

# *I*mitation & *A*mbition

THE RELATION BETWEEN DUTCH  
ADULT AND CHILD PORTRAITURE  
1620-1650

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*“Gemeenlijck sietmen in de leucht,  
alsmer met goet oordeel op acht,  
aen de manier van doen en wesen,  
waer toe de kinderen gheneghen zijn,  
en wat sy in hun ouderdom  
te worden hebben.”*

Karel van Mander, *Het Schilder-Boeck*, Haarlem 1604, fol. 111r.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

	ACKNOWLEDGMENTS	5
	INTRODUCTION	6
	The Historiography of Children in Dutch Art	6
	Aims and Structure	9
	Practices in Child Portraiture	10
I	FLINCK'S <i>PORTRAIT OF A BOY</i> : A PAINTING IN FOCUS	14
	'Slecht ghekleed': the Costume of a Mennonite	15
	The Pair of Gloves as a Symbol of Status	17
	The Landscape, the Pose and the Cane	19
	Problems of Identification: David Leeuw (1631/32-1703) as a Suggestion	19
	The Possible Provenance of the Painting	21
	The Context of Patronage: Leeuw and Flinck	23
	A Mennonite Painting in Flinck's Early Career	25
2	CONVENTIONS IN PORTRAITURE: SOCIAL MESSAGES AND PICTORIAL FORM	29
	Approaches to Portraiture: Production and the Broader Context	29
	Mechanisms of Convention in Adult Portraiture	30
	The Significant Role of the Artist	33
	Children and Social Messages versus Pictorial Form	34
3	CHILDREN AS 'MINIATURE ADULTS': AMBITION, FASHION AND FORMAL IMITATION	36
	Adults and Children: An Ambiguous Relation	37
	The Pastoral Portrait and Courtly Ambitions	38
	Holland instead of Arcadia: Portraits in Contemporary Landscapes	39
	Landscape and Notions of Status in the Seventeenth Century	41
	The Bamboo Cane as Exotic Fashion	43
	Boys with Large Hats and the Rules of Etiquette	46
4	CHILDREN AS 'CHILDREN': SIGNS OF CULTIVATION AND EDUCATION	49
	Fruits and Flowers as Allusions to Fertility and Cultivation	50
	Animals and Pets as Metaphors of Education	52
	Positive and Negative Play	53
	Attributes: Meaning versus Form	54
	Children's Costumes and the Transition to Adult Attire	55
	Spontaneity and Joy: Childish Poses and Facial Expressions	56
	Mixtures of Childlike and Adult Features	58
5	CHILDHOOD IN THE GOLDEN AGE: STAGES OF DEVELOPMENT	61
	Family Life in the Seventeenth Century	62
	Childhood as a Separate Stage in Human Life	63
	Genre Paintings: Parental Roles and Educational Warnings	65
	Family Portraits and the Subsequent Stages in the Life of a Child	68

CONCLUSION	71
BIBLIOGRAPHY	74
LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS	83
APPENDICES	88
A. Archival Documents Related to the Leeuw and van Lennep Families	88
B. Family Tree of the Flinck, Leeuw and van Lennep Families	91
C. Description, Analysis and Transcript of the Division of Household Items of Ameldonck Leeuw (1604-1647) and Maria Rutgers (1603/4-1652) in Amsterdam, 7 February 1653	92
D. Reconstruction of the Provenance of David Leeuw's Portrait	98

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This thesis is partly the result of an internship at the Barber Institute of Fine Arts at the University of Birmingham, where I have intensely studied Flinck's *Portrait of a Boy*, from January until the end of March 2011. The intention of my research there was to find more evidence for a suggestion about the identification of the boy and to investigate further aspects of the iconography of the painting. Moreover, some of those aspects have been presented in an outline of a possible exhibition around this painting. I would like to thank Robert Wenley, Head of Collections and Learning, for giving me the opportunity to study this portrait in such close-up and for the discussions we had around it.

After three months this portrait was still an object of fascination. Especially the tension between the childlike facial expression and posture of the boy on the one hand and his adult costume, formal pose and graceful cane on the other gave the possibility for some further thoughts. The result of this can be found below. I would like to thank professor Rudi Ekkart, whose incredible knowledge of portraiture I admire, for his encouragement to study this genre and for his subtle, but very fruitful comments. Furthermore, I am grateful to professor Peter Hecht for being the second reader and for his motivating ideas on seventeenth-century art.

The first chapter on Flinck's boy would not have been possible without Tom van der Molen, who is currently rewriting Flinck's monograph. His help with regard to the archival material was essential and his fascination with the Leeuw family seems limitless. Finally, I would like to thank professor Volker Manuth, Marieke de Winkel and Jaap van der Veen for their opinions and, last but not least, Kaz Muijlwijk, Sarah Van Ooteghem, Albert Konijnenberg and my parents for their comments on the written text.

## INTRODUCTION

In the seventeenth century the Dutch Republic lived through a period of great wealth and prosperity. Being a republic meant that the nobility did not play as central a role as in other parts of Europe. In towns there were groups of regents, militiamen, merchants and other burghers with large fortunes. Many of them decorated their houses with art works and commissioned portraits from the most celebrated artists of their time. Portraits were made for public buildings and many were especially created for the private context of the home. Great numbers of Dutch seventeenth-century private portraits of adults have survived up to the present, but at least equally many are lost. Families were represented in large-scale group paintings, as were children in individual portraits. It has even been argued that children enjoyed a special position during the seventeenth century not found elsewhere. This may be an overstatement, but it has to be admitted that an incredible number of child portraits was indeed created. Although the two greatest portraitists, Rembrandt (1606-1669) in Amsterdam and Frans Hals (1582-1666) in Haarlem, painted only a few portraits of children, some of their pupils or fellow-townsmen were rather successful in this genre.

One of those painters is Govert Flinck (1615-1660), who painted, among others, a *Portrait of a Boy* in 1640 [fig. 1].<sup>1</sup> It depicts a boy in full length, who is standing in a landscape, wearing a dark costume and broad-rimmed hat and holding a bamboo cane and pair of gloves. One of the most prominent features of this portrait is that somehow the boy seems to be a small adult with the clothes and attributes of a grownup. On the other hand, his delicate and hesitant smile and his immature posture underline the fact that he is still a young child. We may observe a certain tension between the adult and childlike elements. It raises the question for what reasons he was portrayed in this way and what the motivations of the patron – in this case the boy's parents – would have been for this iconography. This question is the point of departure for this thesis.

### **The Historiography of Children in Dutch Art**

Portraiture has been given increased attention in art-historical literature during the last decades. A fascination with children can be detected, however, from the very beginning of the twentieth century. One of the first overviews of children in European painting is by Ch. Moreau-Vauthier of 1901.<sup>2</sup> The author emphasises the juvenile beauty, innocence and delicacy of the children in Dutch seventeenth-century paintings and praises the liveliness and playfulness achieved by the painters. Three more studies on the child in European art have been published in the first half of twentieth century. The first is by Max Sauerlandt of 1921, who also published an abstract of his book exclusively on the German

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<sup>1</sup> Govert Flinck, *Portrait of a Boy*, 1640, oil on canvas, 129,5x102,5 cm, Barber Institute of Fine Arts, University of Birmingham.

<sup>2</sup> Ch. Moreau-Vauthier, *Les portraits de l'enfant*, Paris 1901.

and Dutch schools in 1937.<sup>3</sup> The second is by Emil Waldmann of 1940, who praises the vigour, familiarity and love that can be found in family portraits, especially those in which the artist painted his own offspring.<sup>4</sup> In 1945 John B. Knipping & M. Gerrits wrote a survey of the child specifically in the Dutch visual arts from the late Middle Ages until the nineteenth century.<sup>5</sup> Publications have appeared on family portraits too, such as by Victoria B. Greep and Frauke Laarmann.<sup>6</sup>

Over the course of the twentieth century, several exhibitions have been dedicated to images of children both in portraits and genre scenes. Some of these shows focused on the development of the genre from the fifteenth to the nineteenth or twentieth centuries, while some concentrated on a more specified period, such as the seventeenth century.<sup>7</sup> Other exhibitions have placed the paintings in a wider cultural context of playing, teaching, feasting, eating, praying and further aspects of daily life.<sup>8</sup> Even other shows compiled examples from a specific region within the Netherlands, such as the provinces of Friesland, Groningen and Limburg.<sup>9</sup> On two occasions, the Amsterdam Rijksmuseum devoted special interest to children in its collection.<sup>10</sup> Exhibitions around the theme of Dutch child portraiture have also taken place outside the Netherlands.<sup>11</sup>

Generally speaking, two tendencies can be found in almost all publications. The first is the reason why attention has been given to this genre on such a large scale. For most authors pictures of children are somehow charming, touching and recognisable. Children are thought of as sweet, cheeky, funny or as truly naughty, and without any effort typical characteristics are directly assigned to them.<sup>12</sup> These pictures are closely connected to our own past and youth, but also to our daily family lives. Child portraits are often approached with a modern idea of childhood that is not always in line with the

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<sup>3</sup> Max Sauerlandt, *Kinderbildnisse aus fünf Jahrhunderten der Europäischen Malerei von etwa 1450 bis etwa 1850*, Königstein im Taunus-Leipzig 1921; Max Sauerlandt, *Kinderbildnisse aus fünf Jahrhunderten der Deutschen und Niederländischen Malerei*, Königstein im Taunus-Leipzig 1937.

<sup>4</sup> Emil Waldmann, *Das Bild des Kinder in der Malerei*, Berlin 1940.

<sup>5</sup> John B. Knipping & M. Gerrits, *Het kind in Neerlands beeldende kunst*, 2 vols., Wageningen 1945.

<sup>6</sup> Victoria B. Greep, *Een beeld van het gezin. Functie en betekenis van het vroegmoderne gezinsportret in de Nederlanden*, Hilversum 1996; Frauke Laarmann, *Families in beeld. De ontwikkeling van het Noord-Nederlands familieportret in de eerste helft van de zeventiende eeuw*, Hilversum 2002.

<sup>7</sup> [...], *Tentoonstelling van kinderportretten*, exhib. cat. Arti et Amicitiae, Amsterdam 1910; [...], *Catalogus der tentoonstelling van kinderafbeeldingen Nederlandse schilderkunst XVIe-XXe eeuw*, exhib. cat. Tijdelijk Gemeentemuseum voor Moderne Kunst, The Hague 1924; [...], *Tentoonstelling van kinderportretten*, exhib. cat. Vereniging voor de Kunst, Utrecht 1928; [...], *Kersttentoonstelling Kinderportretten*, exhib. cat. Museum Boijmans, Rotterdam 1947-1948; [...], *Het kind in de Noord-Nederlandse kunst*, exhib. cat. Singer Museum, Laren 1969.

<sup>8</sup> Anne Berendsen, *Kind en spel*, exhib. cat. Stedelijk Museum Het Prinsenhof, Delft 1953; [...], *Rinkelbel en rammelaar*, exhib. cat. Museum Willet-Holthuysen, Amsterdam 1958; Charles de Mooij & Barbara Kruijssen, *Kinderen van alle tijden. Kindercultuur in de Nederlanden vanaf de Middeleeuwen tot heden*, exhib. cat. Noordbrabants Museum, 's-Hertogenbosch 1997, Zwolle 1997.

<sup>9</sup> [...], *Het kinderportret in noordelijk Nederland in de 16e en 17e eeuw*, exhib. cat. Fries Museum, Leeuwarden 1953; [...], *Kinderen van toen. Het Limburgse kinderportret 16<sup>e</sup>-19<sup>e</sup> eeuw*, exhib. cat. Thermenmuseum, Heerlen, Bonnefantenmuseum, Maastricht, Gemeentemuseum Roermond, Roermond & Goltziusmuseum, Venlo 1979, Venlo 1979.

<sup>10</sup> Bob Haak, *Kinderen in de Nederlandse schilderkunst 1480-1700*, Amsterdam 1962; Wouter Kloek, *Alleen kijken naar meisjes of jongetjes*, exhib. leaflet Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam 1977-1978.

<sup>11</sup> [...], *Children painted by Dutch artists 1559-1820*, exhib. cat. Walker Art Gallery, Liverpool 1956.

<sup>12</sup> Exhib. cat. Amsterdam 1977-1978, p. 1.

views of the seventeenth century. This notion includes that children are innocent, adorable, playful, chubby, soft, fragile, unpredictable, pure, uncomplicated and cheerful. Although partly these elements are undoubtedly universal and of all times, our modern ideas may get in the way when we look at children that were painted centuries ago. As a result, the second tendency is that many authors express the objection that in former times children were portrayed as small adults. Repeatedly we read that it was not until the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries that children were portrayed as innocent and playful individuals. Instead of being lighthearted and spontaneous, the children are sometimes claimed to be stiff, serious, official and too grown-up for their early age. In the catalogue of a 2005 exhibition on the British child portrait in the eighteenth century it is stated that: “Until the 18<sup>th</sup> century, portraits of children had been painted according to the conventions established in the Renaissance; boys portrayed as future leaders and girls as future brides. However, artists in Georgian Britain began to paint portraits of children ‘as children’ and not merely as scaled-down adults.”<sup>13</sup>

It is understandable that this statement is made in the British context, where mainly the nobility was portrayed during the seventeenth century. Naturally, the children of noblemen had to be represented in their future roles as successors and heirs to the family fortune and high social position. Also with regard to Dutch and Flemish child portraiture this remark can be found. Knipping & Gerrits point out that seventeenth-century children, mainly wealthy citizens rather than nobles, were still the forthcoming patricians, burghers and peasants.<sup>14</sup> In the catalogue of an exhibition in Amsterdam in 1955-1956 focusing on children’s culture from the sixteenth to the nineteenth centuries it was said that initially children were perceived as adults in pocket-size and later as young personalities with their own distinctive characters.<sup>15</sup>

Both tendencies can be found in the most recent and in-depth study of late-sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Dutch and Flemish child portraits. Accompanying a large exhibition in Haarlem and Antwerp in 2000-2001, entitled *Pride and Joy*, a catalogue was published that focused on various aspects of the genre.<sup>16</sup> In the introduction Jan Baptist Bedaux discussed the question why so many child portraits were created in the Low Countries.<sup>17</sup> His general conclusion is that the love of the parents for their progeny was the prime reason to commission portraits in such large amounts. In addition, he strongly believes in the biological emotional reactions pictures of children may evoke. In the second essay Katlijne Van Der Stighelen draws an outline of the development of child portraits in

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<sup>13</sup> Hannah Neale, ‘The Changing Face of Childhood in British Portraiture of the 18th Century’, in: *Pictures of Innocence. Children in 18<sup>th</sup>-century Portraiture*, exhib. cat. Abbot Hall Art Gallery, Kendal 2005, pp. 5-9, see p. 5.

<sup>14</sup> Knipping & Gerrits 1945, p. 69.

<sup>15</sup> [...], *Kind en kinderleven in Nederland 1500-1900*, exhib. cat. Museum Willet-Holthuysen Amsterdam 1955-1956, Amsterdam 1955, preface.

<sup>16</sup> Jan Baptist Bedaux & Rudi Ekkart (ed.), *Kinderen op hun mooist. Het kinderportret in de Nederlanden 1500-1700 / Pride and Joy. Children’s portraits in the Netherlands 1500-1700*, exhib. cat. Frans Halsmuseum, Haarlem & Koninklijk Museum voor Schone Kunsten, Antwerp 2000-2001, Gent & Amsterdam 2000.

<sup>17</sup> Jan Baptist Bedaux, ‘Introduction’, in: exhib. cat. Haarlem & Antwerp 2000-2001, pp. 11-31.



Flanders.<sup>18</sup> The following essays concentrate on themes from daily life, including child raising and education, toys and costumes. In the catalogue entries, first explorations into various related matters have been carried out, such as the iconography, the religious, social or professional backgrounds of the sitters and their parents, or the relation between the portraits of adults and children. Reasonably, in a catalogue like this it is impossible to encompass every possible related aspect. In some entries we can find the remark that a certain child was depicted in accordance with the traditions of adult portraiture. However, the question exactly which elements from adult portraiture were adopted, mimicked or copied does not play a central part in *Pride and Joy*.

### **Aims and Structure**

It may seem contradictory that the above-mentioned authors praise the Dutch seventeenth-century painters for their lively and recognisable representations of young citizens, while, on the other hand, they blame them for creating images of rigid miniature or scaled-down adults. Perhaps paintings could be classified as belonging to either the first or the second category. In many portraits, however, the painters combine the two seemingly conflicting elements. As Knipping & Gerrits note: “Because of the lively expression of the face and limbs, we almost totally forget about their elderly costumes.”<sup>19</sup> From the art-historical literature and from Flinck’s 1640 *Portrait of a Boy* it becomes clear that it is exactly this tension that forms the essence of many child portraits.

The aim of this thesis is to obtain an improved impression and understanding of this tension by studying the relation between adult and child portraiture in the Dutch seventeenth century. For the first time the statement that children were merely portrayed as ‘miniature adults’ will be studied in depth. What is gained is an insight into the elements from adult portraiture that are imitated in the portraits of children – a practice of which a consistent overview has not been given. As a consequence, we also have a better awareness of the elements that are unique for this genre, that contribute to the childlike appearance of the sitters and that are independent from the portraits of adults. Furthermore, an attempt will be made to comprehend the reasons and ideas behind this iconography. Most importantly, we will have a better understanding of the mechanisms underlying the production of child portraits as a subgenre of portraiture and of the social position of children in Dutch seventeenth-century society mediated through their portraits.

Govert Flinck’s *Portrait of a Boy* will be used as the starting point in the research of these broader questions. Over the course of the chapters it will be asked how the results help to clarify Flinck’s portrait. In the first chapter a thorough study will be made of this painting. It will include a full exploration of its iconography and it will address the possible identification and the context from which it emerged. In the second chapter, a theoretical examination will be carried out around the

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<sup>18</sup> Katlijne Van Der Stighelen, ‘Bounty from Heaven’. The Counter-Reformation and Childlikeness in the Southern Netherlands’, in: exhib. cat. Haarlem & Antwerp 2000-2001, pp. 33-42.

<sup>19</sup> Knipping & Gerrits 1945, p. 100. (“*Door de levendige uitdrukking van gelaat en ledematen vergeten we bijna geheel de ouwelijke kleding.*”)

definitions, functions and interpretations of portraits and the issue of conventions, especially in adult portraiture, will be discussed. In the third chapter the adult elements of Flinck's portrait will be placed in a wider context thus investigating their origin and meaning. It will be attempted to define those aspects of child portraiture that contribute to the idea that they were portrayed as 'miniature adults'. It will not only contain a formal comparison between adult and child portraiture, but will also investigate the symbolism and roles played in these paintings. In reverse, the fourth chapter will focus on those characteristics that are unique for the portrayal of children and not relying on adult conventions. The fifth chapter will explore the possible explanations for this iconography by studying seventeenth-century ideas on child-raising, education and parent-child relations. In this way an alternative to the modern concept of childhood will be presented and will be connected to genre scenes and portraits.

Because Flinck's 1640 portrait forms the base of this thesis, his immediate predecessors and contemporaries will be given more attention than the aftermath of this painting. The main focus lies on paintings from the northern Netherlands created in the period between 1620 and 1650. Setting, attributes, poses and facial expressions will be the main points of study. The limited scope of this thesis does not give the opportunity to extensively analyse the complexity of the costumes of children.

### **Practices in Child Portraiture**

Before turning to Flinck's portrait, a number of general remarks must be made on the practices in Dutch child portraiture. Some of the great masters seem to have refrained from portraying children. In reaction to that Bedaux suggests two explanations. Firstly, in the hierarchy of artistic genres portraiture was placed on one of the lowest positions and, as a consequence, child portraiture was possibly regarded as even of lower rank and as less prestigious.<sup>20</sup> Portraiture was, however, seen as a legitimate means for a painter to earn money, also in times of financial difficulty, and it was often used by painters to position themselves on the market and to bond with a circle of clients. Another factor, Bedaux argues, may be that in children's portraits a larger part of the surface is taken by the costumes, which are laborious to paint and rely less on the talents of the painter, than by the hands and faces.<sup>21</sup>

Yet some painters were rather successful in this genre. In Amsterdam artists like Dirck Dircksz. van Santvoort (1610/1611-1680), Govert Flinck, Ferdinand Bol (1616-1680), Bartholomeus van der Helst (1613-1670) and Nicolaes Maes (1634-1693) created child portraits as individuals, in groups or in the company of their parents, as did Paulus Moreelse (1571-1638) in Utrecht, Wybrand de Geest (1592-1661) in Leeuwarden and Jan Albertsz. Rotius (1624-1666) in Hoorn. At the court in The Hague Michiel van Mierevelt (1567-1641) and later Gerard van Honthorst (1592-1656) immortalized several children. In Haarlem Frans Hals only painted his famous *Catharina Hooft with her Nurse* of

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<sup>20</sup> Bedaux 2000, p. 27.

<sup>21</sup> Bedaux 2000, p. 27.

c.1620, a few family groups later in his oeuvre and many children's *tronies*.<sup>22</sup> Johannes Verspronck (c.1602-1662) and Jan de Bray (c.1627-1697) made a number of child portraits. In other towns a more local tradition may be observed, such as with Jan Claesz. (c.1570-c.1618) in Enkhuizen and Jacob Gerritsz. Cuyp (1594-1652) in Dordrecht, who were both very successful at portraying infants.<sup>23</sup> It is difficult to characterise one of these painters as a true specialist, since these portraits were often created alongside other activities of the artist. A distinction could be made between those painters for whom it was a core activity, such as Claesz. and Cuyp, and those who did it occasionally.

Various explanations have been given for the increased popularity of this genre. First of all, the nature of the society in the northern Netherlands had changed during the Eighty Years War. A new elite and middle class with a growing pride and self-consciousness took over many governmental functions and high-rank positions. Portraits served as an affirmation of their newly-gained status, both in militia pieces and public group paintings and in the private sphere of the home.<sup>24</sup> In return, the rising number of portrait commissions instigated painters to become active in this genre. The growing welfare in the northern Netherlands gave patrons the financial means not only to have themselves portrayed, but also their dear little ones. On the one hand, it may indeed be the case that the love of patrons for their offspring made them desire to have the likenesses of their children recorded.<sup>25</sup> On the other hand, the visualisation of the dynastic relations and the display of status and wealth certainly played a role, but also some changes in the seventeenth-century perception of childhood.<sup>26</sup>

The availability of a competent children's portraitist in a given town stimulated the patronage and production of portraits of young inhabitants.<sup>27</sup> This fashion encouraged a local tradition, as persons usually approached a portraitist from their own or neighbouring town. Thus painters obtained a circle of local clients. Another noteworthy factor is that usually portraits were commissioned by those who in their early years had been portrayed and continued this family habit when reaching adulthood. It is likely that someone who was portrayed as a child will also commission a portrait of his or her own children. Although the discussion on the existence of specific urban schools of painting is not altogether without problems, in portraiture it was a common practice to employ a local artist.

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<sup>22</sup> Frans Hals, *Catharina Hooft and her Nurse*, c.1620, oil on canvas, 86x65 cm, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Preussischer Kulturbesitz, Gemäldegalerie, Berlin.

<sup>23</sup> R.E.O. Ekkart, 'De Enkhuizer schilder Jan Claesz.', *Oud Holland* 104 (1990), pp. 180-218.

<sup>24</sup> See for example Rudi Ekkart, 'Het portret in de Gouden Eeuw', in: Rudi Ekkart & Quentin Buvelot, *Hollanders in beeld. Portretten uit de Gouden Eeuw*, exhib. cat. National Gallery, London & Mauritshuis, The Hague 2007-2008, Zwolle 2007, pp. 17-47, see pp. 21-22.

<sup>25</sup> Bedaux 2000, p. 28; see also the review of *Pride and Joy* by Eddy de Jongh, *The Burlington Magazine* 144 (2002), p. 168, who claims that only the socio-biological approach proposed by Bedaux focusing on the affection evoked by an idealized body form and enlargement of the eyes is not enough to make this claim; therefore he believes it should also be supported by "some cultural or family history".

<sup>26</sup> Van Der Stighelen 2000 has studied the situation in Flanders and argued that the development of the genre is connected to a "sensitivity for children within the family resulting from the religious revival of the Counter Reformation", but also "served a memorial and genealogical purpose" (De Jongh 2002).

<sup>27</sup> See for example Laarmann 2002, pp. 13-14; Rudi Ekkart, 'Portraits in the Mauritshuis. A collection in context', in: Ben Broos & Ariane van Suchtelen, *Portraits in the Mauritshuis 1430-1790*, Zwolle 2004, pp. 11-24, p. 19.

The family could be depicted in a large-scale group painting. Children could be portrayed on individual panels or canvases or were united with their brothers and sisters in a group portrait of the progeny alone. Usually single portraits of all the children of the family were created as a series, for example but not necessarily, representing an allegorical theme. Children could be situated in a landscape, in a domestic interior or against a neutral background. Later-born children were sometimes afterwards included in group paintings or were added to the series. Children that had passed away can be found fluttering in the air or clouds in the shape of angels and *putti*.<sup>28</sup>

According to John Loughman & John Michael Montias the individual portraits were displayed in one of the backrooms of the house. There was a division between the public and private rooms, those that were accessible for a broader audience and those that could only be entered by family members or close friends. The location of the portraits in this part of the home reflects “the growing appreciation by relatives of family portraits as personal heirlooms, establishing their genealogical lineage and commemorating the lives and appearances of deceased kinfolk.”<sup>29</sup> However, some portraits had a more public character, such as *portraits historiés*, formally posed portraits displaying a public self-image of the parent and large family groups. These could be found in the more openly accessible chambers, where they could be appreciated by visitors and guests.<sup>30</sup> Laarmann states that it were mainly the portraits of distant ancestors that were placed in private rooms and that the portraits representing the inhabitants of the home, their direct ancestors and close relatives could usually be seen in the public rooms.<sup>31</sup> Adults are usually portrayed in bust length or three-quarter length. Children, however, were generally portrayed in full length. A reason for this difference may be that children needed to match the average size of an adult portrait and that they should be portrayed in proportion to their parents.<sup>32</sup>

In inventories the prices of portraits were usually not recorded, because they were not for sale and only had a personal emotional value. It is hard to determine to what extent paintings in homes were used as mere decoration or were regarded as art.<sup>33</sup> Family portraits were seldom made for their artistic quality, but always for their significance to represent the current situation of the family and to legitimate and display the wealth and status.<sup>34</sup> Series have often become dispersed as every child received its own portrait from its parents’ heritage. Often copies were made of the portraits of the parents for each child. By the end of the seventeenth century, households were regularly filled with portraits of far-removed kinspersons that may have been placed in one of the backrooms. Sometimes people made very strict regulations in their testaments to prevent the portraits from being owned by

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<sup>28</sup> Bedaux 2000, p. 24.

