72 x 58.5 cm. Single piece. Cusping along the top and right edges is visible in the X-radiograph. The pitch of the cusping at the top edge varies between 15 and 28 cm and extends app. 26 cm into the canvas. The pitch of the cusping along the right edge varies between 8 and 24 cm and extends up to 15 cm into the canvas. Some secondary cusping is also evident along these edges. A deformation extending from the upper right part of the canvas to the bottom of the painting indicates that the canvas was primed while it was still part of a larger piece of linen. Moreover, a selvedge along the right edge visible in the X-radiograph and the marked distortions of the weave along the top edge make it highly likely that this canvas was a corner of a larger piece of primed linen (see Vol. II, p. 33). The *mise en toile* of the *Self-portrait*, in combination with the specifics of the cusping and the selvedge mentioned above eliminates the possibility that the *Self-portrait* was radically cut down at some time. By extension, the same can be said of an underlying portrait of a woman (see *Radiography*).

Threadcount: 14.48 vertical threads/cm (14-15), 12.73 horizontal threads/cm (11.5-13.5). The horizontal threads reveal slubs. Because of this as well as the greater spread of the horizontal threads, it may be assumed that the warp threads run vertically, which is confirmed by the presence of the selvedge along the right edge.

Ground

A light brown layer on the canvas became visible in places where the sulphuric acid used to deface the painting in

1977 had eaten through the upper layers. This locally exposed layer is part of the ground of a woman's portrait under the *Self-portrait* (see *Radiography*).

Kühn determined that this ground consists of a single layer containing an ochre pigment and oil.¹ (See Chapter IV, note 53). He described the colour as yellowish-grey on the basis of his microscopic examination, while we observed it as being light brown. Before the *Self-portrait* was executed, the woman's face was largely covered with a light flesh-coloured intermediate layer that must have served as a ground or local imprimatura for the head in the *Self-portrait*.² This layer surfaced locally in partly retouched areas of wearing.

Paint layer

Condition: During the examination of the painting in 1968 it was noted that there were overpaintings along the contour of the neck and left shoulder and a large retouched filling in the left background near the ear. The painting's condition was radically altered when it was seriously disfigured by sulphuric acid in 1977. The acid struck the painting in a number of places in and around the head, and subsequently dripped down the paint surface in vertical tracks to the bottom (fig. 3). The paint in these tracks has mostly been eroded down to the underlying paint layers, and in some places at the bottom of the painting down to the ground. Three streaks of acid damage are evident in the lit cheek of the face. Other tracks run from the left corner of the mouth, the tip of the nose and from under the shaded eye. Furthermore, there are five tracks to either side of the head in the background and in the clothing which, like the ones in the face, extend to the bottom of the painting.

Removal of the remaining varnish layer revealed that the painting's condition was extremely poor even prior to the acid damage. The head in particular was very worn and in some places overcleaned to such an extent that the flesh-coloured intermediate layer became visible (see *Ground*). Overcleaning of the paint layer was also found in the cap, especially above the forehead and in the background at the upper left. Overpaintings in the cap and the background were removed, while other less disturbing, partially transparent ones were preserved (see note 2). Areas ruined by the acid were retouched. Moreover, during the 1978 restoration, the overall condition of the painting was thought to call for the application of glazes in many places to create tonal cohesion. In addition, the cap, including the lit grey flaps, was almost entirely thinly overpainted. The same applies to large sections in the background around the cap. Large parts of the head, especially the areas of shadow and the transitions to the lighter passages also prove to have been thinly overpainted. Countless smaller retouchings and overpaintings in the eyes make it virtually impossible to assess them. Especially confusing is the presence of blue-grey catchlights in the iris – added later – which because of their placement make the pupil in the nearest eye seem quite large. What appears to be a highlight is probably local damage in the surface; here an underlying red layer is visible. With respect to the lid and brow, the structure of

Fig. 3. Painting with traces of sulphuric acid



Fig. 4. Detail with signature (reduced)



this eye is almost entirely determined by in- and over-paintings, making it impossible to gain an accurate idea of its original appearance. The same applies to the base of the nose and the frown above it (see figs. 6 and 7).