<sup>29</sup> John Loughman & John Michael Montias, *Public and Private Spaces. Works of Art in Seventeenth-Century Dutch Houses*, Zwolle 2000, pp. 42-43.

<sup>30</sup> Loughman & Montias 2000, pp. 45-46.

<sup>31</sup> Laarman 2002, p. 48.

<sup>32</sup> Bedaux 2000, p. 18.

<sup>33</sup> Loughman & Montias 2000, p. 13.

<sup>34</sup> Laarmann 2002, pp. 25+ 41.

unknown or distant family members who would lose interest in their unfamiliar ancestors.<sup>35</sup> Over the course of several decades and generations, portraits were often offered on the art market. Because the appreciation for the old masters was growing, they could be sold for their artistic value.

Children are not easy to portray. In answer to this difficulty, not many contemporary sources give advice on the rendering of children. However, Karel van Mander (1548-1606) recalled in *Het Schilder-boeck* of 1604 Pliny's remark that at the age of three children are half as tall as they will be in their adult lives. He also stated that children in proportion are five heads tall.<sup>36</sup> He believed that their carnation should be glowing, using vermilion paint.<sup>37</sup> Although van Mander did not specifically refer to the portrayal of children, he mentioned children in history and allegorical pieces, in the shape of angels and *putti* and in successful paintings made by artists, whose biographies he discusses. In general he advised children in paintings to be '*poeselich*', '*vleeschachtig*' and '*levendich*'.

Samuel van Hoogstraten (1627-1678) incorporated an elaborate schedule of children's proportions in his *Inleyding tot de hooge schoole der schilderkonst* of 1678, thus extending Pliny's remarks.<sup>38</sup> Many authors have stressed that Gerard de Lairese (1641-1711) in his *Groot schilderboek*, first published in Amsterdam in 1707, has not paid attention to children in this lengthy part on portraiture.<sup>39</sup> That does not mean that he made no comments on children at all in his book. In relation to the colours of nudes, de Lairese stated that healthy children are blushing, ill children are yellowy pale and deceased children are purple, in contrast to adult men and women.<sup>40</sup> He also elaborately reported all the differences between boys and girls in their youth concerning their postures, hair types and facial expressions.<sup>41</sup> He noticed that young children are very clumsy in grasping things with their hands, but that this skill improves over the years.<sup>42</sup> De Lairese mentioned, among other things, that children have the same facial proportions as their parents, but only on a smaller scale.<sup>43</sup>

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<sup>35</sup> Laarmann 2002, pp. 49-50.

<sup>36</sup> Karel van Mander, *Het Schilder-boeck*, Haarlem 1604: "Kinderen vijf hoofden langh, ende zijn ten dry / Iaren half soo langh, als sy te worden hebben. / Kuylkens in handen, als Kinderachtich: / Den Kinderen worden wy nu ghedachtich, / Vijf hoofden hooghe zijn sy in't vercleenen, / Tot schamelheyt dry, twee zijn dgye, en beenen." (*Grondt* Cap. III 14, fol. 11v) and "Kinderen hebben (nae Plinij verclaren) / T'half ghewas van hen lengte ten dry Iaren." (*Grondt* Cap. III 15, fol. 11v).

<sup>37</sup> Van Mander 1604, *Grondt* Cap. XII 29-30, fol. 48v-49r.

<sup>38</sup> Samuel van Hoogstraten, *Inleyding tot de hooge schoole der schilderkonst: anders de zichtbaere werelt*, Rotterdam 1678, Book 2, Cap. 9, pp. 62-64.

<sup>39</sup> Bedaux 2000, p. 25.

<sup>40</sup> Gerard de Lairese, *Groot schilderboek*, Amsterdam 1712: "Het kind, gezond zynde, is bloozende ... Maar zo dezelve ziek zyn, vertoonnd zich het kind wat geelachtig bleek ... Gestorven zynde, is het kind, paarsachtig." (Part 1, Book 1, Cap. X, p. 36).

<sup>41</sup> De Lairese 1712, Part 1, Book 2, Cap. VI, pp. 59-60.

<sup>42</sup> De Lairese 1712, Part 1, Book 2, Cap. VI, p. 61.

<sup>43</sup> De Lairese 1712, Part 1, Book 2, Cap. VI, p. 62.

GOVERT FLINCK'S *PORTRAIT OF A BOY*:

## A PAINTING IN FOCUS

**A**mong the visitors of the Barber Institute in Birmingham the *Portrait of a Boy* by Govert Flinck of 1640 is one of the favourites [fig. 1].<sup>44</sup> He is indeed quite charming, but by some viewers he is jokingly characterised as “that boy who is dressed like his grandfather”. Undeniably there is a certain tension between his childlike appearance and his adult costume, formal pose and elegant cane. Therefore this painting is an exemplary Dutch seventeenth-century child portrait that can very well serve as the starting point of an investigation of the relation between adult and child portraiture.

The boy is standing in full length on a sandy path in a landscape. He is directed to the left and his head is turned towards the viewer. With his large brown eyes his face indicates the innocence of a young child. His hair is dark and his cheeks are blushing red. His mouth betrays a delicate and uncertain smile. He is wearing a broad-rimmed brown hat and a dark costume. His right hand is wearing a brownish glove. The same hand holds the other glove of the pair and a thin wooden cane, which may be made of bamboo. At right there are several wooden beams in upright position, possibly the remains of a fence, covered with brownish vegetation. On the left we see a landscape with a low horizon and a river or lake. Behind it there is a forest with a church tower in the distance. The sky is dark blue and grey, but grows lighter towards the horizon. The overall palette of the painting is rather dark and brown, but the boy's face, collar and left hand light up. The face and hand are painted with great detail and make a smooth impression. The rest of the painting, however, is painted with clearly visible brushstrokes that are applied on the canvas in a sketchy manner. The paint is somewhat transparent and in the vegetation and the boy's costume one can easily see the various layers of paint and the canvas with the naked eye. Yet his face, the water and the sky are painted in a more opaque way. In this chapter, first the iconography of the painting will be studied, including the aspects of his costume, the gloves, the setting and the pose. Furthermore, an attempt will be made to reveal the identity of the boy and to understand the context from which this painting emerged in terms of patronage.

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<sup>44</sup> Joachim Wolfgang von Moltke, *Govaert Flinck, 1615-1660*, Amsterdam 1965, cat. no. 407; Werner Sumowski, *Gemalde der Rembrandt-Schuler*, 6 vols., Landau/Pfalz 1983, vol. 2, cat. no. 692; Charles Douglas Medley, *Catalogue of the paintings, drawings and miniatures in the Barber Institute of Fine Arts, University of Birmingham*, Birmingham 1952; Richard Verdi, *The Barber Institute of Fine Arts. The University of Birmingham*, London 2005, p. 55; Ann Sumner, *The Barber Institute of Fine Arts. Director's choice*, London 2010, pp. 30-31; [...], *Dutch Painting of the Seventeenth Century*, exhib. cat. Ferens Art Gallery, Hull 1961, cat. no. 26; Friedrich Gorissen, *Govert Flinck. Der Kleefsche Apelles 1616-1660. Gemälde und Zeichnungen*, exhib. cat. Städtisches Museum Haus Koekkoek, Kleve 1965, cat. no. 43; J. Richard Judson, *Rembrandt after Three Hundred Years*, exhib. cat. Art Institute of Chicago, Chicago, Detroit Institute of Arts, Detroit & Minneapolis Institute of Arts, Minneapolis 1969-1970, Chicago 1969, cat. no. 62; Christopher Brown, *Art in Seventeenth-Century Holland*, exhib. cat. National Gallery, London 1979, cat. no. 42.

### **‘Slecht ghekleed’: the Costume of a Mennonite**

The boy in Flinck’s portrait is adorned with a very large hat. He is wearing a dark jacket with a row of small metal buttons running down his chest, ending in a knot of dark ribbon. Underneath he is wearing a shirt with a flat white collar ornamented with a small band of lace. His dark cloak is draped over his right shoulder and arm. His breeches are of knee-length and have knots at the ends of the trouser-legs. He is wearing dark stockings and tiny leather shoes accentuating that he is only a child. The costume is overall not very luxurious or extravagant. Actually, it is quite the opposite. In comparison to other seventeenth-century costumes it is rather modest, especially because it lacks the characteristic cuffs, large ruffs or elaborately decorated collars we find in so many portraits. His costume provides an indication not only for his social position, but possibly also for his religious denomination. The fact that he is portrayed at all means that he belonged to the class of well-to-do citizens, but the relative simplicity of his clothing signifies that he could have belonged to the Mennonite community.<sup>45</sup>

The Mennonite community in the Low Countries originated from a movement around 1530 that re-baptized adults and believed that the Last Judgement was near. One of the subgroups was founded by Menno Simons (1496-1561).<sup>46</sup> In the case of the Mennonites, or *doopsgezinden*, only adults are baptised and baptism is preceded by the writing of a personal statement of confession. As a result of their spiritual life, the Mennonites renounced many worldly matters. They were not allowed to take oaths or to bear arms and consequently could not be part of the militia. Therefore, in the seventeenth century, they were usually active as merchants. In the Netherlands there were several branches of Mennonites, called the Friezen, Vlamingen, Hoogduitsers and Waterlanders, some being more liberal than others.<sup>47</sup> In general, the Waterlanders were the most moderate and were rather open to expressions of cultural life, literature and art, despite the worldly character of these affairs. Karel van Mander, both a painter and writer on art, may be one of the best examples of a Mennonite with a profound interest and tolerant attitude towards art. A number of seventeenth-century artists were Mennonites as well, such as Govert Flinck, his teacher Lambert Jacobsz. (c.1598-1636) and the latter’s son Abraham van den Tempel (1622/1623-1672), but also the portraitist Michiel van Mierevelt. In their homes Mennonites also often practiced music.<sup>48</sup>

In her book on fashion in the paintings of Rembrandt, Marieke de Winkel elaborately studied the costumes of his sitters and other figures. Related to his portrait of the wealthy Mennonite merchant and preacher Claes Cornelisz. Anslo (1592-1646) and his wife of 1641 [fig. 2], she made remarks

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<sup>45</sup> Volker Manuth and Marieke de Winkel believe that Flinck’s boy is dressed in a Mennonite style, because he has a short haircut and is wearing a plain brown costume without any further ornamentation, patterns, embroidery, decorations and cuffs (written opinion, 20 March 2011).

<sup>46</sup> See for example Robert P. Zijp, *Wederdopers, menisten, doopsgezinden*, exhib. cat. Rijksmuseum Catharijneconvent, Utrecht 1980; S. Groenveld, J.P. Jacobszoon & S.L. Verheus (ed.), *Wederdopers, menisten, doopsgezinden in Nederland 1530-1980*, Zutphen 1981.

<sup>47</sup> J.A. Oosterbaan, ‘Vlekken en rimpels. Over verdeeldheid en hereniging’, in: Groenveld, Jacobszoon & Verheus 1981, pp. 62-83, see also the chart with the various groups and branches on p. 72.

<sup>48</sup> S.B.J. Zilverberg, ‘Met pen, passer en penseel. Doopsgezinden en cultuur’, in: Groenveld, Jacobszoon & Verheus 1981, pp. 180-194.

about Mennonite costumes: “Mennonites distinguished themselves by their extremely sober way of dressing. Their clothes were always of a subdued colour without any form of ornamentation, albeit made from fabrics of the best quality.”<sup>49</sup> Their costumes were usually black, brown or dark-grey and they were not allowed to wear shimmering fabrics or starched and ironed ruffs.<sup>50</sup> “It is noteworthy that materials like gold, lace and satin or accessories like cuffs, fans, pearl necklaces and bracelets – usually listed in the possession of affluent merchants – are altogether absent from Mennonite inventories.”<sup>51</sup> Irene Groeneweg summed up several late-sixteenth-century and seventeenth-century sources in which modesty of costume and home and the denouncement of fancy colours among Mennonites were mentioned.<sup>52</sup> According to de Winkel, modesty and old-fashionedness were signs of sobriety and constancy, which were especially suited for elderly and devout persons.<sup>53</sup>

An example of a Mennonite female costume can be seen in Frans Hals’s *Portrait of Feyntje van Steenkiste (1603/5-1640)* of 1635 [fig. 3].<sup>54</sup> Her inventory, made on her death in 1640, indicates that she did not possess any silk, satin or velvet, but only cloth and *borat*.<sup>55</sup> In the portrait the rims of her cuffs are edged with wool. She would have found it unthinkable to have herself portrayed with enormous lace cuffs. She is holding plain white gloves, “possibly one of the two pairs valued at one guilder each in her estate”.<sup>56</sup> This does not mean, however, that Mennonites took a careless attitude towards their appearance and their costumes. In their portraits they certainly wanted to look their best, but their visual likenesses lack the ambition of fanciful display, luxury and extravagance. From this one may believe that the Mennonites were regarded as a very pious and devout community. Nevertheless, the Mennonites’ modesty was already mocked and despised by contemporaries. A well-known example is a song by Jan Jansz. Starter (1593-1626), called *Menniste vryagie*, in which a boy falls in love with a Mennonite girl. She, however, rejects him, because she believes he is not properly and too worldly dressed: his hair is too long and his ruff too wide. He, then, gets a haircut and changes his style. His new collar is white and “flat as a plate” and his clothes were no longer adorned with lace and ribbons. Not only does the girl accept him, she also allows him to share her bed.<sup>57</sup>

<sup>49</sup> Rembrandt, *Double Portrait of Claes Cornelisz Anslo (1592-1646) and His Wife Aeltje Gerritsdr. Schouten*, 1641, oil on canvas, 176x210 cm, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Preussischer Kulturbesitz, Gemäldegalerie, Berlin; Marieke de Winkel, *Fashion and Fancy. Dress and meaning in Rembrandt’s paintings*, Amsterdam 2006, p. 47.

<sup>50</sup> Irene Groeneweg, ‘Regenten in het zwart: vroom en deftig?’, in: Reindert Falkenburg (ed.), *Beeld en zelfbeeld in de Nederlandse kunst, 1550-1750, Nederlands Kunsthistorisch Jaarboek* 46, Zwolle 1995, pp. 199-251, see pp. 207-208.

<sup>51</sup> De Winkel 2006, p. 79.

<sup>52</sup> Groeneweg 1995, p. 207.

<sup>53</sup> De Winkel 2006, p. 75.

<sup>54</sup> Frans Hals, *Portrait of Feyntje van Steenkiste (1603/5-1640)*, 1635, oil on canvas, 123x93 cm, Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam. See Seymour Slive *et al.*, *Frans Hals*, exhib. cat. National Gallery of Art, Washington, Royal Academy of Arts, London & Frans Halsmuseum, Haarlem 1989-1990, London 1989, cat. no. 47.

<sup>55</sup> Bianca M. du Mortier, ‘Costume in Frans Hals’, in: exhib. cat. Washington, London & Haarlem 1989-1990, pp. 45-60, see p. 49. *Borat* was a woven fabric with a warp of silk and a weft of wool.

<sup>56</sup> Du Mortier 1989, p. 50.

<sup>57</sup> From *Menniste vryagie*: “... / Zij en zag niets aan mij of ’t scheen haar te mishagen; / Dan was mijn haar te lang, dan al te wijd mijn kragen, / Pauvretten al te ruim, het stijfjel al te blaauw, / Dan was mijn broek te wijd,



The Amsterdam Calvinist preacher Jacobus Trigland (1583-1654) said in a sermon of 1614 that although Mennonites wear supposedly sober and modest costumes and look so pious that they are almost sacred themselves, they are very proud of mind. Even though the fabrics look modest, they are in fact as costly as those fabrics that really seem expensive.<sup>58</sup> The same idea is reflected by a sermon on the novelty of dress by the Dutch Reformed minister Willem Teellinck (1579-1629) of 1620. He stated that some groups, among them Mennonites, are wearing modest costumes, but that they do not act like this from fear of God and that these persons take more pride in their austerity than those in ostentatious costumes.<sup>59</sup> In some cases the modesty of the Mennonites actually evoked the opposite effect; rather than pious they were thought of as arrogant and proud. The reputation of Mennonites in the seventeenth century was not very good and others were not particularly friendly towards them. Because Mennonites were supposed to be honest under any circumstance, a common saying was that they developed a way not to lie, but also not to reveal the truth.<sup>60</sup> D.P. Snoep states that Mennonites were seen as the utmost example of hypocrisy. In drama and common speech Mennonites were ridiculed for their isolated and moderate lifestyle. Some local inns were ironically named ‘The Mennonite Wedding’, events that were characterised by their lack of music and dance.<sup>61</sup>

### **The Pair of Gloves as a Symbol of Status**

The right hand of the boy in Flinck’s portrait is gloved and holds the left glove of the pair. In 1984 Bianca M. du Mortier published an article on the function of the glove in relation to love and marriage symbolism.<sup>62</sup> She mentions that gloves played a particular role in liturgical rituals and legal contracts from the late Middle Ages until well into the seventeenth century and served as symbols of power and

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*dan 't wambuis al te naauw, / Elk kouseband te lang, 'k had rozen op mijn schoenen; / In 't kort, zij maakte zond' zoo'n wereldsch man te zoenen. / Wel goeden avond dan, juffrouw, zei ik, en zij: / Gaat in des Heeren naam, zijn wijsheid blijve u bij. / 't En was niet lang daarna, ik kwam weêr bij haar treden, / Veranderd in mijn spraak, in wezen en in kleeden, / Mijn mantel was gansch slecht, en zwaar mijn haar gekort, / Mijn wit gesteven kraag zoo plat gelijk een bord, / Op al mijn kleëren zat niet één uitwendig koordje, / En daar kwam uit mijn mond niet één onhebbelijk woordje.”* (from: Jan Jansz. Starter, *Friesche Lust-hof. Beplant met verscheyde Stichtelijcke Minne-Liedekens, Gedichten, ende Boer-tige kluchten.* ..., Amsterdam 1623.); see also D.P. Snoep, ‘Een 17de eeuws liedboek met tekeningen van Gerard ter Borch de Oude en Pieter en Roeland van Laer (A 17th-Century Songbook with Drawings by Gerard ter Borch the Elder and Pieter and Roeland van Laer)’, *Simiolus* 3 (1968-1969), pp. 77-134, see pp. 115-123.

<sup>58</sup> Groeneweg 1995, p. 207. The words ‘mennistenfluweel’ (Mennonite velvet) and ‘mennistenlaken’ (Mennonite cloth) were used in the seventeenth century to signify that the fabrics are really expensive because of their high quality, despite looking humble and low-priced.

<sup>59</sup> De Winkel 2006, p. 77; Willem Teellinck, *Den Spiegel der Zedigheyt. Aen de Gemeynthe Christi binnen Middelburgh*, Amsterdam 1620, p. 33: “*Wanneer de mensche syne eere soeckt, ofte syne heylighheit stelt in de slechtheyt syner cleedere, gelijk de valsche prophete deden ... ende so noch de monnicken doen, ende eenig der Weder-dooperen, ende andere schijn-heylige, welke omdat sy slecht ghekleed gaen, haer selven laten voorstaen, dat sy daerom te heyliger zijn. Daer noch oock wel eenighe onder hun, meer uyt een sinnelijckheit, dan uyt ware Godvreesentheydt, so slecht gekleed daer henen gaen: ende dick wils meer hoovaerdye hebben in haer slecht ghewaedt, dan een ander in syn keurlijck kleet.*”

<sup>60</sup> Groeneweg 1995, p. 206; also W.H. Kuipers, ‘In de wereld, maar niet van de wereld. De wisselwerking tussen de doopsgezinden en de hen omringende wereld’, in: Groenveld, Jacobszoon & Verheus 1981, pp. 219-239.

<sup>61</sup> Snoep 1968-1969, pp. 121-122.

<sup>62</sup> Bianca M. du Mortier, ‘De handschoen in de huwelijksymboliek van de zeventiende eeuw’, *Bulletin van het Rijksmuseum* 32 (1984), pp. 67-84.

authority. Du Mortier mainly focused on wedding gloves – always held by women – that appear in marital portraits. As an alternative, Josua Bruyn argued in his article on the Dutch portrait as *memento mori* that more simple gloves could also refer to the vanity and transience of earthly life.<sup>63</sup> He based this suggestion on a sixteenth-century tradition, in which gloves were depicted next to skulls, hour-glasses and pieces of paper. But if gloves are not accompanied by symbols of vanity, this interpretation is not very probable. More generally gloves have been explained as alluding to status and displaying social welfare, but also as a means to protect personal hygiene.<sup>64</sup>

In Dutch seventeenth-century portraiture, sitters are wearing both gloves, holding both of them in the same hand or wearing only one glove of the pair. Whether the gloves are held or worn by the right or left hand is subject to variety. We, as modern viewers, may associate them with the gesture of taking off one's gloves in greeting or deliberately keeping them on as a sign of higher social rank. One of Herman Roodenburg's conclusions is that the ritual of shaking hands was not practiced in greeting in the upper classes, where instead it went together with bowing and doffing one's hat or cap. In communal records of the larger cities, however, shaking or clapping hands was a sign of confirmation or reconciliation in disagreements between different parties. The gesture seems to be related to concepts of friendship, brotherhood, peace, reconciliation or mutual agreement.<sup>65</sup> David R. Smith argues in his book *Masks of Wedlock* that hardly any seventeenth-century sitter is wearing gloves on both hands. He believes this is rooted in a medieval tradition in which taking off one's gloves is a token of friendship or a symbol of humility and openness. The fact that most sitters are holding the gloves in their hands seems to be a fashionable convention based on etiquette.<sup>66</sup>

De Winkel examined which connotations accessories, such as gloves, had in the eyes of contemporary viewers. She argues that gloves lost their original legal and liturgical significance during the seventeenth century and mainly became status symbols. Gloves were very widespread, even to such an extent that they were no longer suitable for the nobility in portraiture and eventually were also no longer included in portraits in the second half of the century.<sup>67</sup> The motif of the glove in the *Portrait of a Boy* should therefore not necessarily contain a deep symbolic meaning. But unquestionably the gloves in this painting were carefully selected to represent the boy's status.

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<sup>63</sup> Josua Bruyn, 'Over het 16-de en 17-de eeuwse portret in de Nederlanden als memento mori', *Oud Holland* 105 (1991), pp. 244-261.

<sup>64</sup> Maria Meyer, *Das Kostum auf niederländischen Bildern. Zum Modewandel in 17. Jahrhundert*, Münster 1986, p. 69.

<sup>65</sup> Herman Roodenburg, 'The 'hand of friendship'. Shaking hands and other gestures in the Dutch Republic', in: J. Bremmer & H. Roodenburg (ed.), *A Cultural History of Gesture. From Antiquity to the Present Day*, Cambridge 1991, pp. 152-189.

<sup>66</sup> David R. Smith, *Masks of Wedlock. Seventeenth-century Dutch Marriage Portraiture*, Ann Arbor 1982, pp. 72-81.

<sup>67</sup> De Winkel 2006, p. 87; she also quotes a letter from the painter Pieter Nason to Willem Frederik of 23 December 1662: "I have decided to omit the gloves in the copy (in his Highness of Orange's left hand in the original), because in my opinion such a burgher-like practice is in no way fitting for such a noble prince."; Du Mortier 1989, p. 48.

### **The Landscape, the Pose and the Cane**

Flinck's boy is placed in a landscape with a river or lake. The strange structure of beams and vegetation at right does not seem to have another function but to add balance to the composition. Because the plants and bushes are painted in a very sketchy and rough way, it is impossible to identify the species and to connect a certain iconographical meaning to it, such as is known to exist for ivy, thistles and flowers. Von Moltke believed the scenery may be reminiscent of the landscape of the Lower Rhine around Flinck's birthplace Cleves.<sup>68</sup> In a landscape drawing of 1642 by Flinck in the British Museum, we see a large tree at left and a deep river valley in the right background [fig. 4]. It has been suggested that this drawing also represents the region near Cleves.<sup>69</sup> The landscape in the painting is less hilly and is perhaps instead inspired by the scenery of Holland. In the second part of the 1630s Flinck also painted several landscapes. In the background of the painting there is a small church tower, but because of its scale it is not recognisable and probably not meant to refer to a specific location. The fact that the boy is situated in a realistic – in the sense of not fantasised – landscape wearing a contemporary costume, may indicate that his family wanted to show that they had the means to spend time in the countryside or owned an estate or business outside town.

Like many other children the boy is portrayed in full length. Overall his pose is rather static and tranquil, but Flinck has attempted to add a bit of movement by placing the boy's right foot in front of the other and by turning his body to the viewer. The boy has raised his right elbow with the draped cloak in an elegant manner and humbly holds his hand with the gloves and cane close to his body. The cane is very thin, long and almost fragile. It is made of bamboo as it reveals the characteristic segmented stem. Bamboo is a precious and exotic material that was imported to Holland through the trade of the Dutch East India Company (VOC). The origin and use of this accessory will receive further attention in the third chapter, as will the tradition and appearance of children in landscapes.