The poor condition of the head, the cap and the background in particular substantially complicates the evaluation of the *peinture* in these areas. The still reasonably preserved white of the shirt collar was swiftly brushed, with a ridge of impasto terminating in a kind of glancing touch. Noteworthy is that the shirt collar does not have a counterpart at the same height on the opposite side of the sitter's neck. The gown is also done in lively brushstrokes. Folds are indicated with vigorous strokes and a rich constellation of closely related shades of yellow and ruddy brown. At the shoulder and the contour of the back the colour fades into a grey-brown. The gown's fit around the neck and over the shoulder is very convincingly rendered. The gleaming metal of both the chain and the pendant has been summarily suggested with yellow ochre, black, and touches of red-brown. The continuation of the chain is indicated with yellow-white dabs. For a more detailed description and evaluation of these passages see Chapter III, pp. 268-270.

Craquelure: The regular horizontally and vertically oriented craquelure pattern in the light areas is highly unusual for a canvas and could be an indication that it was long attached to a panel (see 2. *Comments* and 6. *Provenance*). A typical irregular pattern of canvas craquelure can be seen in the coat and in the background. The paint layer of the entire painting shows marked cupping.

Radiography

The only discernable traces of the *Self-portrait* in the X-radiograph are the tip of the nose, the ear at the left, the white collar and a few highlights on the chain. The outer rim of the shoulder at the left distinguishes itself from the rest of the shoulder by showing up light in the X-ray image. However, the X-radiograph is dominated by an underlying portrait of a woman. Showing up strongly are her face, the cap on her head, a millstone ruff, and a pentimento along the lower edge of the cap's wing. Horizontal brushstrokes of radioabsorbent paint are vis-

Fig. 5. Detail with signature (reduced)



ible in the shadows of the eye sockets, below the nose and in the mouth. These strokes form part of the intermediate flesh-coloured layer between the head of the woman and the *Self-portrait* (see *Ground*). A dark reserve near the woman's left eye socket (whose position corresponds with the self-portrait's right eye) appears to have been wiped out in the intermediate layer when it was still wet.³ The contour of the woman's right shoulder probably followed the edge showing up light of the sitter's shoulder in the self-portrait (see further 2. *Comments*).

Also showing up light in the X-radiograph are several cloudy spots, which are most likely related to an irregularly applied ground. Narrow vertical dark tracks correspond with traces of the acid damage. Visible along the lower edge are fillings showing up white in the acid tracks, which apparently are deeper there.

Signature

In black, somewhat irregularly placed and shaped letters to the right next to the shoulder: <Rembrandt / f.1654> (fig. 4). Traces of another signature in a light-brown paint are found at the upper left: <Rembrandt f> (fig. 5). According to Von Sonnenburg, the latter signature is on a worn paint layer and thus could not belong to the original state of either the discarded or the final painting (see note 2). He suggests that it was added when the original signature could no longer be read. In our opinion, the upper left signature cracked along with the paint layer on which it was applied and is just as worn as this layer. Consequently, we do not believe that the signature was added later. Two presumably autograph signatures were also found in the Berlin *Joseph accused by Potiphar's wife* of 1655 (Br. 524). This phenomenon can be explained by the fact that the initial signature was covered when the painting was reworked.

2. Comments

In 1721, the Delft collector Valerius Röver (1686-1739) purchased a 'portret van Rembrandt, van voren' (Portrait of Rembrandt facing front) from Franco van der Goes (1687-1767) – also from Delft – for 100 guilders. This

turned out to be a good bargain, for only three years later he was offered 200 guilders for the painting (see 6. *Provenance*). In 1750, Röver's widow sold her husband's collection – including the 'Portrait of Rembrandt' – to Landgrave Wilhelm VIII of Hesse-Kassel for a total of 40,000 guilders. There is little doubt that the painting concerned is identical to the late *Self-portrait* in the Kassel Gemäldegalerie discussed here. The dimensions, as mentioned in the estate inventory drawn up after Röver's death in 1739, correspond only with the painting discussed here and not with the other Röver *Self-portrait* by Rembrandt in Kassel (II A 97). Moreover, the date given by Röver to the portrait – 1655 – matches that on this painting to the extent that the diagonal and horizontal lines of the last digit of what is now perceived as a 4 are clearer than the rest of this digit and could thus have been read in the past as a 5. Röver described the portrait in his 1721 catalogue as 'the portrait of Rembrandt, facing front in a cap, painted by himself in his best period in the year 1655.' It is virtually certain that this was the painting described in 1689 as 'a *trony* by Rembrant being his own likeness' (see 6. *Provenance*).