### **Problems of Identification: David Leeuw (1631/32-1703) as a Suggestion**

A recurrent problem with portraits is that sitters remain anonymous in many cases. If we can identify the portrayed person, we may gain a better understanding of the context in which the portrait was created and why a certain iconography was chosen. Usually it is a difficult task and the full reconstruction of the provenance is only incidentally successful. In this case, however, there are several indications that point in a clear direction. Based on the iconography, we have to look for a boy from the Mennonite circles of the liberal branch. His parents would almost certainly be involved in trade or some other business and perhaps own an estate outside town. Furthermore, the fact that the painting is by Flinck indicates that the patron was most likely from Amsterdam. The son of this patron must be a boy who was between six and ten years old in 1640.

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<sup>68</sup> Von Moltke 1965, p. 22.

<sup>69</sup> Govert Flinck, *Landscape with a large tree*, 1642, pen and brown ink and watercolour, 190x195 mm, British Museum, London; Martin Royalton-Kisch, *Catalogue of Drawings by Rembrandt and his School in the British Museum*, 2010, Flinck 2. (online publication).

In his article on the Mennonite community in Amsterdam and their relation to the art of Rembrandt and his circle, S.A.C. Dudok van Heel published a document that he connected to the Birmingham painting.<sup>70</sup> The document, dated 7 February 1653, reports the division of the painting collection of the Mennonite merchant Ameldonck Leeuw (1604-1647) and his wife Maria Rutgers (1603/4-1652) among their children after their deaths. An important fact is that Ameldonck was Flinck's direct cousin: Ameldonck's father was the brother of Flinck's mother. Among Flinck's works on the list there is "*Een conterfeitsel van David Leeuw door Flinck gedaen*" ("A portrait of David Leeuw made by Flinck") that was given to Ameldonck's son David (1631/32-1703). Dudok van Heel selected the portrait in the Barber Institute as the only possible candidate from Flinck's known oeuvre as it displays a boy of approximately seven to nine years of age in 1640 and thus matches David Leeuw's age in that year. As such this is a plausible starting point, but unfortunately Dudok van Heel does not present any arguments to support this suggestion.<sup>71</sup> Therefore another critical look must be taken at the material. The same archival document was already published in 1953 by P. van Eeghen in relation to a large family portrait by Abraham van den Tempel in the Rijksmuseum, which almost undoubtedly shows David Leeuw, his wife and their five children in 1671 [fig. 5].<sup>72</sup> The question is whether the boy and the man in the family portrait are in fact the same person and what is known about their common background.

There are several reasons to assume that the boy in the Barber Institute is indeed David Leeuw. First of all, the Leeuw family were Mennonites of the Waterlander branch. Dudok van Heel is right that the other portraits of boys by Flinck present no conceivable alternative. They are wearing fantasy costumes or are placed in pastoral settings, which were both very uncommon among the portraits of this religious group. Secondly, the boy has approximately the same age as David Leeuw in the year the painting was made. Recently it has come to light that Ameldonck had a cattle business and cattle pastures and that his family owned a property near Bennebroek with a house and a bleachery.<sup>73</sup> This is a third reason to believe that the identification is justifiable.

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<sup>70</sup> S.A.C. Dudok van Heel, 'Doopsgezinden en schilderkunst in de 17e eeuw. Leerlingen, opdrachtgevers en verzamelaars van Rembrandt', *Doopsgezinde Bijdragen / Doopsgezinde Historische Kring* 6 (1980), pp.105-123.

<sup>71</sup> Dudok van Heel 1980, p. 121: "Voor de familieportretten van de hand van Govert Flinck meen ik slechts één geschikte candidaat te hebben voor David Leeuw in een jongetje van acht à negen jaar uit 1640." The author does not explicitly mention that this 'candidate' is the painting in Birmingham; he only included an image of this portrait in his article. In the curatorial file of Flinck's painting at the Barber Institute there is a letter from Dudok van Heel in which he informs the museum about his identification.

<sup>72</sup> Abraham van den Tempel, *Portrait of David Leeuw (1631/1632-1703) and his family*, 1671, oil on canvas, 190x200 cm, Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam; P. van Eeghen, 'Abraham van de Tempel's Familiegroep in het Rijksmuseum', *Oud-Holland* 68 (1953), pp. 170-174. The identification of the persons in this family portrait is based on ancestral research of the last owner of the portrait, J.H. Willink van Bennebroek, who donated the portrait in 1902. The only candidates for a family with five children of the ages seen in the portrait of 1671 among the ancestors of the donor were David Leeuw and Cornelia Hooft; see also P. Visser, *Sporen van Menno. Het veranderende beeld van Menno Simons en de Nederlandse mennisten*, Krommenie 1996, p. 143.

<sup>73</sup> Jaap van der Veen, 'Hendrick Uylenburgh's art business. Production and trade between 1625 and 1655', in: Friso Lammertse & Jaap van der Veen, *Uylenburgh & Son. Art and commerce from Rembrandt to De Lairese 1625-1675*, exhib. cat. Museum Het Rembrandthuis, Amsterdam & Dulwich Picture Gallery, London 2006, Zwolle 2006, pp. 117-205, see p. 175.

Moreover, the Barber painting shows a great resemblance with another portrait by Flinck, namely that of his other cousin Dirck Jacobsz. Leeuw (1614-1652) of 1636 [fig. 6]. This is in the collection of the Mennonite Community in Amsterdam and Flinck's earliest known dated and signed work.<sup>74</sup> Dirck Leeuw is wearing a dark costume with a large cloak draped over his left shoulder and arm and the motif of the glove is the same as in the child portrait. The hat worn by Dirck Leeuw is not original and has been amended at a later stage.<sup>75</sup> Formerly, this would have been a hat with a broad rim according to the fashion of the mid-1630s. Dirck is also depicted in full length and is situated in a landscape. His pose is very similar to that of the boy as he seems to step forward, which adds to the movement and mobility within the portrait. The painting was cleaned in 2006 and this revealed a clear blue sky, but also that the man is holding some kind of fruit in his left hand.<sup>76</sup> These great resemblances at least mean that the young man and the boy belonged to the same circles of clients in Amsterdam and perhaps that they even were related to each other!

### **The Possible Provenance of the Painting**

Only the reconstruction of the provenance of the painting can prove that this identification is correct. Therefore it is useful to see how far it can indeed be recovered. The portrait of David Leeuw was commissioned by his father Ameldonck, who would have asked his direct cousin, the artist Govert Flinck, to paint this portrait. Since the patron and the painter were close relatives, the presence of any document confirming this is very unlikely to exist. Flinck may have portrayed the boy in 1640 at the age of about eight or nine. David inherited his own portrait in 1653 and it would probably be part of his household until his death.

David Leeuw married Cornelia Hooft (1631-1708) on 14 May 1651.<sup>77</sup> She was born at Weesp as the daughter of Pieter Hooft and Wijntje Schouten. She was related to the Mennonite branch of the Amsterdam Hooft regents and a niece of the poet Pieter Cornelisz. Hooft (1581-1647). Joost van den Vondel (1587-1679) wrote a poem to celebrate their marriage, entitled *De Leeuw Aen Bandt*.<sup>78</sup> David was a merchant trading with Russia. His family lived in a house built by the famous architect Philips Vingboons (c.1607-1678), "*daer de Leeuw in den gevel staet*", on the Rokin in Amsterdam (currently number 95). In 1684 David bought the estate De Rijp near Heemstede for 3,000 guilders, after he had been renting it for several years. He converted the name of the estate into Leeuw-en-Hooft (later

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<sup>74</sup> Govert Flinck, *Portrait of Dirck Jacobsz. Leeuw (1614-1652)*, 1636, oil on canvas, 65x47,5 cm, Het Rijpenhofje, Amsterdam (on loan to Museum Het Rembrandthuis, Amsterdam); I.H. van Eeghen, 'Ongrijpbare jeugd. Bij een portret van Govert Flinck', *Bulletin van het Rijksmuseum* 25 (1977), pp. 55-59, see p. 59. In inventories of the Mennonite community his name was changed into Dominus Jacob Leeuwen Dirksz, Jonas Jacob Leeuwen Dirksz and even Jonas van Leeuwen. See the portrait under one of these names in von Moltke 1965, cat. no. 211, and Sumowski 1983, cat. no. 685.

<sup>75</sup> S.J. Gudlaugsson, 'De datering van de schilderijen van Gerard ter Borch', *Nederlands Kunsthistorisch Jaarboek* 2 (1948/1949), pp. 235-267, see p. 238.

<sup>76</sup> Van der Veen 2006, p. 169.

<sup>77</sup> Appendix A, document no. 9.

<sup>78</sup> Joost van den Vondel, *De Leeuw Aen Bandt. Voor David Leeuw En Cornelia Hooft*, 1651, reprinted in: *Verscheide Nederduytsche Gedichten*, Amsterdam 1651, p. 35.

Leeuwenhooft). His family lived in great prosperity, as more than one million guilders were to be divided among his children after his death.<sup>79</sup> In Kees Zandvliet's list of the 250 most wealthy persons of the Golden Age, David Leeuw occupies the thirteenth position, leaving many other famous Dutchmen, such as Michiel Adriaensz. de Ruyter (1607-1676) on place 116, Constantijn Huygens (1596-1687) on place 142 and Jan Six (1618-1700) on place 169, behind him.<sup>80</sup> This indicates that David Leeuw was indeed one of the extremely rich inhabitants of the Dutch Republic. Together David and Cornelia had five surviving children: Maria (1653-1721), Pieter (1657-1677), Weyntje (1659-1728), Cornelia (1663-1716) and Susanna (1669-1726). As a widow without children Maria moved back in with her parents in 1702. Cornelia never married. In their final testament, dated 9 March 1702, the parents decided that the two sisters would be given the house on the Rokin and the estate near Heemstede.<sup>81</sup>

After the death of Cornelia in 1716, a testament was made by Maria on 17 September 1717 declaring that the "*portraicten van de ouders en voorouders*" (portraits of the parents and ancestors) and "*mede het familiestuck*" (including the family piece, probably the painting by van den Tempel) were to remain in the family.<sup>82</sup> The portrait of David Leeuw painted by Flinck would be owned by Maria at that moment. In the document it is stated that after her death the portraits should go to the oldest relative of her generation and then to the other members of that generation, that is first to Weyntje and then to Susanna. Only after the death of all these relatives the paintings may pass on to the next generation, which means to Weyntje's children. By the time of Maria's death in 1721 her two sisters were still alive. Since Weyntje was the eldest of the two, she received her father's portrait collection. She also inherited the estate Leeuw-en-Hooft.<sup>83</sup> Weyntje outlived Susanna and thus several paintings were given to her eldest son David Leeuw van Lennep Arnoutsz. (1683-1745), according to the regulations of Maria's testament. The family portrait by van den Tempel was almost certainly among them. Whether David Leeuw van Lennep owned the youth portrait of his grandfather as well is not sure and from here it is lost.<sup>84</sup>

In reverse, the earliest thing that is known about the portrait in the Barber Institute is that it was in the collection of the famous British surgeon and etcher Sir Francis Seymour Haden (1818-1910), though not exactly at which moment. Before his death, Haden sold the painting to his brother Charles Sydenham Haden Esq., who lived in France. The granddaughter of the latter put the painting

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<sup>79</sup> Van Eeghen 1953, p. 171-172; see the list of David Leeuw's testaments in Appendix A. See also A. van Damme, *De buitenplaatsen te Heemstede, Berkenrode en Bennebroek 1628-1811*, Haarlem 1903, pp. 23-27; Christan Bertram, *Noord-Hollands Arcadia. Ruim 400 Noord-Hollandse buitenplaatsen in tekeningen, prenten en kaarten uit de Provinciale Atlas Noord-Holland*, Alphen aan de Rijn 2005, pp. 170-171.

<sup>80</sup> Kees Zandvliet, *De 250 rijksten van de Gouden Eeuw. Kapitaal, macht, familie en levensstijl*, Amsterdam 2006, see p. XL + p. 34.

<sup>81</sup> Appendix A, document no. 13; after David's death in 1703 and of his wife in 1708, their two oldest daughters, Maria and Cornelia, made a testamentary document in 1709 and became each other's heirs, see Appendix A, document no. 16; the only son, Pieter, had died thirty years earlier.

<sup>82</sup> Van Eeghen 1953, p. 172; see Appendix A, document no. 17.

<sup>83</sup> Stichting Familiearchief De Clercq ([www.familiedeclercq.nl](http://www.familiedeclercq.nl); consulted 4 May 2011).

<sup>84</sup> For a reconstruction of the provenance see Appendix D.

on sale in 1940 in London and later that year it was acquired by the Barber Institute in Birmingham.<sup>85</sup> Haden is mainly known for his etchings and for his books and articles on the art of etching in general. His writings were of great importance in promoting and invigorating this medium in the Etching Revival in Britain. His role as founder and president of the Society of Painter-Etchers in London in 1880 was also essential in this context. Since his return from Italy in 1844 he started to collect old master prints.<sup>86</sup> He had a great collection of Rembrandt's etchings and was responsible for the Rembrandt exhibition at the Burlington Fine Arts Club in 1877.<sup>87</sup> As opposed to previous catalogues, Haden preferred a chronological order of the prints rather than an arrangement according to themes or subjects. He believed that this is the only way to study Rembrandt's development as a printmaker.<sup>88</sup> Haden was a pioneer of the scientific criticism of Rembrandt's etchings and his catalogue was essential in dividing Rembrandt's work from that of his school.<sup>89</sup> The fact that a painting by one of Rembrandt's most prominent pupils, Govert Flinck, was in Haden's collection as well must definitely be seen in the light of his activities as Rembrandt's critic and admirer.

### **The Context of Patronage: Leeuw and Flinck**

Because the provenance of the painting cannot be fully reconstructed, the identification has to remain hypothetical. In any way it is still useful to see what is known about the Leeuw family and the art works they owned, but also their relation to Flinck. Govert Teunisz. Flinck was born in Cleves in 1615 as the son of Teunis Govaertsz. Flinck. The name of his mother is not known, but assumingly she was a daughter of a certain Ameldonck Leeuw, a minister of the Mennonite congregation in Cologne, but also a painter. Flinck's brother was called Ameldonck, which was not a common name, after his grandfather.<sup>90</sup> Although the Leeuw family originated from the Rhineland, several members moved via Emmerich to Amsterdam and Haarlem, where they became wealthy merchants.<sup>91</sup> In seventeenth-century Amsterdam there were several Mennonite families, such as de Neufville, van Lennep, Bierens, Rutgers, de Flines and Roeters. Most of them were merchants and owned properties on the

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<sup>85</sup> For all the documentation on the acquisition and details of the Haden provenance of the painting see the curatorial file at the Barber Institute of Fine Arts, University of Birmingham.

<sup>86</sup> Robin Garton, Gerald Volker Grimm & Gerhard Vincent van der Grinten, *Rembrandt und die englischen Malerradierer des 19. Jahrhunderts / Rembrandt and the english painter-etchers of the 19th century*, exhib. cat. Museum Schloss Moyland, Bedburg-Hau & Museum Het Rembrandthuis, Amsterdam 2005, Bedburg-Hau 2005, p. 14.

<sup>87</sup> Sir Francis Seymour Haden, *The etched work of Rembrandt. A monograph, written as an introduction to a chronological exhibition of Rembrandt's etchings - being the first of its kind - held at the Burlington Fine Arts Club, May, 1877*, London 1879.

<sup>88</sup> Erik Hinterding, Ger Luijten & Martin Royaltou-Kisch (ed.), *Rembrandt the Printmaker*, exhib. cat. British Museum, London & Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam 2000-2001, London 2000, p. 9.

<sup>89</sup> Alison McQueen, *The Rise of the Cult of Rembrandt. Reinventing an Old Master in Nineteenth-Century France*, Amsterdam 2003, p. 226.

<sup>90</sup> See appendix B for the family tree of the Flinck, Leeuw and van Lennep families.

<sup>91</sup> Petra Jeroense, 'Govaert Flinck (1615-1660). Eine Künstlerbiographie', *Niederdeutsche Beiträge zur Kunstgeschichte* 36 (1997), pp. 73-112, see p. 73-74. See also: Nanne van der Zijpp, 'Leeuw (Leeu, Leu) family', in: *Global Anabaptist Mennonite Encyclopedia Online*, 1957. (<http://www.gameo.org/encyclopedia/contents/L43015.html>; consulted 4 May 2011).

Keizersgracht, Herengracht and Singel. Eventually many members of those families were related because of intermarriages.<sup>92</sup>

Flinck must have been around fourteen years old when he was taken to Leeuwarden as a pupil of the Mennonite minister and painter Lambert Jacobsz. in 1629/1630. Arnold Houbraken (1660-1719), who recorded the biographies of seventeenth-century painters in 1718-1721, reports that Flinck went to Amsterdam, because some of his wealthy relatives were living there (“*wyl hy daar zeer welvarende Bloedvrienden had wonen*”).<sup>93</sup> These relatives included his mother’s brother Jacob Leeuw and his family. Flinck’s uncle was living on the Fluwele Burgwal, today known as the Oudezijds Voorburgwal, together with his wife Geertgen Jacobsdr. and their children.

One of the artist’s earliest works is the portrait of his cousin Dirck Leeuw, the second son of Jacob Leeuw, mentioned earlier. On 7 September 1639 Dirck and his wife Maria Anslo (1619-1702) were baptised in the Remonstrant community, but they still had a good relation with their Mennonite relatives. As Flinck married the Remonstrant woman Ingitta or Ingetje Thoveling (1616-1651) in 1645, he became a member of the same community as well a few months after her death in 1651.<sup>94</sup> Dirck Leeuw and Flinck had also become each other’s neighbours. Flinck bought two houses, situated alongside each other, on the Lauriergracht in Amsterdam on 26 May 1644 for 10,000 guilders.<sup>95</sup> When signing his prenuptial agreement, Flinck was accompanied by his father and his Leeuw cousins.<sup>96</sup>

That Flinck had a close relationship with the Leeuw family is also stated by the fact that Ameldonck Leeuw, the first son of Jacob Leeuw from an earlier marriage and Dirck’s half-brother, owned many works by his cousin. Ameldonck and Maria lived in a house on the Nieuwezijds Voorburgwal.<sup>97</sup> After the deaths of Ameldonck in 1647 and Maria in 1652, their collection of paintings and other items was divided in 1653 among their four surviving children: Jacob (1636-1704), Agneta or Angen(i)eta (1630-1694), Barbara (1629-1682), and David (1631/1632-1703).<sup>98</sup> The family owned several works by Flinck, at least consisting of three portraits, three landscapes, one study of an old man, and two history paintings being a crucifixion and a scene from the life of the prophet Elijah. Because Ameldonck’s collection contained so many paintings by contemporary artists, such as Simon de Vlieger (1600/1601-1653), Nicolaes Moeyaert (c.1592/1593-1655), Pieter Claesz

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<sup>92</sup> J.M. Welcker, ‘Het dagelijks brood. De doopsgezinden, de economie en de demografie’, in: Groenveld, Jacobszoon & Verheus 1981, pp. 195-218, for Amsterdam in the seventeenth century see pp. 205-208.

<sup>93</sup> Arnold Houbraken, *De groote schouburgh der Nederlantsche konstschilders en schilderessen*, 3 vols., Amsterdam 1718-1721, p. 20.

<sup>94</sup> Dudok van Heel 1980, p. 110.

<sup>95</sup> S.A.C. Dudok van Heel, ‘Het “Schilderhuis” van Govert Flinck en de kunsthandel van Uylenburgh aan de Lauriergracht te Amsterdam’, *Jaarboek van het Genootschap Amstelodamum* 74 (1982), pp. 70-90, see p. 70. When Flinck made his prenuptial agreement on 2 June 1645, he brings in 16,000 guilders, consisting of “*twee huysen ende haere erven gestaen ende gelegen op de Lauweriersgracht aen de noortzijde.*”

<sup>96</sup> Dudok van Heel 1980, p. 110.

<sup>97</sup> She was not the daughter of the wealthy merchant Nicolaes Ruts, portrayed by Rembrandt in 1631, as stated by Dudok van Heel, but of David Ruts and Josina Lambrechts (c.1565-1638), see Appendix A, document no. 29 + 6; this would also explain why Ameldonck and Maria’s son was named David, namely after his grandfather on his mother’s side. Maria remarried Jan le Pla at Leiden in 1650.

<sup>98</sup> See Appendix A, document no. 5; see the transcript, translation and comments in Appendix C.



(c.1597/1598-1660), Jacob van Ruisdael (c.1628/1629-1682), Jacob Backer (1608-1651), Rembrandt and Adriaan van Ostade (1610-1685), he may be typified as a true art collector.

### **A Mennonite Painting in Flinck's Early Career**

If we want to fully understand the *Portrait of a Boy*, we have to consider its position in the oeuvre of the artist. Every publication on Flinck refers to his biography by Houbraken. Flinck was born as a son of a merchant, who, as the story goes, did not want his son to be an artist, which is a common *topos* in artists' biographies. Houbraken reports that Flinck arrived in Lambert Jacobsz.'s workshop, where he was introduced to Jacob Backer, also a Mennonite and Flinck's senior by seven years.<sup>99</sup> Since Backer was more experienced in his training, he would have left a significant mark on Flinck's time as an apprentice in Leeuwarden.<sup>100</sup> None of Flinck's works from this period are known today.<sup>101</sup>

Houbraken mentions that Backer and Flinck, as advanced in their art that they could fly on their own wings, travelled to Amsterdam together. But the discussion as to when exactly Backer and Flinck moved to Amsterdam and whether they actually went together is still ongoing.<sup>102</sup> Houbraken states that since Rembrandt's style was highly praised at the time, Flinck deemed it necessary to study with this master for one year. Houbraken's remarks about the two young men travelling from Leeuwarden to Amsterdam have been misunderstood for a very long time: only Flinck studied with Rembrandt and Backer did not.<sup>103</sup> Flinck's training in Amsterdam opens a very difficult discussion on Rembrandt's workshop. Especially Rembrandt's early years in Amsterdam and the nature and size of his workshop have faced great speculation in art-historical publications.<sup>104</sup> Rembrandt moved to the house and workshop of the Mennonite art dealer Hendrik Uylenburgh (c.1585-1661) on the Sint Anthoniesbreestraat, which is sometimes referred to as Uylenburgh's Academy housing several assistants and painters. The general impression is that the art dealer provided Rembrandt with commissions for portraits and paintings. Rembrandt was introduced to Uylenburgh's Mennonite clients and he became the teacher of the nameless painters that were already active in this workshop. As a result of Rembrandt's immediate success, the workshop ran a very profitable business.<sup>105</sup>

Because of the discussion, the position of Flinck as an apprentice in Rembrandt's workshop is not easy to determine. Dudok van Heel supposes that Uylenburgh, who had a good relation with his

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<sup>99</sup> For works by Lambert Jacobsz. see: Kurt Bauch, *Jakob Adriaensz Backer. Ein Rembrandtschüler aus Friesland*, Berlin 1926, pp. 12-15, 69-75. For biographical information, archival documents, the Mennonite community in Amsterdam and Leeuwarden and additional works by Lambert Jacobsz. see H.F. Wijnman, 'Nieuwe gegevens omtrent den schilder Lambert Jacobsz. I', *Oud Holland* 47 (1930), pp. 145-157 and H.F. Wijnman, 'Nieuwe gegevens omtrent den schilder Lambert Jacobsz. II', *Oud Holland* 51 (1934), pp. 241-255. Sumowski 1983, p. 998: Flinck arrived in Lambert's workshop in 1629.

<sup>100</sup> See Jaap van der Veen, 'Jacob Backer, een schets van zijn leven', in: P. van den Brink, J. van der Veen, H. Becker, B. van den Boogert, *Jacob Backer (1608/9-1651)*, exhib. cat. Museum Het Rembrandthuis, Amsterdam & Suermondt-Ludwig-Museum, Aachen 2008-2009, Amsterdam 2008, pp. 11-25, see p. 17.

<sup>101</sup> Von Moltke 1965, p. 12.

<sup>102</sup> Bauch 1926; Von Moltke 1965, pp. 10-12; Sumowski 1983, p. 998; van der Veen 2008, pp. 11-25+17-18.

<sup>103</sup> Exhib. cat. Amsterdam & Aachen 2008-2009.

<sup>104</sup> W. Liedtke, 'Rembrandt's "Workshop" revisited', *Oud Holland* 117 (2004), pp. 48-73.

<sup>105</sup> Liedtke 2004, p. 61.

fellow art dealer Lambert Jacobsz., attracted Flinck to come to Amsterdam.<sup>106</sup> Van der Veen suggests that Flinck's relatives of the Leeuw family also had contacts with the Uylenburghs.<sup>107</sup> In Uylenburgh's workshop Flinck was working as Rembrandt's assistant and soon became a successful follower of his style.<sup>108</sup> After Rembrandt's departure from Uylenburgh in 1635, Flinck may have joined him for an additional year of training as Rembrandt was only allowed to have pupils of his own after becoming a member of the guild in the autumn of 1634.<sup>109</sup> Others believe that Flinck went to Amsterdam as late as 1635 and that he actually stayed with Rembrandt only for one year.