Notwithstanding the fact that both descriptions state that the painting was executed by Rembrandt, doubts as to its autograph nature have grown. These were first voiced by Gerson, who felt that the attribution is not wholly convincing.⁴ Subsequently, Schwartz and Tümpel omitted the painting from what they considered to be the autograph oeuvre of Rembrandt.⁵ The following section makes clear just how difficult it is to evaluate the question of authenticity, given the painting's turbulent material history. Assessment of the brushwork, particularly in the face, is seriously hindered by the painting's poor condition.

In their current state, the lit areas of skin consisting of a multitude of turbid shades of flesh colour deviate from what we expect of Rembrandt in paintings of this period. This observation is primarily based on the fact that the familiar interplay of cool and warm tints found in authentic works is almost entirely missing. Furthermore no prominent brushstrokes are visible in the face. A disturbing feature is the manner in which the lights and shadows merge as more or less equally handled paint layers. This is atypical of Rembrandt's paintings of this period. Compare, for example, his *Large self-portrait* in Vienna (IV 8), the 1651 *Young girl at a window* in Stockholm (Br. 377) and the Rotterdam *Titus* from 1655 (Br. 120). It is characteristic of Rembrandt's works of the 1650s that the transition from light to shadow is realised with more or less broadly applied overlapping strokes so that the brushwork displays a certain autonomy. The absence (especially in the face) of these characteristics can be explained by the fact that virtually all of the shaded areas and transitions in the face of the present painting were done by later hand(s) (see *Paint layer Condition*). These areas have been carefully covered with opaque or semi-transparent, finely pigmented paint in such a way that they almost always partially overlap the adjoining lighter paint. As a result, the shadows appear to hover like clouds before the painting. While theoretically the plasticity of the head does not appear to be disrupted by this handling,

a characteristic feature of Rembrandt's paintings of this period, namely the aforementioned 'angularity' of the transitions in tone and colour, may be concealed here. Comparison with a photograph of the face taken before the acid attack (fig. 6) shows the effect of the subsequent restoration on the painting's character (fig. 7).⁶

Where light and shadow merge and dissipate, the brushwork of the intact lit sections does not create the impression that the original painting was done in such softly merging tones as seen today. A constellation of freely applied light impastoed strokes is evident in places in the head. Traces of the characteristic 'crumbliness' at the edges of Rembrandt's brushstrokes⁷ are visible along the outline of the lips, although there, too, the image is somewhat impaired by overpaintings. The course of the original brushstrokes is unusual in only one respect, namely where the horizontal traced of the intermediate flesh coloured layer (see *Ground*) partly interrupt the course of the brushwork. For the rest, the way the direction of the brushstrokes is related to the painted form is common for Rembrandt, as is the paint relief, used to enhance some highlights for example on the nose and the chin. With regard to the colour scheme, visible in those few lit areas in the head that can still be evaluated (in the jaw and chin), there is a subtle interplay of yellow and pink flesh tones with a greyish cast that does not essentially differ from what is found in Rembrandtesque heads from this period. (For a stylistic assessment of other, better preserved elements in the painting, see pp. 266-270)

That the *Self-portrait* was painted over a portrait of a woman with a white winged cap and a millstone ruff has been known since 1932 when Wehlte published a partial X-radiograph of the painting.⁸ In the Rembrandt literature, this X-radiograph served as a spectacular example of a painterly palimpsest. The woman's portrait dominates the X-ray image to such an extent that the nose and the edge of the shirt collar of the sitter in the *Self-portrait* can only be distinguished with close scrutiny. Just what, if any, the standard method was for painting over an extant image is not clear. Important in this respect is the question whether or not it was common practice to apply a fresh ground over the first image prior to painting the new one. This aspect has not yet been systematically investigated. An examination of the traces of wear in the *Bust of a man in a gorget and cap* (I A 8), private collection, the Berlin *Joseph accused by Potiphar's wife* (Br. 524) and the Karlsruhe *Self-portrait* (IV 5) gave the impression that there was no intermediate layer between the underlying and the top painting. In other cases, for example the *Bust of an old woman* (I A 32 and II, *Corrigenda et Addenda*, pp. 839-40; as a work by Jan Lievens) at Windsor Castle and the *David before Saul* (I A 9) in Basel, it appears that an intermediate layer was indeed applied. Investigation of the drastically altered *Flora* (III A 112) in London revealed that the underlying picture of *Judith with the head of Holofernes* was partially covered with a grey layer.⁹ As mentioned above, during the 1977 restoration of the Kassel *Self-portrait* Von Sonnenburg found that a flesh-coloured layer had been locally applied, particularly over the head of the woman (see note 2).

Fig. 6. Detail (1:1) before the acid attack and subsequent restoration in 1978



Fig. 7. Detail (1:1) after restoration in 1978



The reason for elaborating on this intermediate layer – or the local underpainting of the face in the *Self-portrait* – is that the partial wiping away in the course of work on the painting could indicate that the *Self-portrait* was painted on an incompletely dried underlayer. This might partly explain the somewhat flat aspect of the original brushwork in the face in so far as this can be distinguished. That a painting by Rembrandt was executed over an abandoned earlier painting is such a conspicuously frequently encountered phenomenon among the master's self-portraits (see Chapter III) that this can be considered as an argument in favour of the painting's origin in Rembrandt's studio.

The local underpainting of heads with a flesh-coloured layer must have become standard practice in the course of the 17th century. The earliest instance that we know of is the *Portrait of Menno Baron van Coehoorn* by Theodoor Netscher (1661-1732) painted shortly after 1700.¹⁰ In *Het Groot Schilderboek*, De Lairese describes how various areas in a painting can each be underpainted in a different colour: '... the canvas or panel can be prepared as follows: the paints, made thick by being ground with drying oil, must be thinned by being mixed with turpentine, and applied to the canvas or panel with a soft brush; the sky blue, and the ground grey or green, more or less dark, to the extent that your composition and design require. (...) One should not use fine and precious paints, but average ones instead, as long as they are thick and opaque.'¹¹ According to De Lairese, an important reason for applying such local grounds is that they ensure that the sections concerned 'hunne volkomen schoonheid en kracht behouden' (retain their full beauty and power). The phenomenon of local underpainting in the painting of heads has not been sufficiently investigated to allow conclusions regarding the Kassel painting.

The painting's material history is unusual in yet another respect: in 1739 and 1750 it was recorded as being on panel (see 6. *Provenance*). Röver, who catalogued his collection himself, made no reference of either the supports or the frames. However, the emphasis placed on the fact that it is 'op paneel en vergulde lijst' (on panel and [in] a gilt frame) in a description of the painting in a catalogue compiled after Röver's death in 1739 should be given some weight. This could mean that the picture was either transferred from panel to canvas after 1750, or that the canvas had been attached to a panel at an earlier stage and thus described as being a work on panel.

Transferring paint and ground layers from a panel to a canvas was done with increasing frequency as of 1748. This practice fell in disuse in the course of the second half of the 19th century.¹² The structure of the canvas as it shows up in the X-ray image is entirely in keeping with a 17th-century painting on a primed canvas, and thus precludes the possibility of such a transfer. It is far more probable that the canvas was pasted onto a panel and that this panel was then removed some time after 1750 and most likely before 1783, the year in which it was described as having been painted on canvas (see 6. *Provenance*). The nature of the craquelure pattern supports the supposition that the canvas once was attached to a panel. The

craquelure pattern, particularly in the areas containing lead white, consists of cracks which are predominantly horizontal and vertical; such cracks are usually formed by stresses in the wood perpendicular to the grain and are commonly found in panel paintings. That canvases affixed to panels at an early stage tend to display a panel craquelure rather than a canvas craquelure, which is characterised by irregularities, is evident from the *Portrait of Joris de Caullery* (II A 53; *Paint layer*, Condition). The Kassel painting also contains sections displaying a typical canvas craquelure, which will have come about after the panel was removed from the canvas (probably some time after 1750). Due to the predominance of the panel craquelure, it may be concluded that the painting was either attached to a panel from the very beginning, or not long after its execution.