Flinck still lived in Uylenburgh's house for several years, at least until 1644 and from that moment he had his own workshop.<sup>110</sup> The earliest signed and dated work is the portrait of his cousin Dirck Leeuw of 1636. Although this painting was made for a member of Flinck's own family, it is usually regarded as the starting point of his independent career. Von Moltke believes that Flinck's early works express a certain degree of clumsiness, hesitation, lack of inner freedom and self-assurance, but that it is also possible to detect Flinck's own inventions.<sup>111</sup> Sumowski is in general more negative about Flinck's oeuvre and not only his early paintings, but also his later works.<sup>112</sup> Yet the quality of his paintings was soon recognised and we must not forget how popular Flinck had become in his own day. His growing reputation can partly be ascribed to the portrait commissions he received from the Mennonite community in the following period. Although he did paint several history pieces in his early years, most works are in fact portraits, some being much indebted to Rembrandt's style. His most successful self-portrait was painted in 1639, in which he copied the pose Rembrandt applied in his own self-portraits.<sup>113</sup>

Important commissions that boosted his popularity were several militia pieces he painted in the late 1640s. In this way he became very well known in Amsterdam. The shift away from Rembrandt's style to a style closer to Anthony van Dyck from around 1646 has frequently been pointed out.<sup>114</sup> Another development is stated by Houbraken's remark that Flinck was "*geneigt tot grooter ondernemingen*", his will to conduct greater deeds. This is usually explained as Flinck's desire

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<sup>106</sup> S.A.C. Dudok van Heel, *De jonge Rembrandt onder tijdgenoten. Godsdienst en schilderkunst in Leiden en Amsterdam*, diss. Radboud Universiteit Nijmegen, Rotterdam 2006, p. 202; for archival documents confirming the professional and personal relation between Uylenburgh and Lambert Jacobsz. see Wijnman 1934, pp. 251-253.

<sup>107</sup> Van der Veen 2006, pp. 173-175.

<sup>108</sup> Van der Veen 2006, pp. 160-169.

<sup>109</sup> Dudok van Heel 2006, p. 202.

<sup>110</sup> Flinck lived in the art dealer's house since 1637, until he bought the two houses on the Lauriergracht in 1644. Eventually these houses were rented by Uylenburgh after Flinck's death. Since Uylenburgh himself died within two months, the house was rented by his son Gerrit, see Dudok van Heel 1982.

<sup>111</sup> Von Moltke 1965, pp. 15-16.

<sup>112</sup> Sumowski 1983, p. 999.

<sup>113</sup> Govert Flinck, *Self-portrait aged Twenty-Four*, 1639, oil on panel, 66x54 cm, National Gallery, London; see C. J. de Bruyn Kops Mr, 'Vergeten zelfportretten van Govert Flinck en Bartholomeus van der Helst', *Bulletin van het Rijksmuseum* 13 (1965), pp. 20-29.

<sup>114</sup> For a recent study see Hilbert Lootsma, 'Tracing a Pose. Govert Flinck and the Emergence of the van Dyckian Mode of Portraiture in Amsterdam', *Simiolus* 33 (2008), pp. 221-236.

to create more history pieces than portraits.<sup>115</sup> The height of this development took place when the burgomaster of Amsterdam commissioned Flinck in 1659 to paint twelve large-scale paintings for the newly-built town hall on the Dam. Although Flinck made several sketches, he unfortunately died within the next year and was never able to finish this huge project.

In the *Portrait of a Boy* Flinck's style was still very much indebted to that of his teacher. The brushstrokes are very loose in some areas of the painting, such as the costume, the landscape and the vegetation at right. The cane also consists of a sequence of separate brushstrokes in ochre paint. In some parts the paint is so thin that we can see the ground layers. Yet the face and left hand are very refined and detailed. The Birmingham portrait must be situated in Flinck's oeuvre on the point that he had fully established himself as an individual painter after four years. He had mastered Rembrandt's style, but also knew how to incorporate his own inventions and visions in his works. On the other hand, the painting emerged before Flinck's shift to a more international style that would become more and more apparent in the five upcoming years. In Flinck's oeuvre it takes a unique position as it is one of the very few portraits of individuals situated in a landscape wearing contemporary costumes. Throughout his life Flinck painted several children, for example a girl in a fantasy costume holding a dog in her arms and a young black archer.<sup>116</sup> In the following chapters we will see what other solutions Flinck had for the portrayal of children around 1640. Unfortunately, the famous master forger Han van Meegeren (1889-1947) re-used one of Flinck's canvases with a representation of three children for a forgery.<sup>117</sup>

We have approached the portrait from various angles, namely its iconography, its identification, its possible context within a private collection in the seventeenth century, its inheritance and provenance, but also its position in the oeuvre of the painter. There is still some uncertainty about the identification of the boy, despite Dudok van Heel's suggestion of 1980. It is very reasonable that the portrait was made in Mennonite circles, of which Flinck was part in his early years in Amsterdam. With respect to Mennonite views on life and art, it is understandable that the boy was portrayed in a contemporary modest costume. But if we accept that the boy is indeed David Leeuw, we must realise that, despite being members of the Mennonite community, the Leeuw family probably was not very strict with regard to the rules. Both Dirck Leeuw and Flinck converted later in their lives. The fact that Ameldonck and Dirck commissioned portraits at all and that they possessed so many paintings is in itself an indication of their liberal approach to art. Given the extreme wealth David would acquire later

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<sup>115</sup> Tom van der Molen, 'Govert Flinck: 'geneigt tot groeter ondernemingen'', *Amstelodamum. Orgaan van het Genootschap Amstelodamum* 94 (2007), pp. 3-11.

<sup>116</sup> The girl with the dog survived in various copies: Govert Flinck, *Young Girl with a Dog*, late 1630s, oil on canvas, 60x54 cm, Hamburger Kunsthalle, Hamburg; other versions: previously Fred. Muller & Co (1905), Duke of Abercorne (1961), Earl of Crawford and Balcarres, Kunsthaus Zürich, Fuji Art Museum, Tokyo; Govert Flinck, *A Young Archer*, c.1639-1640, oil on panel, 66x51 cm, Wallace Collection, London.

<sup>117</sup> Laarmann 2002, p. 56: Govert Flinck, *The children of the Stadholder Frederik Hendrik*, signed *G. Flinck*, c.1650-1660, oil on canvas, 202x222 cm, previously on art market Paris; changed into Han van Meegeren, *Last Supper* (in the style of Johannes Vemeer), 1939, oil on canvas, 146x267 cm, private collection, Switzerland.

in his life, we may assume that his lifestyle was also not very much restricted by his religious beliefs. If the boy is indeed the same man as in the family portrait of 1671, we can see how much the attitude of Mennonites towards art and their costumes had changed over the course of one generation. The costumes of all family members are no longer very modest and the children wear very colourful outfits. Additionally, they also followed the latest mode in portraiture that preferred the international style of van Dyck over that of Rembrandt's followers.

Given the large size of the painting – it is quite something to have your son portrayed on such a monumental scale – the patron must have been very wealthy. Perhaps it is this wealth he wanted his son to partake in. Concerning the tension between the adult and childlike features of the portrait we may state that the boy has abandoned his typical children's costume and has come to the age when he is dressed as an adult, a practice to which we will return later. His gentlemanlike pose also reflects his future role and the cane is a showy accessory not particularly suitable for children perhaps. Yet his blushing cheeks, the hesitation in his smile, his large brown eyes and his tiny shoes all accentuate the fact that he has not yet grown to adulthood and is still quite boyish after all. It is exactly this tension that will be placed in a broader context in the next chapters.

Finck's *Portrait of a Boy* displays some features that could indeed be characterised as belonging to the realm of adults, such as his elegant costume, his large broad-rimmed hat, his pair of gloves and the slender cane, but also his formal pose. The question arises whether it was common to present children with some adult-like qualities and whether it can indeed be claimed that children were usually portrayed as 'miniature adults' according to the conventions of adult portraiture. In relation to child portraits, it seems quite a natural choice to concentrate on the portraits of their parents that were created for a similar context, namely the private sphere of the home. It is impossible, however, to give a complete overview of all the conventions adopted by adults, because there are many different portrait types, formats and iconographies. Before a comparison can be made between children and adults in Dutch seventeenth-century portraits and a similarity or difference in their conventions could be detected, it is necessary to explore what in fact a portrait is. At first glance, this seems a rather uncomplicated question. A portrait is a representation of a specific person created by an artist. Nevertheless, it is possible to delve deeper into the problems of the definition of a portrait, its functioning and its interpretation. For that reason some of the underlying mechanisms of portraiture will be discussed. These will shed light on the difficulties, dangers and pitfalls the art historian has to overcome in the analysis of this genre.

### **Approaches to Portraiture: Production and the Broader Context**

In a thesis where portraits form the primary object of research, it is necessary and useful to look at the methods and approaches that have been proposed and practiced in the study of portraiture, but also at the questions that are relevant to this artistic discipline. Foremost, art historians have examined the oeuvres of single painters and the recurrent motifs, style, routine, themes, manner of painting, composition and quality throughout their work.<sup>118</sup> The reconstruction of the oeuvre of a portraitist is usually based on close stylistic comparison connected to information found in, for example, archival documents. The art historian may rely on auxiliary resources, such as the history of costumes, inscriptions, heraldry, provenance research, sales catalogues, genealogical and archival research, prints after portraits and similarities with other portraits of the same sitter in order to identify the portrayed persons. In this way it is possible to gain an impression of the clients of the painter and their meaning for the successes in his career. In the light of patronage and production, connections must be made between pendants, series and group paintings, but also with copies, replicas and variations. Prices paid for portraits may also be taken into account. The situation of a portraitist may be compared to the activities of other artists in the same town and the local state of portraiture can be investigated.

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<sup>118</sup> For the elements that need to be studied with regard to portrait production see Rudi Ekkart, *Portrettisten en Portretten. Studies over portretkunst in Holland 1575-1650*, diss. University of Amsterdam 1997, pp. 1-29.

Although it is essential to make an inventory of the material, it will not suffice to ask questions of who, where and when. Besides the production details, there is also a focus on broader questions. Why did the genre become so popular? What was the role portraits needed to fulfil, what was their function in public buildings and the home and where were they displayed? How should specific iconographies be interpreted? Which conventions should be taken into consideration by the painter and what were the expectations of the patron and viewer? How could portraits help painters to position themselves on the market? And what are the differences and similarities between portraiture and other artistic genres? Furthermore, portraits can be studied against the background of contemporary art theory, but also against ideas prevalent in the society they materialised from.

### **Mechanisms of Convention in Adult Portraiture**

Over the last three decades, increased attention has been given to marriage and family portraiture in the Dutch seventeenth century. More theoretical authors often pose the same central questions: What do portraits tell us about the character of the sitter? To what degree do portraits reflect ‘realism’ in the sense that they represent actual persons? Do portraits inform us about the social ideas behind marriage or family life in the seventeenth century? What is the relation between the formal aspects of a portrait and its content? And also, how is meaning created by a portrait or how are meanings attached to it? We, as modern viewers, often believe that a portrait can reveal the sitter’s character. Even today this is one of the requirements we impose on a successful portrait. We also believe that portraitists paint specific individual human beings and that their individuality lies in what we call ‘character’. Nevertheless, it could also be argued that a portrait only captures one single instant and that the momentary emotional expression found in the portrait cannot expose the sitter’s character as a whole. Even though an artist is believed to be able to provide an image of a characteristic pose or attitude of the sitter, this does not imply that the sitter’s soul is expressed in the portrait.<sup>119</sup>

In 1982 David R. Smith’s publication on Dutch seventeenth-century marriage portraiture appeared, entitled *Masks of Wedlock*. His central point is that portraits are social masks and that the character of the sitter is “a relational meaning theatrically performed in front of an audience”.<sup>120</sup> Smith attempts to define the formal or pictorial conventions that reflect contemporary ideas on marriage and the relation between husband and wife. Generally, the sitters are portrayed as being moderate, sober and considerate and reveal restraint and calmness through pictorial formulas. Husbands are, according to Smith, usually more active and connected to public life, whereas wives are portrayed in a more passive way in a setting that unites them with the domestic context. The mechanism Smith describes is that the sitters play social roles in their portraits, which are dictated by a collective and broadly accepted norm of marriage ethics and which are manifestations of the respective positions of both

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<sup>119</sup> P.J. Vinken & E. de Jongh, ‘De boosaardigheid van Hals’ regenten en regentessen’, *Oud Holland* 78 (1963), pp. 1–26, see pp. 5+9.

<sup>120</sup> Smith 1982, p. 9. See also Harry Berger, *Manhood, Marriage & Mischief. Rembrandt’s ‘Night Watch’ and Other Dutch Group Portraits*, New York 2007 who uses and transforms some of Smith’s ideas.

husband and wife within marriage. The roles need to correspond to the current decorum and the rules of etiquette and they need to answer to the expectations of the viewer. Thus they become highly stereotypical. The meaning of the portrait is created through an encounter between both parties: sitter and viewer. Smith uses elements such as pose, attributes, format, facial expressions, composition and the use of light to illustrate the large degree of conventionality in Dutch marriage portraits. On what grounds was the selection from this range of elements made in order to mediate a message the sitter was satisfied about and that answered to his or her own personal wishes?

The influential exhibition *Portretten van echt en trouw* was organised by Eddy de Jongh in 1986. The author asks the question, among many others, on which criteria the selection was based. De Jongh believes that the wishes of the patron ordained the outcome. If the painter had any influence as well depended on the relation between patron and artist, but also on the portraitist's creativity and inventiveness and the extent to which the patron allowed him to express this.<sup>121</sup> But besides the stereotypical and accepted role, should the likeness of the sitter be realistic, true-to-life and recognisable as well? According to de Jongh, resemblance was very important, first, because the face was considered to be the mirror of the soul and hence could signify a dignified spirit, and second, because it was deemed to be shaped after God's own likeness.<sup>122</sup>

In several respects, de Jongh profoundly differs from Smith in his ideas. The main problem lies in the interpretation of both facial expressions and attributes and their relation to contemporary ideas on family life.<sup>123</sup> Smith believes that even minor differences or delicate nuances in pose, gesture and facial expression can contain significant meaning and that the positioning of husband and wife on the panel or canvas may inform us about their mutual relation. De Jongh states that facial expressions do not contain any information about the underlying ethics of marriage.<sup>124</sup> De Jongh concentrates on the iconological approach to gestures and attributes and interprets them in an emblematic way. He has been accused of overlooking seemingly irrelevant aspects, for example an apparently neutral pose or the lack of remarkable attributes that immediately signal the indispensable presence of a *zinnebeeldige* or emblematic meaning. In his iconological approach de Jongh searches for symbolic meanings outside the painting in the broader cultural world of ideas present in literature and other references. This approach is not altogether without dangers as symbols can bear multiple meanings.

One of the major issues of the discussion on Dutch art is the problem to define realism. Lyckle de Vries believes that the realism found in Dutch paintings is not simply copied from real life as it were, but is strongly manipulated and subject to selection.<sup>125</sup> This issue is also essential in portraiture. We may wonder how a balance was achieved between the individuality of the actual sitter and the

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<sup>121</sup> Eddy de Jongh, *Portretten van echt en trouw. Huwelijk en gezin in de Nederlandse kunst van de zeventiende eeuw*, exhib. cat. Frans Halsmuseum, Haarlem 1986, Zwolle 1986, p. 19.

<sup>122</sup> De Jongh 1986, pp. 20-21.

<sup>123</sup> For the limitations of interpreting facial expressions and gestures see Vinken & de Jongh 1963.

<sup>124</sup> De Jongh 1986, p. 36.

<sup>125</sup> Lyckle de Vries, 'The changing face of realism', in: David Freedberg & Jan de Vries (ed.), *Art in History. History in Art*, Chicago 1991, pp. 209-244.

recognisable stereotype role. In her review of Smith's book, Susan Donahue Kuretsky disagrees with his definition of portraits as social masks, because the portraits themselves are a proof of "a striking new sense of individuality and immediacy".<sup>126</sup> Louis van Tilborgh also strongly criticises Smith for confusing two elements, namely the particular behaviour and sentiments of the sitter with their official attitude and the role allocated to them by society.<sup>127</sup> At the time of the publications by Smith and de Jongh numerous sitters were still anonymous. Purely pictorial features were usually the starting point for their interpretation. Over the years, scholars have been able to identify many sitters and have used the biographical information as a tool to understand gestures and attributes within the portrait. The importance assigned to identification has increased. De Jongh and others after him acknowledged that the reconstruction of the identity and biography is crucial in the study of portraiture.

In response to the above-mentioned questions, Ann Jensen Adams proposed an alternative approach. In the first place, she explains that viewers have a very strong reaction to representations of human figures. She argues that viewers often believe that they are in the presence of an actual person, but, in fact, they are overpowered by the illusion and are unaware of the artificiality and schematisation of the depicted figure.<sup>128</sup> The portrait is not an actual or 'real' person and the likeness is always selected, changed, manipulated and idealised. In addition, Adams states that the meaning of the portrait "is produced by the infinite number of systems of belief or knowledge – sometimes called discourses – that they help to produce".<sup>129</sup> This means that a portrait is understood because all the parties (patrons, painters, viewers) participate in the same discourse or paradigm. But discourses change over time and numerous discourses exist simultaneously and are, especially in the past, difficult or even impossible to recover. The task of the art historian is to disclose them as fully as possible. Adams also focuses on the function of the portrait as a creator or carrier of the identity of the sitter. The painter translates his subjective observation of the sitter into paint and thus takes part in the process of the formation of the sitter's identity that is comprehended by the public. The identity that is perceived by the viewer also contributes to his or her own self-image.<sup>130</sup>

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<sup>126</sup> Susan Donahue Kuretsky, 'Review of Smith 1982', *Renaissance Quarterly* 37 (1984), pp. 274-276.

<sup>127</sup> Louis van Tilborgh, 'Review of Smith 1982', *Oud Holland* 100 (1986), pp. 154-156.

<sup>128</sup> Ann Jensen Adams, 'The Three-Quarter Life-Sized Portrait in Seventeenth-Century Holland. The Cultural Functions of *Tranquilitas*', in: Wayne Franits (ed.), *Looking at Seventeenth-Century Dutch Art. Realism Reconsidered*, Cambridge 1997, pp. 158-174+234-238, see p. 161. Adams discussed these matters more elaborately in Ann Jensen Adams, *Public Faces and Private Identities in Seventeenth-Century Holland. Portraiture and the Production of Community*, Cambridge 2009.

<sup>129</sup> Adams 1997, p. 161.

<sup>130</sup> For another interpretation of portraiture and identity see Joanna Woodall, 'Sovereign bodies. The reality of status in seventeenth-century Dutch portraiture', in: Joanna Woodall (ed.), *Portraiture. Facing the subject*, Manchester 1997, pp. 75-100.



## **The Significant Role of the Artist**

In my view, there are some good points in these theories. Patrons or citizens in the seventeenth century had a certain sense of individuality as a consequence of the growing power of their class and they often had a personal wish and the financial means to have their portraits painted. To some degree they were able to express this individuality in their portraits through their choice of costume, attributes and background setting. This would happen in close cooperation with the portraitist, who was knowledgeable in this field and could introduce novelties to the composition and iconography. On the other hand, the portrait could not be too individual, extravagant or extraordinary, because it had to be understood, recognised and accepted by an audience. Private portraits were meant to be looked at and observed by a wider public entering the home.

However, one aspect that is overlooked by these theorists is that the stereotype is not so much a product of the demands imposed by society, but of the style and routine of the artist. The role of the artist is often reduced to that of a mediator between the sitter and the viewer. Most authors have approached the portraits from a sociological and psychological perspective and have paid a lot of attention to the interaction and encounter between the portrayed person and the observer. It seems that sometimes the nature of the portrait is characterised as a social messenger rather than a panel or canvas that carries the results of an artistic procedure. The focus lies on the processes of patronage and identity formation and of viewing and perceiving, rather than on artistic creation. Identity is currently a very fashionable concept that is applied to artists, patrons, audiences, communities and nations in the past, though not always rightly. In the seventeenth century portraits were not regarded as art works in the same way as history pieces or landscapes and one of their main functions was to commemorate the sitter. Nonetheless, cannot be denied that portraits also are material objects created by artists.

Every portraitist has his own characteristic style. We only have to flip through the pages of the numerous monographs of Dutch portraitists to understand that personal technique, style and inventiveness are for a large part responsible for the differences in portraiture. The facial expressions, no matter how seemingly neutral, will always reveal the trademark of the painter. Verspronck's sitters are usually rather friendly, while those of van der Helst are often more forceful. The chosen facial expression is not necessarily the result of a complex and specified selection process of social messages and identities, but rather of the practice of the painter. Routines were not only applied to facial expressions, but naturally also to poses. The poses of the sitters in Verspronck's oeuvre gradually develop. In his earlier works the bodies of the sitters are portrayed in three-quarter view and the standing persons have turned their heads towards the viewer. Men often keep their right arms akimbo, while the women hold their folded hands close to their bodies. In Verspronck's later works, the

portrayed persons are seated, a fragment of the chair has frequently been included and the gestures are sometimes livelier.<sup>131</sup>

Another aspect is that, besides the role of individual artists in the artistic process, portraiture in itself also has certain conventions. Portraits are not representations of the daily reality of the sitter, nor are they attempts to capture a spontaneous moment or emotion as photographs sometimes are today. Portraits are required to be static and representative images of the sitters and have a long visual tradition from which the seventeenth-century examples have developed. A third element that has not regularly been stressed is that conventions and traditions are indeed conventional. Some formal types have become so common that both artists and patrons are no longer aware of the underlying motivations. Some iconographical motifs or attributes have lost their original meaning over time and were simply included out of custom. Therefore we must understand that the appearance of the portrait is not always rooted in a conscious social choice of painter and patron, but in the artistic technique, habits and practice of the artist and of portrait conventions in general.

Although the social approaches and investigated mechanisms, such as by Smith and Adams, are very interesting from a scholarly point of view, it is doubtful that seventeenth-century patrons, artists and viewers were aware of them. For persons belonging to a certain class it was fashionable and common to invest their newly-gained personal wealth in something like a portrait, which was probably partly stimulated by their own desires, but also because fellow-citizens of their class commissioned them. For a painter a motivation for creating portraits may have been his success in this genre – in which success can have multiple meanings – and it provided him a proper income. The audience of the private portraits mainly consisted of relatives, friends and other acquaintances. Thus the sitters and viewers of the portraits all belonged to the same social circles.

### **Children and Social Messages versus Pictorial Form**

In the same way as adult portraits can give the impression of an encounter with an actual person, portraits of children often evoke a very strong emotion of recognition.<sup>132</sup> The fact that so many exhibitions worldwide have been dedicated to the portrayal of children is only proof of the strong affection modern viewers have towards these paintings. As mentioned in the introduction, present-day viewers regularly project their ideas of childhood on these portraits from the past and are especially appreciative of those portraits that answer to their notion of children as innocent, playful and cheerful young individual creatures. The fact that some seventeenth-century children are perceived as too formal and too stiff and are looked upon with a sense of slight disdain can be explained from the incongruence between discourses on childhood in the past and the present.

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<sup>131</sup> For this development see Rudolf E.O. Ekkart, *Johannes Cornelisz. Verspronck. Het leven en werk van een Haarlems portretschilder uit de 17<sup>de</sup> eeuw*, exhib. cat. Frans Halsmuseum, Haarlem 1979.

<sup>132</sup> Jan Baptist Bedaux, 'From Normal to Supranormal. Observations of Realism and Idealism from a Biological Perspective', in: Jan Baptist Bedaux & Brett Cooke (ed.), *Sociobiology and the Arts*, Amsterdam 1999, pp. 99-128.

Although representations are always schematised, this does not imply that the portrait cannot picture a specific person. Since so many children have been portrayed in the Dutch seventeenth century, it must signify that at least they were regarded as individuals in some sense, worthy of solitary portrayal. Children are not very easy to portray. The individual features of the child have not yet fully developed and, at the same time, are constantly changing, as are fashions in costume and hairstyle. Thus it is difficult to create a timeless image of a recognisable child at a specific age.<sup>133</sup> Perhaps it is unlikely that the portraitist was asked to represent one specific moment or stage in the child's life. In this respect, the child portrait differs from the adult portrait that was often made to commemorate or celebrate a special occasion like a wedding, a new public function or the coming to a certain age.<sup>134</sup>

But such motives were not entirely absent. For example, the breeching of a boy could be such an event. Altogether, it seems more reasonable to assume that – since children were normally portrayed only once during their youth and this was a very costly and prestigious affair – the created picture was supposed to be a representation of their childhood as such rather than a particular record of the son or daughter at, for example, the age of eight. Yet often all the children of a given family were portrayed in a series and the relation between their different ages was indeed expressed in their portraits. The same can be said of family groups, in which each child was portrayed at its respective age. Furthermore, the moment the parents entitled the painter with the task to create a portrait usually also dictated the child's depicted age.

It cannot be denied that portraits are cultural products that interact with the society from which they originate. The idea of the isolated artist-creator cannot be sustained with regard to portraiture. As shall be argued in the following chapters, children's portraits can indeed carry a social message about the sitter and can be understood when placed in their contemporary society. However, it will not suffice to interpret these paintings from this perspective. It is essential that attention is also paid to the role of the artist, his artistic habits and to the requirements of portraiture as an artistic genre. Both aspects need to be equally taken into consideration when studying the relation between the adult and child portrait in the Dutch seventeenth century.

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<sup>133</sup> See also Edward King, 'Some Observations on the Difficulties of Painting Children', in: exhib. cat. Kendal 2005, pp. 11-14.

<sup>134</sup> De Jongh 1986, p. 23.

CHILDREN AS ‘MINIATURE ADULTS’:  
AMBITION, FASHION AND FORMAL IMITATION

In art-historical literature on the seventeenth century, it has been noted that in some cases children were portrayed as miniature adults.<sup>135</sup> In 2009 Rudi Ekkart wrote of the *Girl in Blue* by Verspronck: “In accordance with the conventions of the Dutch Golden Age she is portrayed as an adult lady in miniature”.<sup>136</sup> Most authors point out that it are mainly the costumes of the children that are reminiscent of those of adults. This idea is brought forward by Knipping & Gerrits, but particularly in publications on costumes by, for example, J.H. der Kinderen-Besier (“miraculous creatures, dressed as grown-up persons in miniature”), Elisabeth Ewing (“The child as miniature adult, the image that was to last until the latter part of the eighteenth century, had arrived.”), and Bianca M. du Mortier (“children’s clothing in the seventeenth century was a miniature version of adult dress”).<sup>137</sup>

Even though this statement has regularly been made, a consistent overview of this practice has never been given. Because it is impossible to study all the elements from adult portraits emulated by children, a selection has been made that is closely related to Flinck’s *Portrait of a Boy*, namely the traditions of children in landscapes, boys with wooden canes, and boys with large hats. In this way the elements from this portrait are placed in a wider context and their origin and meaning can be understood. As a result, some aspects will not be given the full attention they deserve. Intrinsically, girls will not play a central role, but will be presented alongside the addressed traditions. Because of the nature of Flinck’s painting, portraits situated in a domestic interior or in front of a neutral background will be studied to a lesser degree. Furthermore, it will mainly be the setting, poses, gestures and attributes that will be placed against adult traditions. Costumes worn by the children will not be elaborately discussed.

If children mimic elements of adult portraiture, we have to consider if the result is caused by a choice for a specific social role. Is the meaning of this role the same as for the adult or does it change when applied to an infant? Obviously the portraits were commissioned by the parents and the children themselves did not play a large part in the decision-making. Perhaps this is the explanation why so many children have been depicted in their future roles as heirs to the family estates or the leading positions they will fulfil in their adult lives.<sup>138</sup> Still, we must not forget that many imitations of adult behaviour are the effect of the practice of the painter and of portraiture.

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<sup>135</sup> Knipping & Gerrits 1945, pp. 69+98; exhib. cat. Amsterdam 1955-1956, preface; Neale 2005, p. 5.

<sup>136</sup> Rudolf E.O. Ekkart, *Johannes Verspronck en het Meisje in het blauw*, Amsterdam 2009, p. 5; on pp. 17-18 he mentions “the solemnity that the demands of the day required of most children’s portraits.”

<sup>137</sup> Knipping & Gerrits 1945, pp. 52,74,77,80,96; J.H. der Kinderen-Besier, *Spelevaart der Mode. De kledij onzer voorouders in de zeventiende eeuw*, Amsterdam 1950, p. 76; Elisabeth Ewing, *History of Children’s Costume*, London 1982, p. 25; du Mortier 1989, p. 56.

<sup>138</sup> King 2005, p. 14.

### Adults and Children: An Ambiguous Relation

Three examples will illustrate that the relation between adults and children in portraits including the same conventions is not unambiguous. In 1640, the same year as the *Portrait of a Boy*, Flinck created his beautiful *Girl by a High Chair* [fig. 7]. Knipping & Gerrits claim that Flinck has created “an old little woman”, but that this is the way the seventeenth-century parents saw their offspring.<sup>139</sup> The pose of a woman resting one of her hands on a chair or table is very common in Dutch portraiture and this tradition is followed in Flinck’s painting.<sup>140</sup> We can see this stance, for example, in a contemporary painting by the Amsterdam artist Huygh Pietersz. Voskuyl (1591-1665) in his *Portrait of Geertruyd Reael (1600-1652)* of 1640, in which the woman rests her right hand on a table with a wicker basket and a piece of dark cloth [fig. 8].<sup>141</sup> Whereas the woman is depicted in three-quarter length, the girl is portrayed in full length. Rather than calmly placing an arm on the chair in an elegant way as the woman, the girl is still so young that the chair is primarily there to support her unstable posture. Although Flinck based himself on this tradition, the outcome is completely different.

One year later, Verspronck painted his *Girl in Blue* that echoes the pose and attributes and the neutral background we find in many of Verspronck’s female portraits [fig. 9].<sup>142</sup> If we compare this painting to the *Portrait of a Woman* in Enschede, believed to be the girl’s mother, we can see some striking resemblances [fig. 10].<sup>143</sup> The two paintings are exactly the same size and were clearly meant to mirror each other. There are great similarities in the hairstyle, dress, jewellery and in the composition of the pose with the left hand on top of the right and the attribute of the lowered fan. Since the paintings have the same size, the heads of both sitters are placed on the same level in the picture plane, but in proportion the girl is much smaller. In effect, we can see a larger part of the girl’s body and also her complete fan, which is cut off by the frame in the portrait of her mother. The girl is placed in the centre of the canvas, while her mother stands more to the right in correspondence with the male pendant on the left. Apart from these parallels, the cheeky smile that may burst into laughter releases the tension between the young girl and her adult role. Ekkart writes: “As a result, the viewer is left with the impression that the girl and the painter – who accurately reproduced her features – were gently poking fun at formal adult behaviour.”<sup>144</sup> According to Ekkart, her facial expression informs us that the girl is only playing the role of an adult, but does not pretend to actually be one.<sup>145</sup>

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<sup>139</sup> Knipping & Gerrits 1945, p. 98.

<sup>140</sup> Ekkart in: exhib. cat. Haarlem & Antwerp 2000, cat. no. 35.

<sup>141</sup> Huygh Pietersz. Voskuyl, *Portrait of Geertruyd Reael (1600-1652)*, 1640, oil on panel, 121x89 cm, Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam.

<sup>142</sup> Johannes Verspronck, *Girl in Blue*, 1641, oil on canvas, 82x66 cm, Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam; exhib. cat. Haarlem 1979, p. 44 + cat. no. 33.

<sup>143</sup> Johannes Verspronck, *Portrait of a Woman*, 1640, oil on canvas, 82x65 cm, Rijksmuseum Twenthe, Enschede; exhib. cat. Haarlem 1979, cat. no. 23.

<sup>144</sup> Ekkart in: exhib. cat. Haarlem & Antwerp 2000-2001, cat. no. 38.

<sup>145</sup> Ekkart 2009, p. 5.

The third example is the *Portrait of a Boy in Grey* by Flinck's companion Jacob Backer, which he painted in 1634 [fig. 11].<sup>146</sup> Backer applied an artistic device of letting the boy look down upon the viewer. The low viewpoint produces a very confusing situation, because children are always looked down upon by adults and the positions are switched in this painting. Not only does the boy appear to be taller in this way, the scale of the portrait is more monumental.<sup>147</sup> This trick has also been applied in sixteenth-century dynastic children's portraits, such as in Hans Holbein the Younger's (1497/1498-1543) *Edward VI, Prince of Wales as a Child* of around 1538 in Washington.<sup>148</sup>

### **The Pastoral Portrait and Courtly Ambitions**

In numerous portraits children are related to nature, especially in the guise of pastoral figures. Moreelse's *Two Girls in a Pastoral Costume* of 1622 is the earliest known example of a pastoral portrait that survived up to the present [fig. 12].<sup>149</sup> This painting was a starting point of a pastoral tradition of half-length figures against neutral backgrounds or figures in landscapes, which flourished in the 1630s and 1640s and was taken on by artists such as Honthorst, Santvoort, Jacob Gerritsz. Cuyp, de Geest, Jan Baptist Weenix (1621-c.1660), Backer and Bernard Swaerdecroon (1607-1654) and later by Jan Mijtens (c.1614-1670) and Gerbrand van den Eeckhout (1621-1674). Flinck took part in this tradition as well, for example with half-length adult figures in the guise of shepherds, shepherdesses and the goddess Flora.<sup>150</sup> He also portrayed children in this tradition, both in figures of shepherds in landscapes and in the allegorical portrait of a *Girl as Flora* that he created almost simultaneously with the *Portrait of a Boy* in Birmingham [fig. 13-15].<sup>151</sup>

Several authors have investigated the motivations for the growing popularity of this genre.<sup>152</sup> Alison McNeil Kettering concluded in her book *The Dutch Arcadia* of 1983 that pastoral paintings were usually commissioned by three classes in society: first the royalty in the persons of Stadholder Frederik Hendrik (1584-1647), Amalia van Solms (1602-1675), and the Winter Queen Elizabeth Stuart (1596-1662), second the nobility, and third the patrician citizens in large towns. Originally,

<sup>146</sup> Jacob Backer, *Portrait of a Boy in Grey*, 1634, oil on canvas, 94x71 cm, Mauritshuis, The Hague; Ekkart in: exhib. cat. Amsterdam & Aachen 2008-2009, cat. no. 7.

<sup>147</sup> Ekkart in: exhib. cat. Haarlem & Antwerp 2000-2001, cat. no. 27.

<sup>148</sup> Hans Holbein the Younger, *Edward VI, Prince of Wales as a Child*, c.1538, oil on panel, 57x44 cm, Andrew W. Mellon Collection, National Gallery of Art, Washington.

<sup>149</sup> Paulus Moreelse, *Two Girls in a Pastoral Costume*, 1622, oil on canvas, 120x95 cm, Centraal Museum, Utrecht; exhib. cat. Haarlem & Antwerp 2000-2001, cat. no. 20.

<sup>150</sup> For adult shepherds and shepherdesses see von Moltke 1965, cat. no 127, 128, 129, 130, 140, 141, 143, 144, 147, for Flora see cat. no. 95.

<sup>151</sup> For children as shepherds and shepherdesses see von Moltke 1965, cat. no. 137, 138, 139, 142, 145, 146; Govert Flinck, *Young Shepherdess*, 1650, oil on canvas, 128x94 cm, whereabouts unknown (Sumowski 1983, cat. no. 684); Govert Flinck, *Portrait of an Unknown Boy*, c.1636-1649, oil on panel, 114x85 cm, whereabouts unknown (auction Drouot, Paris, 12 December 1987); Govert Flinck, *A Girl as Flora*, c.1640, oil on canvas, 117x90 cm, Musée des Beaux-Arts de Nantes, Nantes (von Moltke 1965, cat. no. 414; exhib. cat. Haarlem & Antwerp 2000-2001, cat. no. 36).

<sup>152</sup> Peter van den Brink *et al.*, *Het Gedroomde Land. Pastorale schilderkunst in de Gouden Eeuw*, exhib. cat. Schirn Kunsthalle, Frankfurt am Main, Musée National d'Histoire et d'Art, Luxembourg & Centraal Museum, Utrecht 1993, Zwolle 1993.

pastoral literature and theatre had always been associated with the country life of the nobility and courts. Kettering decided that there may have been a relation between “the interest in pastoral painting by the Dutch urban privileged classes” and “the rise of the country landholdings in the second and third quarters of the century”.<sup>153</sup> She argued that the urban elite had begun to purchase estates and country houses, which they used as good investments, as vacation retreats and, most importantly, as a means to gain “the social status of the land-owning class”.<sup>154</sup> With regard to portraits, Kettering surmised that sitters did not appear in the role of rural and pastoral figures to represent the simple and virtuous side of a country lifestyle, but rather as a means to equal the nobles and courtiers, who could enjoy the pleasures of country life. The fact that many children were portrayed in pastoral portraits as well may indeed be a reflection of the role the parents wanted them to fulfil in society.

### **Holland instead of Arcadia: Portraits in Contemporary Landscapes**

Besides the fantasised and idealised rural landscapes, some portraits of the first half of the seventeenth century include a representation of the contemporary landscape, such as in the *Portrait of a Boy* by Flinck. In his oeuvre we can find examples of adult sitters who are placed in a landscape, first of all the *Portrait of Dirck Jacobsz. Leeuw* of 1636, mentioned in the first chapter [fig. 16]. In relation to this painting, we can see that children could be depicted in a similar setting and that they mirror some elements of adult portraiture. The Monogrammist GTB, active in the second quarter of the seventeenth century, created a *Portrait of a Boy* that is very comparable in his pose and attributes to Dirck Leeuw [fig. 17].<sup>155</sup> In the same way as Dirck, the boy is standing in a landscape with vegetation and trees on the left and is looking to the right. Both the man and the boy are holding a pair of gloves in their right hand and are wearing a large hat and flat white collar. They are bending their left arms under their cloaks and have placed one foot in front of the other. The resemblance between the two is in fact strictly formal in their standardised pose and attributes, rather than in a social message they want to mediate.

A further example in the oeuvre of Flinck is his *Portrait of Man with a cane* in a dune landscape and a church tower in the right background [fig. 18].<sup>156</sup> Somehow it is similar to the *Portrait of a Boy*, but overall the man’s pose is more stiff, mainly because his cane is placed in a rigid vertical position. Women could also be portrayed full length in a landscape, such as in a 1636 portrait by an anonymous Dutch painter in New York [fig. 19].<sup>157</sup> A painting of a young woman and a boy in a landscape, previously ascribed to Flinck, has been rejected as an authentic work of the artist by von

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<sup>153</sup> Alison McNeil Kettering, *The Dutch Arcadia. Pastoral Art and its Audience in the Golden Age*, Montclair & Woodbridge 1983, pp. 8-9.

<sup>154</sup> Kettering 1983, p. 9.

<sup>155</sup> Monogrammist GTB, *Portrait of a Boy*, second quarter seventeenth century, oil on panel, 55x34 cm, private collection, Almelo.

<sup>156</sup> Govert Flinck, *Portrait of a Man*, Muzeum Narodowe, Warsaw, further details unknown.

<sup>157</sup> Anonymous Dutch Painter, *A Young Woman in a Landscape*, 1636, oil on panel, 66x50 cm, The Friedsam Collection, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.

Moltke, who entitled it *Portrait of a Young Lady Taking a Walk with her Son* [fig. 20].<sup>158</sup> Perhaps the painting rather records a girl with her younger brother. In any case, Flinck's boy in Birmingham and this boy are wearing the same type of costume and a broad-rimmed rounded hat and are holding a long cane [fig. 21].

Besides individuals, husbands and wives also had themselves portrayed in landscape settings, one of the most frequently discussed examples being Frans Hals's *Couple in a Garden*, possibly the Haarlem merchant Isaac Massa (1586-1643) and his first wife Beatrix van der Laen (1592-1639) in the year of their wedding 1622 [fig. 22].<sup>159</sup> Although the couple is seated under a tree, they are not situated in a wide landscape, but in a garden with a view on a fountain, a mansion, two further couples, statues and peacocks. Eddy de Jongh and Pierre J. Vinken related various aspects of the painting to emblematic traditions, including the garden, ivy, vine, thistle, peacocks, urns and buildings, and connected them to the iconography of love and marital faith.<sup>160</sup> Despite its fame, this painting is very much an exception in rendering a couple. Their informal poses and their apparent spontaneity can be contrasted against Flinck's *Portrait of Dirck Graswinckel and Geertruida van Loon* [fig. 23], to which de Jongh has attached the meaning of marital faith and concordance by means of the *dextrarum iunctio* and their moral stability, strength and durability symbolised by the solid oak. This double portrait respects all the rules of official decorum.<sup>161</sup>

A large number of portraits in landscapes is formed by family groups. The development of this type, which became most successful in the 1630s and 1640s, has been clearly outlined by Laarmann. She makes a distinction between three standard types that materialised during this period: the first in Northern Holland with a linear composition of the sitters placed in wide rural landscapes; the second in Haarlem of Frans Hals and Pieter Claesz. Soutman (c.1593/1601-1657) with large figures in proportion to the visualised landscapes, filling the canvas and involved in lively and joyful interaction; and the third in Southern Holland with Jan Daemen Cool (1589-1660) in Rotterdam and the Cuyper family in Dordrecht, in which the parents and youngest children are placed on one side and the other

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<sup>158</sup> Anonymous Dutch painter (previously ascribed to Flinck, but rejected by von Moltke), *Portrait of a Lady Taking a Walk with her Son*, date unknown, oil on panel, 75x60 cm, whereabouts unknown (Christie's, London, 20 June 1902; Collection Gebrüder Bourgeois, Cologne, 27 October 1904 as Flinck; Curt Benedict, Paris, 1937); von Moltke 1965, cat. no. 145.

<sup>159</sup> Frans Hals, *Couple in a Garden (possibly Isaac Massa (1586-1643) and Beatrix van der Laen (1592-1639))*, c.1622, oil on canvas, 140x166 cm, Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam; exhib. cat. Washington, London & Haarlem 1989, cat. no. 12.

<sup>160</sup> Eddy de Jongh & Pierre Jacques Vinken, 'Frans Hals als voortzetter van een emblematische traditie. Bij het Huwelijksportret van Isaac Massa en Beatrix van der Laen', *Oud Holland* 76 (1961), pp. 117-152; see also de Jongh 1986, cat. no. 20 and David R. Smith, 'Courtesy and its discontents. Frans Hals's 'Portrait of Isaac Massa and Beatrix van der Laen'', *Oud Holland* 100 (1986), pp. 2-34.

<sup>161</sup> Govert Flinck, *Portrait of Dirck Graswinckel and Geertruida van Loon*, 1640-1646, oil on canvas, 107x91 cm, Museum Boijmans-van Beuningen, Rotterdam; exhib. cat. Haarlem 1989, cat. no. 28; R.E.O. Ekkart, *Nederlandse portretten uit de 17e eeuw / Dutch Portraits from the Seventeenth Century. Eigen collectie / Own collection. Museum Boijmans-van Beuningen*, Rotterdam 1995, nr. 17; Friso Lammertse in: Norbert Middelkoop (ed.), *Kopstukken. Amsterdammers geportretteerd 1600-1800*, exhib. cat. Amsterdams Historisch Museum 2003, Bussum 2002, cat. no. 78.



children on the opposite side of the painting with a view on a landscape in the centre.<sup>162</sup> Over time, the landscapes were gradually more realistic in a sense that contemporary farmhouses, meadows and dunes were depicted and recognisable towns and villages were included.

Family portraits are a very good case to study the imitation of parental poses and attributes by children, because they are placed on the same panel or canvas and are meant to form a coherent group. The works by Herman Doncker (before 1620-after 1656), active in Haarlem and Enkhuizen, are good examples to illustrate this point. He takes a central position in establishing the Northern Holland landscape tradition by placing his figures in a linear arrangement in Italianate or Dutch landscapes.<sup>163</sup> Laarmann comments that Doncker developed a few standard types of his men and women. The men have usually placed one foot in front of the other and at least one of their arms is bent under their cloaks. In the other hand they are holding their canes or hats. Women generally stand firmly on the ground with their weight resting on both legs and with one arm hanging down in a relaxed way. In many cases the children are as standardised and are simply a smaller version of the parents next to them.<sup>164</sup> This mirroring of pose and attributes can clearly be detected in Doncker's *Portrait of a Couple with Three Children and a Ship in the Background* of 1645 and his somewhat later *Portrait of a Couple with Two Children* [fig. 24-25].<sup>165</sup> Doncker is a painter who used standard types for his sitters. Therefore it is difficult to argue that the parents wanted their children to parallel them in a particular way for social reasons. Instead this resemblance originates from Doncker's artistic routine.

### **Landscape and Notions of Status in the Seventeenth Century**

Laarmann related the emergence of family portraits in landscapes to the development of the contemporary landscape as an independent artistic genre in the early decades of the seventeenth century. Besides the emblematic reading of landscapes, as proposed by de Jongh, or the landscape as a descriptive art form, as suggested by Svetlana Alpers, several authors have attempted to connect notions of identity to these landscapes, such as Simon Schama and Ann Jensen Adams.<sup>166</sup> Another development, also noted by Kettering, is that the urban elite was in a better position to purchase estates and country houses and recreated in the open air of the countryside.<sup>167</sup> Several families had themselves

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<sup>162</sup> Laarmann 2002, pp. 70-77.

<sup>163</sup> Frauke Laarmann, 'Herman Meindertsz. Doncker. Ein origineller Künstler zweiten Ranges', *Oud Holland* 114 (2000), pp. 7-52, see pp. 21-23.

<sup>164</sup> Laarmann 2000, p. 24.

<sup>165</sup> Herman Doncker, *Portrait of a Couple with Three Children and a Ship in the Background*, 1645, oil on panel, 87x111 cm, whereabouts unknown; Laarmann 2000, cat. no. 30; Rudi Ekkart, *Portret van Enkhuizen in de gouden eeuw*, exhib. cat. Zuiderzeemuseum, Enkhuizen 1991, Zwolle 1990, cat. no. 37; Herman Doncker, *Portrait of a Couple with Two Children*, 1645-50, oil on panel, 67x57 cm, whereabouts unknown; Laarmann 2000, cat. no. 34; exhib. cat. Enkhuizen 1991, fig. 38.

<sup>166</sup> Simon Schama, 'Dutch Landscapes. Culture as Foreground', in: Peter C. Sutton (ed.), *Masters of 17<sup>th</sup>-century Dutch Landscape Painting*, exhib. cat. Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston & Philadelphia Museum of Art, Philadelphia 1988, Boston 1987, pp. 64-83; Ann Jensen Adams, 'Competing Communities in the "Great Bog of Europe". Identity and Seventeenth-Century Dutch Landscape Painting', in: W.J.T. Mitchell (ed.), *Landscape and Power*, Chicago & London 2002, pp. 35-76.

<sup>167</sup> Laarmann 2002, p. 74.

portrayed with a recognisable town in the background, thus identifying their origin. Jacob Gerritsz. Cuyp made a portrait of *Three Children of Sebastiaan Francken and Jacobmijna van Casteren*, his first children's portrait, in which a view of The Hague was incorporated [fig. 26].<sup>168</sup> The Francken family came from Dordrecht, but also owned a townhouse on the Kneuterdijk in The Hague and the country estate of Hoeckenburch near Voorburg. It is interesting to note that the father of these children fulfilled a government post in The Hague. It is mainly his high position that is manifested in the portrait of his offspring.

There are also examples of families and children that are portrayed in a landscape referring to the pleasures of country life and the possible ownership of an estate in the region.<sup>169</sup> Some citizens seemed to have aristocratic pretensions, gained by their high position rather than by birth, and commenced to purchase castles or large estates. Yet their numbers were small. Most urban landowners possessed a garden, which became a very popular but affordable investment, with perhaps a small arbour or garden house to observe the scenery.<sup>170</sup> The fact that a family was depicted in a landscape may indicate that they had possessions outside town, but this is not necessarily always the case. Sometimes the landscape is recognisable, but usually it is rather general and indiscriminate, as in Flinck's *Portrait of a Boy*. The appearance of actual country houses in the background of family portraits is more common in the second half of the seventeenth century.

Such landowners are said to have tried to emulate the lifestyle of the aristocracy, not only by means of estates or country houses, but also by engaging themselves in the hunt. Scott A. Sullivan argued that the main functions of still lifes with poultry, hares and wild animals and portraits in the role of hunters were to associate the owner to the noble class to which he may or may not belong.<sup>171</sup> We can observe this phenomenon in family portraits, such as in a cooperation by Jacob Gerritsz. Cuyp and his son Aelbert, where two huntsmen approach their other seven family members in a landscape [fig. 27].<sup>172</sup> Bartholomeus van der Helst made a painting of the van Aras family, in which their estate near Overveen can be seen, together with a view on Haarlem. The painter included several allusions to

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<sup>168</sup> Jacob Gerritsz. Cuyp, *Three Children of Sebastiaan Francken and Jacobmijna van Casteren*, 1635, oil on canvas, 130x198 cm, Museum Boijmans-van Beuningen, Rotterdam; Ekkart 1995, cat. no. 11; Ekkart in: exhib. cat. Haarlem & Antwerp 2000-2001, cat. no. 29; Sander Paarlberg *et al.*, *Jacob Gerritsz Cuyp (1594-1652)*, exhib. cat. Dordrechts Museum, Dordrecht 2002, cat. no. 14.

<sup>169</sup> See for example Jacob Gerritsz. Cuyp & Aelbert Cuyp, *Portrait of a Couple and a Child with a View of Rhenen*, 1641, oil on canvas, 107x147 cm, private collection; Alan Chong, 'New Dated Works from Aelbert Cuyp's Early Career', *Burlington Magazine* 133 (1991), pp. 606-612, fig. 47; exhib. cat. Dordrecht 2002, cat. no. 27.

<sup>170</sup> For the situation in Leiden see Dirk Jaap Noordam, 'Leidenaren en hun buitenverblijven in de vroegmoderne tijd', in: Jan de Jongste, Juliette Roding & Boukje Thijs (ed.), *Vermaak van de elite in de vroegmoderne tijd*, Hilversum 1999, pp. 15-39.

<sup>171</sup> Scott A. Sullivan, *The Dutch Gamepiece*, Montclair & Woodbridge 1984, pp. 41-44; J.A. Hendriks, 'Jacht als vermaak voor de elite', in: de Jongste, Roding & Thijs 1999, pp. 137-152.

<sup>172</sup> Jacob Gerritsz. Cuyp & Aelbert Cuyp, *Portrait of a Family in a Landscape*, 1641, oil on canvas, 155x245 cm, Israel Museum, Jerusalem; Arthur K. Wheelock (ed.), *Aelbert Cuyp*, exhib. cat. National Gallery of Art, Washington, National Gallery, London & Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam 2002, Washington 2001, cat. no. 3.

the hunt, such as the hunting costume, riding boots, the hounds and the hare [fig. 28].<sup>173</sup> Boys were often portrayed in the role of small huntsmen, usually in the company of falcons or hounds. This portrait type knew a long tradition throughout the seventeenth century [fig. 29-31].<sup>174</sup> These portraits have been classified as reflections of the aristocratic ambitions of the parents. The most known painting of this type is Jacob Gerritsz. Cuyp's portrait of *Michiel Pompe van Slingelandt (1643-1685)* of 1649 [fig. 32].<sup>175</sup> The boy is dressed in a red fantasy costume and a kestrel is seated on his gloved left hand. His attire is not particularly practical during the hunt and the bird should in fact be a falcon. The right to hunt is one of the privileges of the aristocracy. The father of the boy was not of noble birth, but he purchased an estate and noble titles and thus considered himself to equal the nobility.