The X-ray image of the underlying woman's portrait is Rembrandtesque in a number of respects, particularly in its brushwork. It represents a woman's head with an elongated face turned to the left. She wears a winged cap and a very narrow millstone ruff. It is virtually certain that the woman's portrait was unfinished when the *Self-portrait* was painted over it; in fact, it is probably mostly an underpainting. This assumption is based on the fact that the lower edges of the ruff's piping, which would normally have been indicated in small curved lines of white radioabsorbent paint, were not found in the X-ray image (for X-radiographs of finished ruffs see for instance III A 143 and III C 107).

Von Sonnenburg thought that the woman's head could not have been by Rembrandt (see note 2). Despite the risk of making statements regarding attribution based on the style and the quality of an X-ray image, we nevertheless share his opinion. The perspective and spatial construction of the cap and collar display conspicuous weaknesses, which would more likely be the work of a less accomplished painter, probably an assistant or pupil of Rembrandt, than of the master himself. We should not discount the possibility that the woman's head was painted considerably earlier than the *Self-portrait*, perhaps in the 1640s. The woman's costume is a type worn already at the beginning of the 1640s (compare III A 143 [1641] and III C 107 [1642]).

Notwithstanding the above deliberations, the question of whether the *Self-portrait* is an autograph work has yet to be answered. It is clear that the painting's genesis and subsequent material history significantly complicate making a reliable assessment of its stylistic and qualitative features. That it was the work of a later hand, someone outside Rembrandt's studio, is improbable for the chances are slight that a supposed pasticheur or forger would have been able to secure an unfinished work from Rembrandt's studio to use as a support.

Moreover, we saw that those sections where traces of the original application of paint are still visible, particularly areas of the costume still in reasonable condition – do not essentially deviate from other works by Rembrandt with respect to the colour scheme and the manner of painting. Assessment of the physiognomical aspects, which has proven useful in questions of the authenticity of

Rembrandt's late self-portraits, is in the case of the Kassel *Self-portrait* seriously hampered by its poor condition. The proportionally large eyes (the right one of which appears to be missing the characteristic sagging fold of the eye lid) and the definition of form in the forehead, such as the high eye sockets, the 'floating' wrinkle in the forehead and the disproportionately high contour of the forehead deviate from the facial features described on the basis of Rembrandt's self-portraits (see Chapter III). However, as explained in *Paint layer Condition*, the eyes, the base of the nose and the frowning wrinkle cannot be evaluated because of the nature and scope of the overpaintings.

For the time being, the arguments outlined above lead us to conclude that the *Self-portrait* in Kassel was definitely made in Rembrandt's studio. A more detailed analysis of the brushwork in well preserved passages, as elaborated in Chapter III, p. 266 ff, has convinced us that the present painting is an autograph work by Rembrandt and probably served as the prototype for two free studio variants, the '*Self-portrait*' in Vienna (IV 11) and the '*Self-portrait*' in Florence (IV 12).

3. Documents and sources

See 6. *Provenance*.

4. Graphic reproductions

1. Etching by Joachim Jan Oortman (Weesp 1777 – Paris 1818) inscribed: *Dessiné par S. Le Roy. – Gravé par Oortman. / Portrait de Rembrandt* (fig. 8). Published in Filhol, *Galerie du Musée Napoléon V*, Paris 1808, no. 353: '... peint sur toile; hauteur soixante-onze centimètres huit millimètres ou deux pieds deux pouces; largeur cinquante-sept centimètres trois millimètres ou un pied neuf pouces. ... Ce bel ouvrage fait partie de l'exposition de la conquête de 1806.' The etching reproduces the painting in the same direction as the original. The background near the shoulder at the right is lighter than in the painting, whereby the contour of the bust is clearly visible there.