### The Bamboo Cane as Exotic Fashion

Canes had a long tradition in portraiture and were often included in portraits of the nobility during the sixteenth century. Flinck's boy is holding a particular type of cane that is most likely made of bamboo because of the segmented stem. Bamboo canes will serve as a case to investigate the imitation of an adult attribute in child portraiture. Bamboo is obviously a precious and exotic material that reached Holland through the trade of the VOC. There is a painting, ascribed to Aelbert Cuyp, depicting a merchant and his wife, possibly Barend Ruygbroek and Catharina Paets, accompanied by a black servant holding a large umbrella over their heads [fig. 33].<sup>176</sup> The scene takes place in Batavia and the merchant is pointing at his fleet with a bamboo cane. The fleet serves as an indication of his professional background. In the collection of the Rijksmuseum there is a bamboo cane with an ivory knob and copper tip, traditionally said to have belonged to Michiel Adriaensz. de Ruyter, the sea-captain whose fame is great because of his role in three Anglo-Dutch Wars.<sup>177</sup>

Besides the visual evidence, there is also literary support for the presence of bamboo in the Netherlands. The first journey to the East Indies took place in 1595-1597. In the journey of 1599-1601

<sup>173</sup> Bartholomeus van der Helst, *Family Portrait of Jochem van Aras, Elisabeth Claes Loenen and Maria van Aras*, 1654, oil on canvas, 170x198 cm, Wallace Collection, London; Judith van Gent, 'A New Identification for Bartholomeus van der Helst's Family Portrait in the Wallace Collection', *Burlington Magazine* 146 (2004), pp. 165-167; Judith van Gent, *Bartholomeus van der Helst (circa 1613-1670). Een studie naar zijn leven en zijn werk*, diss. Utrecht University 2011, cat. no. 70.

<sup>174</sup> For example Douwe Juwes de Dowe, *Double Portrait of Two Boys in a Landscape, One as a hunter, the Other as John the Baptist*, 1647, oil on canvas, 114x135 cm, Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam; Bartholomeus van der Helst, *Boy with a Falcon*, 1665, oil on canvas, 77x70 cm, private collection, England; Wallerant Vaillant, *Portrait of a Boy with a Falcon*, c.1650-1674, 75x62 cm, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.

<sup>175</sup> Jacob Gerritsz. Cuyp, *Michiel Pompe van Slingelandt (1643-1685)*, 1649, oil on panel, 106x78 cm, Dordrechts Museum, Dordrecht; A. Kuiper-Ruempol & E. Wolleswinkel, 'De identificatie van J.G. Cuyp's "Jongen met valk" als Michiel Pompe van Slingelandt', *Bulletin Dordrechts Museum* 7, no. 3/4 (1982); exhib. cat. Haarlem & Antwerp 2000-2001, cat. no. 49; exhib. cat. Dordrecht 2002, cat. no. 35.

<sup>176</sup> Aelbert Cuyp, *Portrait of a Dutch Merchant and His Wife, with East Indies Fleet in the Bay of Batavia*, c.1650-1660, oil on canvas, 138x208 cm, Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam; Julie Berger Hochstrasser, *Still Life and Trade. In the Dutch Golden Age*, New Haven & London 2007, ill. 58.

<sup>177</sup> *Bamboo cane with pear shaped ivory knob and copper tip*, traditionally said to have belonged to Michiel de Ruyter, c.1675, length 91 cm, Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam; Peter Sigmond & Wouter Kloek, *Sea Battles and Naval Heroes in the 17th-century Dutch Republic*, Amsterdam 2007, p. 158.

doctor Nicolaas Coolmans and professor Pieter Pauw (1564-1617) from Leiden participated as well. They were mainly in search of plants with medical properties. As a result of their journey they took many objects with them, among others two sticks of bamboo, which were displayed in the museum of the Hortus Botanicus in Leiden. These bamboo sticks soon became the pride of the Hortus and were reproduced in many prints depicting the museum.<sup>178</sup> Parts of the results of the journey were published in Leiden in 1605 by Carolus Clusius (1526-1609) as *Exoticorum Libri Decem*. Thus bamboo was present in the Netherlands from at least 1601 onwards and images of this material were available via prints. A third source that is certainly important for the knowledge of this type of wood in the Dutch Republic is imported china with painted motifs of bamboo.

Perhaps the earliest example of a VOC officer with bamboo is the *Portrait of Pieter van den Broecke (1585-1640)* by Frans Hals of 1634 [fig. 34].<sup>179</sup> Van den Broecke was a merchant and eventually officer of the VOC, travelling to Africa and the East Indies.<sup>180</sup> In the portrait he is holding a wooden cane, probably of bamboo, but only a small fragment is visible. This portrait may be the starting point of a tradition that would be followed until the end of the seventeenth century, namely of seated naval officers, but also of merchants, shown with a bamboo cane, such as in portraits of Witte Cornelisz. de With (1599-1658)<sup>181</sup>, the *Portrait of Jacob Trip (1627-1670)* [fig. 35] by Bartholomeus van der Helst of 1655<sup>182</sup>, and the *Portrait of a Gentleman and Lady seated Outdoors* of c.1670, possibly by his son Lodewyck van der Helst (1642-after 1683).<sup>183</sup> This is another tradition in which Flinck participated, namely in his *Portrait of Gerard Pietersz. Hulft (1621-1656)* in an oval of 1654 with the attributes of a naval officer, among them a bamboo cane, in the margin.<sup>184</sup> Officers and

<sup>178</sup> J. Heniger, 'De Eerste Nederlandse Wetenschappelijke Reis naar Oost-Indie, 1599-1601', *Leids Jaarboekje / Jaarboekje voor geschiedenis en oudheidkunde van Leiden en omstreken* 1973, pp. 27-49, pp. 37-38.

<sup>179</sup> Frans Hals, *Portrait of Pieter van den Broecke (1585-1640)*, 1634, oil on canvas, 71x61 cm, Kenwood House, Iveagh Bequest, London; Julius Bryant, *Kenwood. Paintings in the Iveagh Bequest*, New Haven & London 2003, cat. no. 7; exhib. cat. Washington, London & Haarlem 1989-1990, cat. no. 44; exhib. cat. London & The Hague 2007-2008, cat. no. 19.

<sup>180</sup> Pieter van den Broecke, *Korte historiael ende journaelsche Aenteykeninghe Van al't gheen Merck-waerdich voorgevallen is, in de langdurighe Reysen ... als insonderheydt van Oost-Indien*, Haarlem 1634.

<sup>181</sup> Several copies after one prototype of Witte de With's portrait have been made by for example Abraham Evertsz. van Westerveld (c.1620-1692) and Hendrick Sorgh (c.1610-1670), see R.B. Prud'homme van Reine, 'De zeventiende-eeuwse zeeheldenportrettenreeks van Abraham Westervelt', *Bulletin van het Rijksmuseum* 41 (1993), pp. 3-15; also Jan Daemen Cool, *Witte Cornelisz. de With (1599-1658)*, 1564, oil on canvas, 108x81 cm, Maritiem Museum, Rotterdam; Rudolf E.O. Ekkart, 'De Rotterdamse portretschilder Jan Daemen Cool', *Oud Holland* 111 (1997), pp. 201-240, cat. no. 29.

<sup>182</sup> Bartholomeus van der Helst, *Portrait of Jacob Trip (1627-1670)*, 1655, oil on canvas, 110x95 cm, Amsterdams Historisch Museum, Amsterdam; exhib. cat. Amsterdam 2003, cat. no. 24.

<sup>183</sup> Lodewijk van der Helst (attributed), *Portrait of a Gentleman and Lady Seated Outdoors*, c.1670, oil on canvas, 158x118 cm, Philadelphia Museum of Art (possibly a fragment of a larger family group with children at right); because of the dog and the gun, this painting possibly alludes to the man's ambitions as a hunter and his aristocratic aspirations; Peter C. Sutton, *Northern European Paintings in the Philadelphia Museum of Art*, Philadelphia 1990, cat. no. 39.

<sup>184</sup> Govert Flinck, *Portrait of Gerard Pietersz. Hulft (1621-1656)*, *First councillor and director of the VOC*, 1654, oil on canvas, 100x103 cm, Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam.

merchants with canes and a ship or fleet in the background can also be found in many other examples, but it is not always clear whether the material of the cane is bamboo [fig. 36].<sup>185</sup>

Around 1640 both adult men and boys were portrayed with bamboo canes. Bamboo was probably imported at a larger scale and would perhaps be available on the market as a very fashionable commodity for wealthy citizens and merchants of, for example, a port like Amsterdam, who were not directly related to the VOC. Because the portraits were painted almost simultaneously, bamboo was perhaps a novelty that truly fashionable persons wanted to have. We can find examples in large family portraits, in which the cane is held by the father, but also in group portraits of children where usually the eldest son is displaying it. Additionally, single figures carry this attribute. In the portrait by an anonymous master, previously thought to be a portrait of children of the de Potter family, the boy is obviously holding a bamboo cane, in a similar way as Flinck's boy [fig. 37].<sup>186</sup> The pose and clothes of the boy are also very comparable to the ones in Flinck's painting. There is also a portrait attributed to Jan Daemen Cool of a boy in a landscape pointing with a bamboo cane at the background, possibly originally part of a larger family piece [fig. 38].<sup>187</sup> The resemblance between this painting and Flinck's boy, both of 1640, is striking. Their costumes are very similar, including the broad-rimmed hat, they are both situated in a river landscape and they both hold a bamboo cane. Bamboo canes have also been included in portraits of boys by Dirck van Santvoort and Jan Albertsz. Rotius.<sup>188</sup> We must conclude that bamboo did not have a deep symbolic meaning, but simply was included as a fashionable and therefore status-raising object, such as the gloves discussed in the first chapter, but also the fans held by girls and women in Verspronck's portrait of the *Girl in Blue* and her mother.

Bamboo canes also appear in a different context, for example in the very charming *Portrait of a Boy* of the early 1650s by Verspronck [fig. 39].<sup>189</sup> The boy is depicted against a neutral background wearing a military costume and gloves. His attributes have a military character, namely the cane in his right hand, a dagger on his side and a sash across his chest. His outfit is not common for ordinary burghers and would be reserved for princes and other children of the nobility. Perhaps his outfit

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<sup>185</sup> For example Dirck Dircksz. van Santvoort, *Portrait of captain Otto van Vollenhoven, his wife Apollonia Bogaert and their daughter Anna on the beach*, c.1640, oil on canvas, 120x148 cm, Sotheby's Amsterdam, 13 May 2003, lot 65; Herman Doncker, fig. 19 (note 165); Nicolaes Maes, *Portrait of Captain Job Jansse Cuijter and His Family*, 1659, oil on canvas, 110x151 cm, North Carolina Museum of Art, Raleigh (A. Staring, 'Vier familiegroepen van Nicolaes Maes', *Oud Holland* 80 (1965), pp. 169-180.).

<sup>186</sup> Anonymous (previously attributed to Govert Flinck, Carel Fabritius and circle of Jacob Gerritsz. Cuyp), *Portrait of Two Children of the de Potter family*, c.1640, oil on canvas, 98x112 cm, private collection; D. Hannema, 'The Children of the de Potter Family, by Carel Fabritius', *The Burlington Magazine for Connoisseurs* 48 (1926), pp. 276-277+279; W.R. Valentiner, 'Carel and Barent Fabritius', *The Art Bulletin* 14 (1932), pp. 197-241.

<sup>187</sup> Formerly attributed to Jacob Gerritsz. Cuyp, now Jan Daemen Cool, *Portrait of a Boy Holding His Hat in a River Landscape*, 1640, oil on panel, 89x77 cm, Sotheby's, London, 26 October 1994, lot 139; Ekkart 1997, cat. no. 20; see p. 205 + p. 218 (note 36).

<sup>188</sup> Dirck Dircksz. van Santvoort, *Portrait of a Boy*, 1644, oil on panel, 108x76 cm, Hessisches Landesmuseum, Darmstadt; for Rotius see the next chapter.

<sup>189</sup> Johannes Verspronck, *Portrait of a Boy*, c.1650-54, oil on panel, 77x54 cm, Bert & Mia van Deun-Loyens, Oberägeri.

reflects the ambitions of his parents to belong to the aristocracy.<sup>190</sup> Despite his adult pose, attire and attributes, the boy has been very carefully observed by the painter and has an exceptionally fresh facial expression.<sup>191</sup> Besides boys in the role of hunters, there are many portraits of boys as military officers, such as Ferdinand Bol's *Portrait of Otto van der Waeyen (1648-1686)* of 1656 [fig. 40].<sup>192</sup> In his costume and attributes a combination was made of Polish and Western-European elements.<sup>193</sup> Otto's pose is closely related to the ones in portraits of Michiel Adriaensz. de Ruyter that Bol painted one or two years later. Both the boy and the man hold a baton or hammer in the air with their right arms and their left arms akimbo [fig. 41-42].<sup>194</sup> This stance is taken both by Verspronck's and Bol's boy and has been explained as alluding to the pride, aggressiveness and self-possession of military men. This pose has a long tradition dating back to the sixteenth century. During the seventeenth century, it was adopted both in portraits of individual men, such as standard-bearers, and militia pieces. Since both boys are portrayed in military roles this pose seems very appropriate. In daily life, Joaneath Spicer argues, this pose was not accepted because of its arrogance and books on etiquette clearly advised against it.<sup>195</sup> Yet there are also portraits of men and children not depicted with military attributes, but with the arm akimbo. Therefore the negative meaning was absent in children portraits, both of boys and girls, and the stance was included to add movement and elegance to the sitter.<sup>196</sup>

### **Boys with Large Hats and the Rules of Etiquette**

In the above-mentioned examples a large black, brown or grey hat has regularly been included. In her standard work on Dutch seventeenth-century costumes der Kinderen-Besier notes that in the third and fourth decades felt hats were very popular. The bowl of the hat increased in height over time. These hats usually had a broad rim that could be shaped and worn in various ways depending on the social position of the person. Young cavaliers were wearing whirling hats adorned with feathers, buckles and gems, while militiamen wore the hats on the back of their heads. Worthy regents and modest burghers usually had a hat with a simple ribbon or cord around the bowl. Around the turn of the fifth decade,

<sup>190</sup> Ekkart 1979 p. 52, cat. no. 79; exhib. cat. Haarlem & Antwerp 2000, cat. no. 53; Ekkart 2009, p. 40.

<sup>191</sup> Ekkart in: exhib. cat. Haarlem & Antwerp 2000-2001, cat. no. 53.

<sup>192</sup> Ferdinand Bol, *Portrait of Otto van der Waeyen (1648-1686)*, 1656, oil on canvas, 158x120 cm, Museum Boijmans-van Beuningen, Rotterdam; Albert Blankert, *Ferdinand Bol 1616-1680. Een leerling van Rembrandt*, Den Haag 1976, cat. no. 139; the identification has been confirmed by Ekkart 1995, cat. no. 3.

<sup>193</sup> Marieke de Winkel, in: exhib. cat. Amsterdam 2003, cat. no. 12; the Polish costume was very fashionable in Amsterdam around this time, because there was a lot of interest in Poland as a result of the strong trade connection. In the year 1656 the city of Gdańsk was blocked during the Second War between Poland-Lithuania, Russia and Sweden (1655-1660), and Holland sent out a fleet under the command of Michiel de Ruyter in order to protect its trade. Even if there is no direct connection between this event and the portrait of 1656, it is noteworthy that the family of Otto van der Waeyen was involved in the admiralty.

<sup>194</sup> Ferdinand Bol, *Portrait of Michiel Adriaensz. de Ruyter (1607-1676)*, 1667, oil on canvas, 157x138 cm, Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam; Blankert 1976, cat. no. 76; Ferdinand Bol, *Portrait of Michiel Adriaensz. de Ruyter (1607-1676)*, 1668-69, oil on canvas, 130x117 cm, Statens Museum for Kunst, Copenhagen; Blankert 1976, cat. no. 83.

<sup>195</sup> Joaneath Spicer, 'The Renaissance elbow', in: J. Bremmer & H. Roodenburg (ed.), *A Cultural History of Gesture. From Antiquity to the Present Day*, Cambridge 1991, pp. 84-128.

<sup>196</sup> Bedaux in: exhib. cat. Haarlem & Antwerp 2000-2001, cat. no. 63.

the hats of elegant gentlemen were usually black, but some young nobles, officers and militiamen preferred yellow or grey. Eventually the hats were no longer worn on the back of the head, but in the centre and in upright position.<sup>197</sup>

It is possible to distinguish two basic positions of the hat in portraiture, namely worn on top of the head or held in one of the sitter's hands. The first type can be seen in Flinck's *Portrait of a Boy*, the *Portrait of Dirck Jacobsz. Leeuw* and the portrait by the Monogrammist GTB [fig. 17] and in many other portraits of individual men, couples, families and children in landscapes. The hat is naturally an attribute one would mostly wear outdoors. Willem van der Vliet (1584-1642) has included an enormous hat in his portrait of a Catholic boy from Delft, who was only eighteen months old when his portrait was painted.<sup>198</sup> However, in many cases we can see that the boy is holding the hat in one of his hands, such as in the *Portrait of a Boy by Cool* [fig. 38]. Another motif is that a hat has been dropped on the ground in some family portraits. It is difficult to determine a consistent pattern in this practice. Probably the difference was a means to create some variety in the group painting. Indoors we can observe a similar distinction, where hats were in addition sometimes placed on tables.

Something may be noted, however, about the etiquette of doffing one's hat. Family groups are good examples of the difference or similarity in headgear of fathers and sons. After a first exploration, it can be stated that fathers do not hold their hats in their hands, while their sons are wearing theirs. Doffing one's hat obviously demonstrates respect for the other person, be it the parent of the viewer, and also obedience to authority. For boys it was appropriate to show that they were aware of this etiquette and that they were properly educated.<sup>199</sup> Thus it is impossible that the father would doff his hat, who was always the highest authority, while his son would not.

With regard to the landscape in Flinck's *Portrait of a Boy* it may be an overstatement to say that his parents had aristocratic pretensions, because the location of the setting is not identifiable and there is no obvious allusion to an estate or other privileges of country life. But certainly the landscape was meant to identify the boy with the status that the countryside had in this time. As said before, the Leeuw family owned an estate and cattle business outside Amsterdam, but the reference to these possessions is perhaps only implicitly made here. The bamboo cane also generated status in a sense that it was a very fashionable commodity around 1640, such as the pair of gloves and the large hat. By means of these elements and his formal pose Flinck's boy imitates some aspects of adult behaviour and he definitely was not the only one.

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<sup>197</sup> Der Kinderen-Besier 1950, pp. 94-95 and pp. 137-138; Meyer 1986, pp. 79-86 distinguished several types of hats and argues that the variety in headgear is so large that it is difficult to give a substantial overview.

<sup>198</sup> Willem van der Vliet, *Unidentified Boy*, 1638, oil on panel, 93x76 cm, Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam.

<sup>199</sup> Wayne E. Franits, *Paragons of Virtue. Women and Domesticity in Seventeenth-Century Dutch Art*, Cambridge 1993, p. 158; see also Herman Roodenburg, 'On "Swelling" the Hips and Crossing the Legs. Distinguishing Public from Private in Paintings and Prints from the Dutch Golden Age', in: Arthur K. Wheelock & Adele Seff (eds.), *The Public and Private in Dutch Culture of the Golden Age*, Newark & London 2000, pp. 64-84.

Based on the discussed examples, there are generally three ways in which elements from adult portraiture were imitated by children. In the first place, children appear in fantasy costumes in the guise of shepherds, hunters and military officers. These portraits do not reflect the child's appearance in daily life. The iconography was obviously selected to inform the viewer that the parents had aristocratic aspirations and wanted their children to take this position in society as well. The same idea can be found in representations of children in a contemporary landscape, possibly referring to a country lifestyle and the ownership of estates. However, L. Kooijmans has argued that the situation is not as simple as it seems.<sup>200</sup> Despite their prosperous and luxurious lifestyle, the patricians were not so much looking for an aristocratic position. In a Republic, noble titles were not of great value and many regents had great power anyway. It was more profitable to be a burgher of the first rank than a second-rank noble. For the elite, it was more in their favour to distinguish themselves from other burghers than to imitate the nobility. A way to do this was indeed to adopt elements from courtly culture, not because this was a position they wanted to pursue, but simply because the language of this courtly lifestyle traditionally implied status.

Secondly, the bamboo cane is, like other accessories as gloves, fans and hats, an example of an attribute that was imitated by children not so much for its symbolic meaning, but simply because it was truly fashionable. These elements mainly contribute to the idea of children as miniature adults, because as viewers we immediately recognise their adult origin and we understand that young toddlers would normally not be wearing or holding them. Thirdly, children could mimic purely formal elements of adult portraiture, such as we have seen in the poses of the Monogrammist GTB's *Portrait of a Boy* and Doncker's family portraits. Attributes such as gloves and hats could also eventually be included for their formal qualities, especially in family groups. This last type is mainly related to the practices of the painter.

However, the emulation of adult traditions, such as in the case of Flinck's *Girl by a High Chair* or Verspronck's *Girl in Blue*, reveals that elements were not always copied in a direct way, but were reused in a different context with a different meaning, creating an image of a child in which we can recognise some adult features, but that in essence is still completely childlike. In the same way, Flinck's boy in Birmingham has a childish posture and facial expression despite his adult costume and attributes. In this chapter we have seen that children, by making use of adult conventions, both social and formal, are alluding to their future lives and positions. In the next chapter we will investigate which elements were in fact particular for and restricted to the portrayal of children and a reflection of the present state of their childhood.

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<sup>200</sup> L. Kooijmans, 'Patriciaat en aristocratisering in Holland tijdens de zeventiende en achttiende eeuw', in: J. Aalbers & M. Prak (ed.), *De bloem der natie. Adel en patriciaat in de Noordelijke Nederlanden*, Amsterdam 1987, pp. 93-103+178-179; for a discussion on the term 'burgerlijk' see Harald Hendrix & Marijke Meijer Drees, *Beschaafde burgers. Burgerlijkheid in de vroegmoderne tijd*, Amsterdam 2001.



CHILDREN AS 'CHILDREN':  
SIGNS OF CULTIVATION AND EDUCATION

Despite the fact that some children were portrayed in their future roles with overtly adult elements, in essence they are still depicted as young children. In the case of Flinck's *Portrait of a Boy* the patron and painter decided that this is the way the boy should be immortalised. But perhaps they could have made a different choice. Alternative iconographies will be shown in this chapter by studying those elements that are unique for the portrayal of children and not dependent on conventions in adult portraiture. It is also a response to the claim that children were merely portrayed as 'miniature adults'.

Of course some childlike elements in Dutch painting have not passed unnoticed. In the introduction to the 1956 exhibition *Children Painted by Dutch Artists* in Liverpool it has been remarked that in the seventeenth century the "new realism was also applied to children's portraits, and the child's typical behaviour now became the painter's main pre-occupation. A wonderful variety of possibilities resulted. The children were painted sitting in a high chair, or standing beside it, holding a golf-club, playing with dogs or goats, ..." <sup>201</sup> In 2001 Mariët Westermann noticed that "Given the weight of Reformed writing on child rearing, with its interdiction of parental indulgence, it is surprising how often painters let children be children rather than miniature adults. ... Many portraits continued to present children in formal attire and attributes, as if to will their adult selves into being. Just as many, however, gave children colorful, even frivolous, dress and let them strike more casual poses." <sup>202</sup>

In 1983 Mary F. Durantini published *The Child in Seventeenth-Century Dutch Painting*, the title implying that her book covers all the different types, genres and appearances of children in Dutch painting of this period as a means to understand what it was like to be a child during the Golden Age. Her publication is, however, solely concentrated on children in genre paintings of everyday life at home, in the classroom and at play, which she classified as "typically childish" situations and activities. <sup>203</sup> Child portraiture clearly reveals some of the seventeenth-century ideas on childhood as well. <sup>204</sup> Although we, as twenty-first-century viewers, may have a different understanding of elements

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<sup>201</sup> Exhib. cat. Liverpool 1956, p. 4.

<sup>202</sup> Mariët Westermann, "Costly and Curious, Full of pleasure and home contentment." Making Home in the Dutch Republic', in: Mariët Westermann (ed.), *Art & Home. Dutch Interiors in the Age of Rembrandt*, exhib. cat. Denver Art Museum Denver, Colorado, The Newark Museum Newark, New Jersey 2001-2002, Zwolle 2001, pp. 15-81, see pp. 64-65.

<sup>203</sup> Mary F. Durantini, *The Child in Seventeenth-Century Dutch Painting*, Ann Arbor 1983, p. 4.

<sup>204</sup> See the criticism on Durantini in Jan Baptist Bedaux, 'Beelden van 'leersucht' en tucht. Opvoedingsmetaforen in de Nederlandse schilderkunst van de zeventiende eeuw', *Nederlands Kunsthistorisch Jaarboek* 33 (1982), pp. 49-74, note 46; Wayne Franits, 'Review of Durantini 1983', *The Art Bulletin* 67 (1985), pp. 695-700.

such as toys and pets or attach different meanings to them, we can be pretty certain that these objects were regarded in the seventeenth century as part of the realm of children too.

In this chapter the attributes of toys and pets will be studied, together with flowers and fruits, which are not restricted as such to the portraiture of children, but have a specific “childish” meaning when depicted in this context. Furthermore, some comments will be made on the difference between adult and child clothing, but also on the poses and facial expressions of children that express more movement and spontaneity than some adult counterparts. This chapter will focus on portraits in a contemporary setting and costume. *Portraits historiés* of children in the role of mythological figures, such as a putto, Cupid, or Ganymede will not be extensively studied, even though these particular allegorical roles cannot be found in adult portraiture.<sup>205</sup> As in the previous chapter, it needs to be considered to what extent the depiction is a result of a social and educational message or of the artistic and formal conventions practiced by the painter.