2. Engraving by Pierre Louis Henri Laurent (1779-1844) with the inscription: *Peint par Rembrandt. – Dessiné par Plonski. – Gravé par Henri Laurent. / Portrait de Rembrandt*. The engraving reproduces the painting in the same direction as the original.

5. Copies

1. Canvas 60.5 x 50.5 cm; Paris, Louvre, inv. no. R.F. 2667 bis. The painting was acquired as an original in 1928 from the collection of Alfred Boucher. Foucart considers this copy as a late work on the basis of the machine woven canvas, and the absence of a ground and underpainting.¹³

6. Provenance

*– In the 1689 estate inventory of Willem Spieringh (d. 1686) drawn up in Delft under no. 48: 'Een trony van Rembrant sijnde sijn contrefeytsel' (A *trony* by Rembrant being his own likeness). This inventory also includes under no. 67 'Een Christus als een hovenier van Rembrant' (Christ as a gardener by Rembrant). This latter mention refers to a painting that Valerius Röver bought from Willem van der Goes (1696-1751) in 1721 (III A 124). The *Self-portrait* in Kassel was, as is shown

Fig. 8. Etching by J.J. Oortman



below, in the collection of Willem van der Goes' brother, Franco. Franco and Willem van der Goes were the sons of Adriaan van der Goes and Maria Spieringh, the daughter of the aforementioned Willem Spieringh. On the basis of this, the *Self-portrait* in Kassel can be identified as the one listed in Willem Spieringh's inventory.¹⁴

– Coll. Franco van der Goes (1687-1767). Sold in 1721 to Valerius Röver for 100 guilders, according to a mention in the inventory of the successive owner.

– Coll. Valerius Röver (1686-1739) of Delft; described in his 'Catalogus van mijne schilderijen, boeken, tekeningen, prenten, beelden, rariteiten' (Catalogue of my paintings, books, drawings, prints, sculpture, curiosities) drawn up by Röver himself. Mentioned among the works bought in 1721 under no. 69: 'Het portret van Rembrandt, van voren met een mutse, door hem zelfs in zijn beste tijd geschildert ao. 1655. [f] 100:- Hoog .. [left open] Gekogt van de Raadsheer Mr. Franco van der Goes en is mij ao. 1724 f 200:- voor geboden' (The portrait of Rembrandt, facing front in a cap, painted by himself in his best period in the year 1655. [f] 100:- Height .. [left open] Purchased from Counsellor Franco van der Goes and I was offered f 200:- for it in 1724).¹⁵ The 'Catalogus van schilderijen' (Catalogue of paintings) compiled after Röver's death in 1739 (ms. UB II A 17-1) contains not only a description, but also information about the support and the frame under no. 4: 'Het portret van Rembrand, van vooren met een muts, door hem zelfs in zijn beste tijd gesc. op paneel en vergulde lijst, h. 28d, b. 22d [= 73 x 57.4 cm (Rhine-land feet)] [f] 200:-' (Portrait of Rembrandt, frontal view in a cap, painted by himself in his best period on panel with a gilt frame).

– Sold in 1750 by Röver's widow to Landgrave Wilhelm VIII

of Hesse-Kassel (1682-1760): described as 'Het portret van Rembrant. door hem zelfs geschildert op paneel vergulde lyst, h.23d. [sic], br. 22d [= 60 x 57.4 cm]' (Portrait of Rembrandt painted by himself on panel [with a] gilt frame); the measurements of the height must be a mistake in the 'Catalogus van eenige nog in wezen zynde schildery-kabinetten, namentlijk; Van Mevrouw Douariere De Reuver, verkogt aan zyn Doorl. Hoogh. den Heere Prins van Hessen, voor de somma van 40000 Guldens' (Catalogue of some still existing collections of paintings, 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).

– In the *Haupt-Catalogus* begun in the year 1749, described under no. 561 as: 'Rembrants eigenes Brustbild mit einer schwarzen Mütze. Höhe 2 Schuh 4 Zoll Breite 1 Schuh 10 Zoll [(Rhineland feet) = 73.2 x 57.5 cm].' Described in *Verzeichniz der Hochfürstlich-Hessischen Gemälde-Sammlung in Cassel*, Kassel 1783, as no. 53 in 'Das herrschaftliche Palais, nächst der Gallerie [auf der Ober-Neustadt]': 'Rembrandt van Ryn. Das Brustbild dieses Mahlers selbst, mit einer schwarzen Mütze und behängt mit einer goldenen Kette. Auf Leinwand, 2 Fusz 4 Zoll hoch, 1 Fusz 10 Zoll breit.'

– In Paris from 1807 to 1815, thereafter back in Kassel.

NOTES

1. H. Kühn, 'Untersuchungen zu den Pigmenten und Malgründen Rembrandts, durchgeführt an den Gemälden der Staatlichen Kunstsammlungen Kassel', *Maltechnik/Restaur* 82 (1976), pp. 25-33, esp. 29-30.
2. H. von Sonnenburg, 'Rembrandts "Segen Jakobs"', *Maltechnik/Restaur* 84 (1978), pp. 217-41, esp. 237-38.
3. For a discussion on such interventions in wet or dry paint, see Vol. I, pp. 32-33.
4. Gerson 310.
5. Schwartz 1984; Tümpel 1986.
6. Possibly the traces of previous, more accentuated brushstrokes have vanished due to abrasion. For a description of radical cleaning methods used in the past, see: R.H. Marijnissen, *Dégradation, conservation et restauration de l'oeuvre d'art*, Brussels 1967, vol. I, pp. 67-72.
7. Van de Wetering 1997, p. 188.
8. K. Wehlte, 'Aus der Praxis der maltechnischen Röntgenographie', *Technische Mitteilungen für Malerei* 48 (1932), p. 73.
9. Exhib. cat. *Art in the making*, 1988/89, p. 63.
10. Theodoor Netscher, *Portrait of Menno Baron van Coehoorn*, doek 109 x 85 cm; Enschede, Rijksmuseum Twente, inv. no. 106. The *Portrait of a man with a breastplate and plumed hat* (Br. 223) and its pendant the *Portrait of a woman* (Br. 364) in the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York appear to be two other cases. In and around the heads, roughly applied radioabsorbent paint can be discerned in the X-radiograph. The strongly contrasting threads of the support visible in these areas, however, indicate that this paint was applied to the back of the canvas. For another opinion, see exhib. cat. *Rembrandt/not Rembrandt I* 1995/96, pp. 26-27.
11. G. de Lairese, *Het groot schilderboek*, Haarlem 1740² (1707), I, pp. 329-31: '...dat men het doek of paneel aldus kan bereiden: de verwen, met droogenden olie dik gevreeven, zal men met terpentynolie zeer dun mengen, en met een zacht kwasje het gemelde doek of paneel op deze wyze overstryken; de lucht blaauw, en de grond graauw of groen, min of meer donker, na maate dat uwe Ordinantie en Aftekening zulks vereischt. (...) Tot deze gronden zal men geen fyne en kostelyke verwen gebruiken, maar gemeene, als zy slechts lyvig zyn en wel dekken.'
12. V. Schaible, 'Die Gemäldeübertragung. Studien zur Geschichte einer "klassischen Restauriermethode"', *Maltechnik/Restaur* 89 (1983), pp. 96-129.
13. J. Foucart, *Les peintures de Rembrandt au Louvre*, Paris 1982, p. 95.
14. GA Delft, not. W. van Ruyven, NA 2290, doc. 18, dd 23 January-31 March 1689 (Urk. 364). See also the will of Spieringh's widow in which she determined that the entire estate was to remain undivided until her eldest child had reached the age of 20, *ibidem*, document 4, dd 21 January 1689.
15. Amsterdam, University Library ms. UB II A 18. Published by E.W. Moes in: *O.H.* 31 (1913), p. 20.