In the portraiture of children we encounter many types of toys, but also pets like dogs, horses, goats and birds. Some children are holding a basket of fruits or a single piece of fruit, for example cherries, apples, oranges and grapes, while others are depicted with a bunch of flowers, plants on the ground or flowers in a vase. As Bedaux argues in the introduction to *Pride and Joy*, a distinction needs to be made between realistic and allegorical attributes: “‘Realistic’ accessories are objects that might reasonably have belonged to the child’s everyday world, such as rattles, colf sticks, dolls, other toys and pets. Allegorical accessories consist of objects like fruit and flowers, that were not a direct element of a child’s daily reality and which were added by the artist and/or patron for symbolic reasons. ‘Realistic’ accessories, however, could also have an allegorical significance, which helps explain why they were selected in the first place.”<sup>206</sup> This is not the place to unravel the specific meanings of all these objects, since much work has already been done in this field, especially by Bedaux himself. It is useful, nonetheless, to sum up some of the findings.

### **Fruits and Flowers as Allusions to Fertility and Cultivation**

De Jongh’s *Zinne- en minnebeelden in de schilderkunst van de zeventiende eeuw* of 1967 was an important starting point of a new iconographical approach to attributes, gestures and other remarkable elements in portraiture and genre painting.<sup>207</sup> De Jongh found great similarities between these motifs in paintings and those included in emblem books of the seventeenth century, in which the pictorial representation was accompanied by a *motto* and an explanatory poem. In this publication, de Jongh addressed several elements in paintings with children, such as the dog, the finch and the blowing of

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<sup>205</sup> For interpretations of these paintings see for example Wendy Schaller, ‘Chariots to Heaven. Memorial Portraits of Children in the Guise of Venus’, *Oud Holland* 118 (2005), pp. 213-222.

<sup>206</sup> Bedaux 2000, p. 18.

<sup>207</sup> Eddy de Jongh, *Zinne- en minnebeelden in de schilderkunst van de zeventiende eeuw*, Amsterdam 1967; he studied these parallels more profoundly in Eddy de Jongh, Jan Baptist Bedaux *et al.*, *Tot lering en vermaak. Betekenissen van Hollandse genrevoorstellingen uit de zeventiende eeuw*, exhib. cat. Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam 1976 and in *Portretten van echt en trouw* of 1986.

bubbles, and attempted to explain their meaning by referring to the emblematic literature. In one of his articles, de Jongh studied a particular motif appearing in seventeenth-century family and child portraits, namely the bunch of grapes that is held by the stem, leaving the grapes themselves untouched.<sup>208</sup> He combined this motif with its occurrence in Jacob Cats's (1577-1660) *Houwelyck* of 1625 and claimed that it signifies virginity, not only in its most direct sense, but also as the 'second virginity' within marriage that is consumed without lust, but with virtuous love. Despite the fact that there seems to be a similarity between the painterly motif and the emblem, there are some major discrepancies between the two, resulting in a complex construction on the part of de Jongh in order to explain the full significance of the motif by means of emblems.

Bedaux clarified that eating fruit was not perceived as healthy in the seventeenth century. The soft nature of fruits will cause them to rot and was believed to produce cramps and other inconveniences.<sup>209</sup> In response to de Jongh, Bedaux argued in his article 'Fruit and Fertility' of 1987 that the similarity between the bunch of grapes in portraiture and the emblem is the result of "pictorial homonymy", saying that the origin of both is different and thus their meanings are not identical.<sup>210</sup> He states that iconologists have often created interpretational problems "alien to seventeenth-century man".<sup>211</sup> Instead, he prefers to see the grape and other types of fruit as more general symbols of the fertility of a fruitful marriage, i.e. breeding many children that are properly educated in the same way as fruit should be cultivated. He also believes that this meaning can be applied to many sorts of fruit in any place and position in the painting, thus eliminating an interpretation based on emblems.<sup>212</sup>

Flowers have naturally been related to blossoming and youth, but also to cultivation. In Cesare Ripa's (c.1560-c.1622) *Iconologia*, first published in 1593, the personification of Education is depicted with a sapling tied to a stick. Likewise flowers are growing along a trellis or on a climbing rod in child portraits. Such flowers indicate that youth should grow straight and should be guided and educated.<sup>213</sup> But flowers that have fallen onto the ground or are withered allude to the transience and brevity of youth, as do roses and carnations in particular. On the other hand, some plants have an overall negative meaning in the context of child portraits, namely the ivy and the thistle. If education fails and the child does not learn proper morals, nature runs wild and is uncontrolled, as it were, resulting in thorns, thistles, and ivy that overruns all other plants. Such plants were often included as a counterexample of proper education.<sup>214</sup>

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<sup>208</sup> Eddy de Jongh, 'Grape Symbolism in Paintings of the 16th and 17th Centuries', *Simiolus* 4 (1974), pp. 166-191.

<sup>209</sup> Bedaux: in exhib. cat. Haarlem & Antwerp 2000-2001, cat. no. 65.

<sup>210</sup> Jan Baptist Bedaux, 'Fruit and Fertility. Fruit Symbolism in Netherlandish Portraiture of the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries', *Simiolus* 17 (1987), pp. 150-168.

<sup>211</sup> Bedaux 1987, p. 167.

<sup>212</sup> Bedaux 1987, p. 168.

<sup>213</sup> Jan Baptist Bedaux, 'Discipline for Innocence. Metaphors for Education in Seventeenth-Century Dutch Painting', in: idem, *The reality of symbols. Studies in the iconology of Netherlandish art, 1400-1800*, Den Haag & Maarssen 1990, pp. 109-169, see p. 127.

<sup>214</sup> Bedaux: in exhib. cat. Haarlem & Antwerp 2000-2001, cat. no. 65.

## Animals and Pets as Metaphors of Education

Whereas Bedaux suggested that the meaning of fruits should be rather general, he presents his interpretation of the dog in child portraiture as one of the few successful attempts to combine a pictorial motif in painting with its emblematic counterpart.<sup>215</sup> In the legend of the legislator Lycurgus, included in Plutarch's *Moralia* in the part on raising children and translated in Dutch in 1634 in *Plutarchi Gulden-Boeck*, two dogs are raised in a different manner. One was trained to hunt and the other was always given food. When presented a living hare and a bowl of food in their adult stage, the first ran after the hare and the second ate the food. This story illustrates that, besides their nature, the behaviour of adults is rooted in their education as youths and that it is a result of the rules they permanently practiced and exercised during their childhoods. The training of dogs, Bedaux shows, occurs in seventeenth-century genre paintings and portraiture, but also in various emblems of the time, such as in the 1625 illustration to Cats's first part of *Houwelyck*, entitled *Maeghde-Wapen*, and in an emblem by Cornelis Galle (1576-1650) of 1640. The dog was a variation of Plutarch's animal, but bears the same meaning: nature can be corrected by means of education and exercise.

Other animals in Dutch child portraiture have similar connotations.<sup>216</sup> The untamed horse needs to be broken in order to be ridden with ease. Similarly the training of children should commence at an early age. Finches and parrots, being sometimes tied to a string, can be trained to pose on a stick and they can learn to speak.<sup>217</sup> The goat, which is a well-known symbol of carnal desires, has regularly been related to controlled sexual lust.<sup>218</sup> In Plutarch's view, parents should not loosen the reins and the lusts of older children should be bridled. This idea has been expressed in family portraits and individual portraits of boys, who control the animal with a bridle, stick or whip. Rotius created several portraits of this type. The sticks used by the boys in his paintings are remarkably made of bamboo, such as in a *Four-Year-Old Boy with a Goat* in the Rijksmuseum [fig. 46].<sup>219</sup> Thus the fashionable item of the bamboo cane, discussed in the previous chapter, can also be applied in a very different manner and context. Girls were said not to have such strong sexual desires and to have more shame. Still, they could be depicted with a cat reaching for an unattainable fish as the female equivalent of the bridled goat.<sup>220</sup> There are also examples of goat-carts, both in family portraits and in groups of children, which must have had a similar meaning of reining both the goat and the lusts.<sup>221</sup>

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<sup>215</sup> Bedaux 1982; Bedaux 1990; Bedaux 2000, pp. 19-22.

<sup>216</sup> Wayne Franits, 'Betemt de jueghd / soo doet sy deugd.' A Pedagogical Metaphor in Seventeenth-Century Dutch Art', in: *Nederlandse portretten. Bijdragen over de portretkunst in de Nederlanden uit de zestiende, zeventiende en achttiende eeuw*, Den Haag 1990 (*Leids Kunsthistorisch Jaarboek* 8, 1989), pp. 217-226.

<sup>217</sup> Bedaux 1982, p. 63; Bedaux in: exhib. cat. Haarlem & Antwerp 2000-2001, cat. no. 26; Finches might also refer to contained and captured love: de Jongh 1967, pp. 42-49.

<sup>218</sup> Bedaux 1990, p. 141; Bedaux in: exhib. cat. Haarlem & Antwerp 2000-2001, cat. no. 57.

<sup>219</sup> Jan Albertsz. Rotius, *Four-Year-Old Boy with a Goat*, 1652, oil on panel, 116x87 cm, Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam, exhib. cat. Haarlem & Antwerp 2000-2001, cat. no. 57.

<sup>220</sup> Bedaux 1990, p. 141; Bedaux in: exhib. cat. Haarlem & Antwerp 2000-2001, cat. no. 57.

<sup>221</sup> Volker Manuth, 'Een kindskontrefejtsel, antycqs gedaen' und 'Een ... van Scipio Africanus'. Zu zwei neu identifizieren Gemälden des Gerbrand van den Eeckhout', *Oud Holland* 112 (1998), pp. 139-150; Bedaux in: exhib. cat. Haarlem & Antwerp 2000-2001, cat. no. 67; Slive believes it is inappropriate to emphasise the

### Positive and Negative Play

Durantini made a distinction between three types of toys in Dutch genre paintings of the seventeenth century. “In the first group are those activities which function as reminders of the vanity and transience of earthly matters. ... Therefore the second group consists of those toys or activities which stress the qualities needed in order to live properly, while the third group illustrates the opposite – vice, folly and immortality.”<sup>222</sup> Examples of the first category are children blowing bubbles or playing with a bladder, which are, unsurprisingly, symbols of the transitory nature of human life and the earthly pleasures, because of their brief existence and the fleeting joy they produce. Flinck chose this typically childish iconography in his *Portrait of a Boy as Homo Bulla*, also painted in 1640 [fig. 43].<sup>223</sup> The boy is seated on a chair and is wearing a red fantasy costume. In his hands he holds a device for blowing bubbles. The meaning of this attribute is accentuated by the skull on the table in the left background. Durantini’s second category consists of toys that symbolise the selection of the right path in life, such as the top that can be disciplined, but also the game of knucklebones or marbles that requires great skill. The third group contains the toys that somehow indicate that the child has gone astray, alluding to misspent time, such as paper pinwheels, kites, card games, dice and mousetraps, or to self-deception, such as hobby horses and masks, but also alluding to ambition, vanity and folly. Musical instruments and dolls can in some cases also be interpreted as harmful toys.

Overall, many of the toys that have been given negative connotations by Durantini appear in child portraiture, such as girls with dolls and boys with kites. Parents would, however, not have their children portrayed exclusively with negative attributes without compensating these with symbols of good upbringing.<sup>224</sup> Thus the iconographical meaning of the objects presented by Durantini is not stable under all circumstances. Annemarieke Willemsen offered a different interpretation of the toys by arguing that many of them were in fact part of the households of the children and were indeed played with on a daily basis.<sup>225</sup> The choice for the toys was strongly influenced by those objects that were actually most dear to the depicted child. Although she does not reject a symbolic meaning, Willemsen argued that the toys were probably not included if the child itself had no affection for them. The toys are not necessarily direct portraits of the objects owned by the child, but can be the result of artistic traditions, and were incorporated in portraits “to enliven the composition, to emphasise that the subject was a child and, in many cases, to serve as status symbols.”<sup>226</sup>

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controlled sexual desires of very young children in something as important and public as a portrait and does not support this interpretation: exhib. cat. Washington, London & Haarlem 1989-1990, cat. no. 10

<sup>222</sup> Durantini 1983, p. 178.

<sup>223</sup> Govert Flinck, *Portrait of a Boy as 'Homo Bulla'*, 1640, oil on canvas, 65x56 cm, Sotheby's, New York, 22 January 2004, lot 47; Sumowski 1983, cat. no. 644.

<sup>224</sup> Franits 1985, p. 697,

<sup>225</sup> Annemarieke Willemsen, 'Images of Toys. The Culture of Play in the Netherlands around 1600', in: exhib. cat. Haarlem & Antwerp 2000-2001, pp. 61-71.

<sup>226</sup> Willemsen 2000, p. 62.

### Attributes: Meaning versus Form

Generally, all the attributes and accessories – fruits, flowers, pets and toys – somehow allude to the proper upbringing of the child. Despite the fact that very specific interpretations of all the single objects have been formulated, it may suffice to say that they all relate to the same theme or concept. Iconologists cannot be completely certain that their understanding of seventeenth-century paintings is indeed the same as those of contemporary viewers. Furthermore, although paintings and emblems existed side by side in a certain culture, some pictorial traditions were much older and the origin of the two may be different. For example, cherries and flowers already appeared in late-sixteenth-century child portraits, before the publication of the particular emblem books referred to by some scholars. Bedaux therefore tends to argue that it is better to understand the attributes in a more general sense. In addition, he also believes that all these elements (the so-called *bijwerk*) are in fact mainly a matter of form. The attributes are subordinate to the representation of the sitter. Artists could simply make a selection from the large range of items they could include in the portrait, “almost without thinking”, and combine all kinds of objects to their liking.<sup>227</sup> Some attributes were subject to erosion of meaning and both portraitists and viewers were no longer aware of their exact original significance. They were simply included to enliven the image.<sup>228</sup>

One example in which we can clearly see that patrons were not making a deliberate choice for a specific symbolic meaning are the many boys with goats by Rotius. These paintings seem to be part of the pictorial repertoire of this local Hoorn artist and merely his personal trademark or standard type rather than the result of a very conscious choice on behalf of the parents [fig. 44-47].<sup>229</sup> On the other hand, some attributes may have a fairly undefined meaning at first glance. They are seen as formal means to liven up the portraits, while in fact they bear a second layer of meaning. An instance of this phenomenon is the series of five girl’s portraits by Dirck van Santvoort, identified by Ekkart as the five sisters of the Spiegel family of around 1639 [fig. 48-52].<sup>230</sup> Each of the girls is depicted with an attribute from the aforementioned categories: Rebecca with apples, pears and grapes in her hands and the folds of her skirt, Elisabeth with a flute, Petronella as a shepherdess with a floral wreath, Margriet with a dog looking at a mirror, and Geertruyt with a finch seated on her right hand and pinching her

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<sup>227</sup> Bedaux 2000, p. 21. De Jongh argues in his review of *Pride and Joy* that solving the problem of iconographical interpretation by dismissing the importance of the symbolic meaning is not the best solution (de Jongh 2002, p. 168).

<sup>228</sup> Bedaux 1987, p. 168.

<sup>229</sup> J.A. Renckens, ‘De Hoornse schilder Jan Albertsz. Rotius’, *Nederlands Kunsthistorisch Jaarboek 2* (1948/1949), pp. 165-234, cat. no. 51, 69, 70; John R. Brozius, *Spiegel der jonckheydt. Het West-Friese kinderportret in de zeventiende eeuw*, exhib. cat. Westfries Museum, Hoorn 2010, p. 16.

<sup>230</sup> Dirck Dircksz. van Santvoort, *Rebecca Spiegel (1625-1651) as Taste*, c.1638-1639, oil on panel, 61x49 cm, private collection; Santvoort, *Elisabeth Spiegel (1628-1707) as Hearing*, c.1638-1639, oil on panel, 63x50 cm, The Cleveland Museum of Art, Cleveland; Santvoort, *Petronella Spiegel (1630-1656) as Smell*, c.1638-1639, oil on panel, 63x50 cm, Musée des Beaux-Arts, Rodez; Santvoort, *Margriet Spiegel (1631-1670) as Sight*, 1639, oil on panel, 64x49 cm, private collection; Santvoort, *Geertruyt Spiegel (1635-1662) as Touch*, 1639, oil on panel, 63x50 cm, National Gallery, London; R.E.O. Ekkart, ‘Vijf kinderportretten door Dirck Santvoort’, *Oud Holland* 104 (1990), pp. 245-255; see also R.E.O. Ekkart, ‘A portrait historié with Venus, Paris and Cupid. Ferdinand Bol and the patronage of the Spiegel family’, *Simiolus* 29 (2002), pp. 14-31.

left index finger. When viewed as individual portraits, the attributes are perhaps not readily understood as messengers of an allegorical theme. But when taken as a whole, they compose a representation of the Five Senses, respectively as Taste, Hearing, Smell, Sight and Touch. This series is one of the very few examples in which all the portraits of the individual children have been reunited and can be understood in unison. Perhaps more series of this kind can be recovered and the interpretation of some portraits must be adjusted.

### **Children's Costume and the Transition to Adult Attire**

As remarked earlier, several costume historians have argued that children's clothing in the seventeenth century was simply a miniature version of that of adults. However, a completely different position is taken by Saskia Kuus in the *Pride and Joy* catalogue.<sup>231</sup> She states that although at a certain age children started to dress in line with the customs of adults, their costumes were not at all miniature copies of adult clothing. Significant differences can quite easily be detected, for example when comparing the costumes of girls and those of the adult dolls they hold in their hands.<sup>232</sup> Differences included not only the form and components of the costumes, but also the fact that children commonly wore more colourful attire than adults. We have already seen examples of such colourful dresses in Verspronck's *Girl in Blue*, Cuyp's children of the Francken family, and Santvoort's Spiegel sisters.

In a sense the costumes of children should be "appropriate to be recorded for prosperity", as were those of adults, but in their daily lives children would not be wearing this clothing. Even though paintings are the most important source to reconstruct children's costume, the portraitists undoubtedly had a certain artistic freedom to include parts that were merely picturesque additions, such as the veil and garland of the *Girl by a High Chair* by Flinck.<sup>233</sup> In their early years, both girls and boys were wearing skirts, often with a white apron, such as worn by the girls in Doncker's family groups. That does not mean that their garments were identical.<sup>234</sup> For people in the seventeenth century the distinction between boys and girls would have been very easy to make. For boys, at least, it was customary to be dressed in an adult costume from around the age of six or seven and the change from a skirt to breeches was an important moment, as we can read in some historical documents.<sup>235</sup> However, the exact age at which this change took place varied from occasion to occasion. Flinck's boy and Backer's *Boy in Grey* have both changed to adult attire, which is overall much darker than children's clothing. As girls grew older their costumes would also be more ladylike and less colourful.

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<sup>231</sup> Saskia Kuus, 'Children's Costume in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries', in: exhib. cat. Haarlem & Antwerp 2000-2001, pp. 73-83.

<sup>232</sup> Kuus 2000, p. 74.

<sup>233</sup> Kuus 2000, p. 75.

<sup>234</sup> See for example S.A.C. Dudok van Heel, 'Een minne met een kindje door Frans Hals', *Jaarboek Centraal Bureau voor Genealogie* 29 (1975), pp. 146-159; exhib. cat. Amsterdam 1977-1978; Kuus 2000, pp. 79-80.

<sup>235</sup> Phillis Cunnington & Anne Buck, *Children's costume in England. From the fourteenth to the end of the nineteenth century*, London 1965, pp. 70-71; Kuus 2000, pp. 80-81; Broos & van Suchtelen 2004, cat. no. 1.

### Spontaneity and Joy: Childish Poses and Facial Expressions

Besides toys, one of the elements that is most explicitly associated with childhood is that children are playful, energetic and active. All of these characteristics seem to be conflicting with the act of posing for a portrait. However, for painters this was not a major problem. The most important part of the body that needed to be portrayed was of course the face. The rest of the body could be modelled by the artist according to his own artistic convictions and practices or the wishes of the patron. The poses emerged from the artist's memory and his study material. The result is that most children are indeed depicted in a rather formal frontal pose and little movement is added to their limbs. Although this changed in the second half of the seventeenth century in the works of an artist such as Nicolaes Maes, in the first half it is indeed hard to find any convincing movement in individual child portraits. For example, there is a girl by Hendrick Cornelisz. van Vliet (1611/1612-1675) of 1643 holding a garland of flowers and seated on the ground, a six-year-old boy from the circle of Jacob Backer of 1656 standing in an illusionistic window offering an apple to the viewer, a boy by Bartholomeus van der Helst in a seascape who is about to hit a ball with his *colf* stick of the late 1650s, and a portrait by Ludolf de Jongh (1616-1679) of 1661 of a boy, who is training his dog and is seated on a bench with his left leg pulled up on the seat, thus striking a pose of course not decent for an adult [fig. 53-56].<sup>236</sup>

Another aspect of the ideas on childhood is that children are joyful and that they smile a lot. In Maarten van Heemskerck's (1498-1574) family portrait of c.1530 this innocent euphoric emotion has been conveyed in a most beautiful way [fig. 57]. The depiction of laughter was not meant to expose the cheerful characters of the children, but should be understood in a symbolic way. Laughter and uncontrolled delight were seen as the embodiment of the daft foolishness of children and should be discouraged by the parents.<sup>237</sup> The tradition that van Heemskerck started seems to have been broken straight away and children ceased to smile, let alone burst out in laughter, in late-sixteenth- and early-seventeenth-century portraits. Again there are exceptions, such Emerentia van Beresteyn by Soutman of 1628 [fig. 58], who has a very friendly smile on her face.<sup>238</sup> But taken as a whole, very few children are smiling in their portraits.

In group portraits, contrastingly, the rendering of poses and facial expressions is profoundly different. In the first place, children are usually depicted in proportion to the adults and the setting around them. In this way their childlike postures are underlined. Their limbs are shorter in relation to the rest of their bodies and overall their postures are less slender than those of adults. Furthermore, the artists have often attempted to visualise interaction between the various sitters and thus the children

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<sup>236</sup> Hendrick Cornelisz. van Vliet, *Portrait of an Unknown Girl Holding a Garland of Flowers*, 1643, oil on panel, 91x73 cm, whereabouts unknown; Circle of Jacob Backer, *Six-Year-Old Boy with an Apple*, 1656, oil on canvas, 53x42 cm, private collection; Bartholomeus van der Helst, *Portrait of a Boy with a Colf Stick*, c.1658-1659, oil on canvas, 112x84 cm, whereabouts unknown; Ludolf de Jongh, *Boy Training His Dog*, 1661, oil on canvas, 98x71 cm, The Arthur and Margaret Glasgow Fund, Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, Richmond.

<sup>237</sup> Maarten van Heemskerck, *Portrait of Pieter Jan Foppesz. and his Family*, c.1530, oil on panel, 119x140 cm, Staatliche Museen, Kassel; Greep 1996, pp. 18-32.

<sup>238</sup> Pieter Claesz. Soutman, *Portrait of Emerentia van Beresteyn*, 1628, oil on canvas, 145x105 cm, Waddesdon Manor, Buckinghamshire.



are also moving more than in individual formal portraits. Frans Hals was particularly successful in creating this interaction in his few family groups. In his earliest family portrait of around 1620, now as two separate canvases, we can see that the children are cheerful, that they exchange glances and gesticulate in the direction of one another [fig. 59].<sup>239</sup> In Hals's London family group of the late 1640s, one young girl is leaning on her mother's lap, while at left one of the elder daughters holds another young girl in her arms, who is being offered a flower by one of her brothers. In the foreground, a girl is seated on the ground and smiles at the viewer [fig. 60].<sup>240</sup>

During the same period, Anthony van Dyck (1599-1641) portrayed many courtiers in England and especially in his group paintings of children we can observe some wonderful action and spontaneity. In a portrait of three children, perhaps by one of his followers, the eldest boy is studying a book, while the second is holding a finch. The bird has caught the attention of the youngest child, who is holding a rattle and stretches out his left hand towards the small living creature with great amazement [fig. 61].<sup>241</sup> Honthorst adapted this tradition during his stay in England in 1628, for example, in his portrait of the *Duke of Buckingham and His Family*. The youngest child sits on the lap of his mother, but leans over to the flowers held by the daughter on the left [fig. 62].<sup>242</sup> Honthorst brought this tradition to the Netherlands on his return and can, for instance, be clearly seen in his assumed portrait of Isabella Charlotte van Nassau-Oranje (1632-1642) of c.1632, in which the small naked princess is seated under a tree and stretches out her hand to grasp a fruit [fig. 63].<sup>243</sup>

In the 1640s Ferdinand Bol made a painting with a girl is willing to pose for the portraitist. But her slightly younger brother seems to be bored and pulls his sister away to the right, with an annoyed expression on his face, to continue their walk in the open air [fig. 64].<sup>244</sup> One of the best examples of childish movement and emotion is created in Rembrandt's *Family Portrait* of around 1668. Although Rembrandt only painted very few children's portraits, in this family group the affection of the family members is rendered in a very touching way. The youngest child rests its arm on the chest of the mother on the right, while two girls on the left smile at each other [fig. 65].<sup>245</sup>

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<sup>239</sup> Frans Hals, *Family Portrait in a Landscape*, c.1620, oil on canvas, 153x163 cm, Viscount Boyne, Bridgnorth, Shropshire; Frans Hals, *Three Children with a Goat Cart*, c.1620, oil on canvas, 152x107 cm, Musées Royaux des Beaux-Arts de Belgique, Brussels; exhib. cat. Washington, London & Haarlem 1989-1990, cat. no. 10+11.

<sup>240</sup> Frans Hals, *Family Group in a Landscape*, c.1647-1650, oil on canvas, 148x251 cm, National Gallery, London; exhib. cat. Washington, London & Haarlem 1989-1990, cat. no. 67.

<sup>241</sup> Anthony van Dyck or a follower, *Portrait of Three Boys*, after c.1620, oil on canvas, 84x108 cm, Victoria Art Gallery, Bath.

<sup>242</sup> Gerard van Honthorst, *The Duke of Buckingham and His Family*, 1628, oil on canvas, 132x193 cm, Hampton Court (copies in the National Portrait Gallery, London, Ryston Hall, Museum of Fine Arts, Houston); J. Richard Judson & Rudolf E.O. Ekkart, *Gerrit van Honthorst, 1592-1656*, Doornspijk 1999, cat. no. 385.

<sup>243</sup> Gerard van Honthorst, *Portrait of a Girl, possibly Isabella Charlotte van Nassau-Oranje (1632-1642)*, c.1632, oil on canvas, 108x83 cm, Mauritshuis, The Hague; Judson & Ekkart 1999, cat. no. 320.

<sup>244</sup> Ferdinand Bol, *Portrait of Two Children in Full Length in a Landscape*, 1640s, oil on canvas, 129x117 cm, whereabouts unknown.

<sup>245</sup> Rembrandt, *Family Portrait*, c.1668, oil on canvas, 126x167cm, Herzog Anton Ulrich-Museum, Braunschweig.

### **Mixtures of Childlike and Adult Features**

From all the above-mentioned childlike features, including childish attributes, the particular elements of children's costumes and the active poses and joyful facial expressions of young sitters, we may obtain the impression that indeed some typically childish characteristics and behaviour in portraits can be pointed out. Can we altogether reject the statement that children were simply portrayed as miniature adults during the seventeenth century? The situation is not as uncomplicated as it may seem. It is hard to find an example of a child that is simultaneously playing with a toy, is wearing an explicitly childlike costume and is presented as a energetic young creature. A portrait is not a genre painting and we should not expect the children to be actually playing rather than posing. It is not a representation of the child's daily life, but a static image that has been carefully composed and balanced, both in form and content. Nevertheless, there are certain tensions in the portraiture of children, regardless of the childlike aspects. Very often a combination is made of elements from both adult portraiture and elements that specifically are part of the category of children, as we have already noticed. In Flinck's *Girl by a High Chair* [fig. 7] the usual table or chair has been replaced by a typical children's object, namely the high chair, but the girl's pose is derived from the representations of adults. In Verspronck's *Girl in Blue* [fig. 9] the spontaneous facial expression is combined with an adult stance and costume. In the final part of this chapter some other tensions and mixtures will be explored.

The first tension is considered with the formal aspects of the portraits. The five Spiegel sisters are, despite their childlike attributes and their symbolism, conveyed in a very traditional way. They are placed in front of a neutral background and have been portrayed in three-quarter length. Although many children were positioned in this type of setting and the three-quarter length is definitely not uncommon, numerous adults have been portrayed likewise. The second tension relates to the interpretation of animals in child portraits. Although Bedaux outlined very clearly that dogs usually allude to the proper upbringing of children, this notion should not be attached to every depiction of this pet in the company of a child. For example, in the portrait of Michiel Pompe van Slingelandt by Jacob Gerritsz. Cuyp [fig. 32] the dog is an essential element of the hunt. According to Bedaux, the dog can refer to this privileged sport, but can equally be a sign of education. The dog is sniffing the ground in search of a potential prey. Nevertheless, it is more a matter of instinct than of training.

In the sequence of boys with goats by Rotius, the animal has disappeared to the background in one of his last portraits with this theme. While in his earlier portraits the boys are holding the goats by their horns and are holding the reins and a stick, the boy in Boston has taken the pose of a gentleman [fig. 47]. With his left arm akimbo, he is resting on his cane. He is wearing breeches and a large dark hat. Overall, he is quite similar to Flinck's boy. There is no contact between him and the goat. The animal seems to have been included as an accessory that lost its traditional meaning. In this way an odd mixture emerges of a typically childlike iconography with an adult pose and attribute. This fusion

also appears in Jan Daemen Cool's family group in Brussels of 1637 [fig. 66].<sup>246</sup> Although the youngest boy is seated on the back of a horse, lead by his older brother, and is holding the reins, it is difficult to state that this is only an allusion to his proper education. The parents are seated under a tree on the left in the company of a young boy, while the fourth son and the only daughter are standing at right together with a whippet. In the background there are meadows and a church. Overall, the scenery and the two animals seem to associate the family with country life, as discussed earlier.

The third tension appears in the combination of attributes that belong to the sphere of children and those of adults. For example, a boy by an anonymous Dutch master of 1615 has been depicted with a *colf* stick, but simultaneously is holding a hat in his left hand [fig. 67].<sup>247</sup> A girl with a green parrot resting on her right hand by another unknown painter of around 1640 looks at the viewer in a frightened way. At the same time, she is holding a fashionable fan in her left hand [fig. 68].<sup>248</sup> The combination of a fan with fruits and pets, in this case a squirrel, can also be observed in the portrait of Elisabeth van Oosten of 1663, ascribed to Willem Jansz. Ploy (active c.1655-1675) [fig. 69].<sup>249</sup>

The final tension is that between pose and facial expression on the one hand and attributes on the other. Dirck van Santvoort's beautiful rendition of a boy in white against a dark background, probably Simon van Alteren (1640-1674), of c.1641 shows a rattle in the left hand of the young child, who was just one year old when this portrait was created [fig. 70].<sup>250</sup> His pose is that of a prince or a general, since he firmly grips a long stick in his right hand. We have already seen this stance in Ferdinand Bol's later portrait of Otto van der Waeyen. Otto was much older, however, when he was portrayed in this way. A motivation for this pose of Santvoort's boy was definitely his father's high social position, who was knighted in England and appointed Bailiff of Kennemerland.

This chapter has shown that at the time Flinck created his *Portrait of a Boy* there were many different iconographies that to a greater extent stressed the childlike appearance of young sitters. Flinck took part in such other traditions as well, for example with the *Girl by a High Chair* and the boy with the bubbles. This at least indicates that Flinck was aware of such alternatives, but perhaps also that he consciously decided to create a different image of the boy in the Birmingham painting. Definitely the age of this boy played a large part and dictated that it was no longer appropriate to include toys, pets or other childlike features, such as a colourful costume.

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<sup>246</sup> Jan Daemen Cool, *Portrait of a Family in a Landscape*, 1637, oil on panel, 128x175 cm, Musées Royaux des Beaux-Arts en Belgique, Brussels; Ekkart 1997, cat. no. 19.

<sup>247</sup> Anonymous Dutch master, *Boy with a 'Colf' Stick*, 1615, oil on panel, 107x66 cm, Markiezenhof, Bergen op Zoom; exhib. cat. Haarlem & Antwerp 2000-2001, cat. no. 17.

<sup>248</sup> Anonymous Netherlandish master, *Portrait of a Girl with a Parrot*, c.1640, oil on canvas, 112x79 cm, National Gallery, London.

<sup>249</sup> Willem Jansz. Ploy (ascribed to), *Portrait of Elisabeth van Oosten (1660-1714)*, 1663, oil on canvas, 118x83 cm, Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam.

<sup>250</sup> Dirck Dircksz. van Santvoort, *Boy in White, probably Simon van Alteren (1640-1674)*, c.1641, oil on panel, 87x68 cm, private collection; Ekkart in: exhib. cat. Haarlem & Antwerp 2000-2001, cat. no. 40.

Let us take the portraits discussed in the previous chapter into consideration and compare them with the portraits discussed here. We notice that it is rather difficult to draw the line between children that are mainly copying things from adult portraiture and children that have been portrayed with childlike attributes, but in whose portraits also some adult conventions were incorporated. Perhaps these two types are so near that they are not worthy of a strict separation. If a child is depicted with a toy, we do not immediately have the impression that the sitter is more childlike, as it were, than a child with a wooden cane and a hat. These are different iconographies – the first alluding more directly to childhood than the latter – but the overall images that are created are equally formal.

In answer to that, it is perhaps ineffective to think in terms of these categories: childlike versus adult elements. It is very important that we do not confuse two things. A formal pose and a neutral facial expression in a child portrait are not necessarily the result of the emulation of adult conventions, but rather of the requirements that are inherent to portraiture as a genre in itself. Perhaps the *Girl in Blue* is not consciously “poking fun at formal adult behaviour” because her smile seems to contradict her static pose. Perhaps her pose was not selected because she wanted to be a small adult lady, but simply because it was the artistic approach and formal type that Verspronck applied to all his female sitters. Individual portraits are meant to be official, public and motionless representations of the sitters, in which a respectable image of these persons is produced that is recognisable and fairly timeless. These requirements are the same for adults and children. Again we are confronted with the inadequacy of projecting the notions of children as cheerful and lively creatures on seventeenth-century portraiture. Portraits were not meant to embody these characteristics at all. We are not left in doubt whether the sitter is a child or an adult, when he is wearing an elegant costume with a large hat, a pair of gloves and a wooden cane, such as Flinck’s *Portrait of a Boy*. Because of the proportions of the body and the face and its relation to the surrounding setting, we immediately see that the person in question is a child.

At the same time it is difficult to maintain that portraits are only a matter of form. They mediate a certain social message that is to be read by the viewer. And this message was perhaps not the same for the child and the adult. Hopefully an understanding of these messages will shed light on the discussion whether the emulation of adult conventions in child portraiture was a conscious process of communicating a social idea about the sitter or whether this emulation was indeed mainly a matter of formal portrait conventions in both adult and child portraiture. The interpretation of the roles that children play in their portraits is the theme of the final chapter. It will hopefully also clarify for what reasons Flinck and the patron decided that the boy in 1640 was portrayed the way he was and not differently.

CHILDHOOD IN THE GOLDEN AGE:  
STAGES OF DEVELOPMENT

A distinction could be made between children that mimic elements from adult portraiture and children that are portrayed with childlike attributes, costumes and poses. In many portraits the two aspects are combined and it is not always easy to determine which category is the most applicable to a particular portrait. The final outcome of a portrait is for a certain part based on formal conventions, both of the portraitist and of portraiture as a genre. Nevertheless, this is not the end of the story and portraits are not only a matter of form. This chapter will explore which social messages were communicated by child portraits and thus what the motivations of the patrons may have been for the selection of the iconography of their attributes and poses. Eventually this may also increase our understanding of Flinck's *Portrait of a Boy*.

As pointed out earlier, the question remains to what extent portraits are reflections of contemporary ideas on issues such as family life. But if argued that it is incorrect to project modern ideas of childhood on the paintings from the past, we have to understand what instead the seventeenth-century notions of childhood were. We must keep the cultural and historical context in mind, or in other words, ask the question what the cultural and social framework was in which the children, immortalised in the portraits, grew up. The main focus lies on the general conceptions and patterns of childrearing, education and parent-child relations and their connection with works of art. Are the paintings indeed expressions of these ideas in a direct sense or not?

In the past three decades art historians and historians have paid attention to the visualisation of family life both in genre paintings and in portraits. Besides the actual works of art and prints, the authors relied on seventeenth-century written material, such as household manuals and treatises, guidebooks to family life, medical handbooks, sermons, comic plays, etc. Many art historians have consulted emblem books to find explanations for iconographical motifs. Other items of use are private letters from parents or from foreign travellers who described the situations they encountered during their visits. In her 1983 book, Durantini additionally made use of restrictions and admonitions of the Church and references to the Bible, autobiographies, contemporary drama and plays, children's rhymes, Dutch proverbs and some other sources. Franits has commented upon the use of socio-historic sources for the interpretation of paintings in general.<sup>251</sup> It is very important that the cited sources are indeed relevant to the paintings in terms of comparability, date and place. The expressed opinions should be applicable to society at large or at least to the social group that commissioned or bought the paintings. Furthermore, Franits argues, symbolism should not be seen as simple "sociological illustration". The use of the sources for the purpose of providing background information is also not

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<sup>251</sup> For his comments on Durantini's methods see Franits 1985.

without pitfalls, because the sources are often contradictory and usually contained ideas formulated by individuals that are not shared by the general public.<sup>252</sup>

All these manuals and guidebooks naturally presented an ideal situation. In reality, these ideals were not necessarily practiced within every household in the country. Similarly, portraits also display ideal and harmonious families rather than the actual difficulties and problems the families needed to face in their daily lives. In this sense the written sources and the paintings may be comparable. But their precise relationship should be studied with care. Another question is whether every family was indeed aware of the information presented in the manuals and treatises. It has been stressed many times that Jacob Cats's *Houwelyck* was published in a large edition of 50,000 books, as was *Maeghden-plicht*, and that of *Trou-ringh* 25,000 books were printed. Thus every respectable household in the Netherlands probably owned a copy.<sup>253</sup> Cats has been endlessly cited by art historians in relation to seventeenth-century paintings. His writings were by far not the only source. Other Dutch writings on the rearing of children include those by the Reformed minister Willem Teellinck, catechisms designed for children by Philips van Marnix van Sint Aldegonde (1540-1598), Jacobus Borstius (1612-1680) and Jacobus Koelman (1632-1695), the educational treatises of Erasmus (1466-1536) and Jacob Cats, the expositions of Marnix van Sint Aldegonde, the preacher of the Further Reformation Petrus Wittewrongel (1609-1662) and Koelman, and the medical handbooks by Johan van Beverwyck (1594-1647) and Stephanus Blankaart (1650-1704).<sup>254</sup>

### **Family Life in the Seventeenth Century**

Nowadays we often believe that in the past families were much bigger than they are today and that households contained various family members, including the parents and children, but also grandparents and aunts. Furthermore, the elite were believed to employ many servants. We only have to look at seventeenth-century family portraits to understand that this was not the case. The average family consisted of four members and the so-called nuclear family was the norm in the Golden Age. This was partly due to high infant mortality. The main reason for the relatively low average was that many adults were widows and widowers and there was a high percentage of single people.<sup>255</sup> It was also typical for a society that mostly relied on trade rather than farming and that, for a large part, lived in towns and cities. Companionship and mutual love were regarded by Protestants and Catholics as the basis of marriage. The roles of husbands and wives in marital life were clearly defined: "the husband was to provide materially and spiritually for his family and his servants, while his wife was to use the

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<sup>252</sup> See also his comments in Franits 1993, pp. 4-17.

<sup>253</sup> De Jongh 1974, p. 173 (especially note 14).

<sup>254</sup> Jeroen Dekker, Leendert Groenendijk & Johan Verberckmoes, 'Proudly Raising Vulnerable Youngsters. The Scope for Education in the Netherlands', in: exhib. cat. Haarlem & Antwerp 2000-2001, pp. 43-60.

<sup>255</sup> Donald Haks, *Huwelijk en gezin in Holland in de 17<sup>de</sup> en 18<sup>de</sup> eeuw. Processen en moralisten over aspecten van het laat 17de- en 18de-eeuwse gezinsleven*, Assen 1982, p. 148.

household purse wisely, nurture the couple's children, and supervise female servants."<sup>256</sup> Parents were of course responsible for their children and, in return, children were to respect their parents. The home was the domain of the mother. Children would mainly be under her care, though under the power of both parents. Adulthood was officially reached at the age of twenty-five. Yet boys and girls were allowed to marry before that age, but from that moment onwards girls were subdued to the marital power of their husbands.<sup>257</sup> Not many people, unfortunately, survived up to that age, as the level of infant mortality was indeed very high and life expectancy was low. Only half of the children overcame all the possible illnesses and problems of bad hygiene, but the other half died mainly before the age of five. On the other hand, many women died during pregnancy and childbirth or as the result of fatal infections after giving birth.<sup>258</sup> Therefore the existence of people was very vulnerable and in danger and hence particularly cherished.<sup>259</sup>

### **Childhood as a Separate Stage in Human Life**

In the twentieth century many scholars, such as historians, sociologists and psychologists, have attempted to write a history of childhood from various perspectives. The main question in their publications is how concepts of childhood developed over time and also when changes in this concept emerged. Inherent to this problem, the questions arise whether childhood was always recognised as a separate stage in the life of a human being, how the concept was brought into practice and also at what age children entered the world of adults. One of the pioneers in this field was the historian Philippe Ariès, who claimed that there was no notion of childhood in the past, especially in the Middle Ages. He based this conclusion on visual representations – or the lack of it – from this period in which children were depicted as adults on a smaller scale, also in adult costumes.<sup>260</sup> He argued that the development of the concept took place over a time span of several centuries and that it was not until the eighteenth century that the modern principles of childhood had fully taken shape.

Others after him have related the manifestation of the ideas on childhood to modernity. Yet all of them have positioned the beginning of this process at a different moment in history. The discussion also evolves around the issue whether childhood is a biological state or a social construction. Other authors have concentrated more on the social position of children in society and the attitude towards them, whether they were regarded as a pleasure or a bother, and how they were treated in terms of sympathy and affection or discipline, punishment and cruelty. The evolutionistic theory implies that the specific demands of children were slowly acknowledged to a larger extent and were related to the

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<sup>256</sup> Westermann, 2001, p. 49.

<sup>257</sup> Haks 1982, p. 158.

<sup>258</sup> Bedaux 2000, p. 24; Dekker, Groenendijk & Verberckmoes 2000, p. 57.

<sup>259</sup> See also for the expression of this in portraiture in B.C. Sliggers (ed.), *Naar het lijk. Het Nederlandse doodsportret 1500-heden*, exhib. cat. Teylers Museum, Haarlem 1998, Zutphen 1998.

<sup>260</sup> Philippe Ariès, *L'Enfant et la Vie Familiale sous l'Ancien Régime*, Paris 1960; translated as Philippe Ariès, *Centuries of Childhood. A Social History of Family Life*, New York 1962.

growing awareness of individual identity.<sup>261</sup> As opposed to the evolutionistic theory, some authors have in its place stressed the continuity of family relations, affection and domesticity.<sup>262</sup>

In many of these studies paintings and other visual material were the prime sources. Rather than construing a history of childhood, some art historians have attempted to write a history of children in art, in which the opposition between evolution and continuity can also be detected. Anita Schorsch's *Images of Childhood* reflects Ariès's notion that in the Middle Ages childhood was not recognised, but that especially in seventeenth-century Holland, eighteenth- and nineteenth-century England and America the affection and love of parents for their children was expressed in art.<sup>263</sup> Erika Langmuir in 2006 focused instead on the continuity of ideas on childhood from antiquity to the present by approaching the material from different themes.<sup>264</sup> A 1992 exhibition on British paintings of children, covering the seventeenth until the twentieth centuries, also paid attention to universal issues.<sup>265</sup> The catalogue to the 1997 exhibition *Kinderen van alle tijden* was divided into several stages and events in the life of a child, such as birth, learning to walk, family life, feasts, illness, death, school time and objects such as toys, portraits, and children's costumes, surveying the period between the Middle Ages and the present.<sup>266</sup> Overall, many authors have stressed that particularly in the Dutch seventeenth century the changes in the ideas of childhood made their way into art.

Since the Middle Ages the ages of men were visualised in prints in the form of a stairway: childhood and youth were positioned on the low left side of the stairs, adulthood as the summit of life in the centre, and old age on the descending steps on the right [fig. 71]. The various ages were accompanied by appropriate attributes, costumes, and references to occupations belonging to each stage in life. These prints can perhaps be regarded as evidence that the notion of the division of human life in subsequent stages is very old.<sup>267</sup> Cats's *Houwelyck* is segmented in the five stages of the life of a woman: maiden, sweetheart, bride, housewife and widow. Although Cats did not dedicate a special chapter to childhood, his book starts with an exposition on children's play as an illustration of foolish behaviour that should be avoided during adult life [fig. 72].

There is mutual disagreement among art historians about the image of children that is created in seventeenth-century Dutch genre paintings and portraits. Some claim that it appears from the paintings that childhood was not recognised as an independent stage in human life. According to

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<sup>261</sup> See also Linda Pollock, *Forgotten Children. Parent-Child Relations from 1500-1900*, Cambridge 1985 and her historiographic overview on pp. 1-32.

<sup>262</sup> See the historiographic overview on pp. 156-158 in Jeroen J.H. Dekker, 'A Republic of Educators. Educational Messages in Seventeenth-Century Dutch Genre Painting', *History of Education Quarterly* 36 (1996), pp. 155-182.

<sup>263</sup> Anita Schorsch, *Images of Childhood. An Illustrated Social History*, New York 1979.

<sup>264</sup> Erika Langmuir, *Imagining childhood*, New Haven & London 2006.

<sup>265</sup> Sara Holdsworth & Joan Crossley, *Innocence and Experience. Images of Children in British Art from 1600 to the Present*, exhib. cat. Manchester City Art Galleries, Manchester, Ferens Art Gallery, Hull, Castle Museum, Nottingham & Kelvingrove Museum and Art Gallery, Glasgow 1992, Manchester 1992.

<sup>266</sup> Exhib. cat. 's-Hertogenbosch 1997.

<sup>267</sup> [...], *Die Lebenstreppe. Bilder der menschlichen Lebensalter*, exhib. cat. Kleve, Kevelaer & Velbert 1983, Cologne 1983; Dekker, Groenendijk & Verberckmoes 2000, p. 50.



Durantini, childhood was depicted as “a preparatory stage prior to the more perfect end: adulthood.”<sup>268</sup> Franits’s opinion on these matters is quite the opposite: “Regardless of the extent to which the seventeenth-century concept of childhood differed from the modern-day one, the very presence of children in art and literature suggests that parents did not neglect them but were aware of the problems and needs in this distinct stage of life, separate from adulthood.”<sup>269</sup> Westermann states that “The pictures appear to have participated in the gradual development of a conception of childhood as a separate and more prolonged stage of human development, with special needs and pleasures.”<sup>270</sup> She relates this to the growing religious emphasis on the individual’s position before God and the sacred idea that childbearing was one of the virtuous acts and aims of marriage.

This diversity of interpretations reveals how difficult, and perhaps impossible, it is to observe the paintings in a neutral and objective way. As a historian, Donald Haks argues that the discussion whether stages such as childhood and adolescence were acknowledged at certain moments in history is not relevant in the end. He also believes it is futile to think in terms of the ‘discovery of the child’ in the eighteenth century, in which the child was compared with a *tabula rasa* or a blank slate implying that children are not innately sinful. He prefers to study whether a child was considered to require a different approach and attitude than an adult on the part of the parents. Haks believes that in seventeenth-century Holland it was indeed admitted that children should be approached with tact and should be encouraged in a sympathetic way and also that they had specific characteristics, namely being cheerful, selfish, reckless and carefree. That does not mean, however, that these qualities were regarded as positive and valuable. Instead, children were submitted to adult standards and their behaviour was seen as silly and foolish. Despite the fact that children should be addressed in accordance with their very nature, they were constantly reflected in the mirror of adulthood.<sup>271</sup>

### **Genre Paintings: Parental Roles and Educational Warnings**

In the Dutch Republic, numerous themes from the daily lives of children made their way into genre paintings, such as nursing, having meals and feeding, school time and teaching, praying, lace making, feasting, playing, assisting at domestic tasks, being ill, and combing their hair [fig. 73-76]. Although the exact meaning of some motifs is disputable, these paintings are indications of the large interest that adults took in their children. As with portraits, genre paintings suggest that, in one way or another, a certain significance was ascribed to infants. As opposed to portraiture, genre painting allows the painter to include more movement and emotion in his figures. Thus genre paintings more readily appeal perhaps to us modern viewers than the portraits that are said to be stiff and formal. Since the publications of de Jongh, Alpers and many others, genre paintings are no longer considered to be direct illustrations of daily reality in the Dutch seventeenth century and their supposed realism has

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<sup>268</sup> Durantini 1983, p. 3.

<sup>269</sup> Franits 1993, pp. 159-160.

<sup>270</sup> Westermann 2001, p. 64.

<sup>271</sup> Haks 1982, pp. 161-162.

been subject to extensive study and critique.<sup>272</sup> Instead, in the case of children, these paintings are believed to contain ideas and ideals of education and proper upbringing.

With reference to Gerard Dou's triptych of the *Allegory of Artistic Education*, which only survived in an eighteenth-century copy [fig. 77], Jan Emmens argued that it is an allegorical representation of the Aristotelian belief that three elements are needed for proper childrearing: nature, education and exercise – an idea also found in the writings of Cicero, Quintilian, Plutarch and Erasmus.<sup>273</sup> Children are very fragile in their early years and their nature can easily be corrupted, effortlessly distracting them from choosing the right path. Therefore children need education and discipline and the taught rules and skills should be exercised on a frequent basis. This triad is also key to the interpretation of fruits, flowers and animals in child portraits and the foundation of seventeenth-century theories on correct upbringing, which was the responsibility of the parents. Children were supposed to learn good manners, certain skills, and be brought up as virtuous and pious Christians. It was believed that children are gifts of God and should be given spiritual education. In return, children were supposed to be subdued to their parents and their wills should be broken. Although discipline was one of the foremost elements in childrearing, physical punishment was not appreciated and was advised to be used with moderation.

Durantini came to the conclusion that genre paintings depicting scenes from the daily lives of children were intended for an adult audience. Since children mimic the behaviour of their parents, both good and bad, Durantini believes that all the genre paintings with children were meant as mirrors for the parents. Adults should judge their own actions and estimate whether the education and training they provide their children is adequate. They are asked to decide if they indeed set the right example and in this way are to question their own behaviour as well. Paintings illustrating the proverb 'As the old sing, so pipe the young' are one of the most direct ways of giving shape to this idea [fig. 78]. Genre paintings mainly had a moralistic meaning intended for adults rather than children.<sup>274</sup>

Franits believes the paintings are also directed at the children, since many contain educational and pedagogical messages. The home was seen as the ideal environment for the instruction of children. Franits concludes that the family was seen as a miniature version of society and thus that the education of children was not only advantageous for themselves, but also for their families and for society at large.<sup>275</sup> This idea is studied very elaborately by the cultural historian Simon Schama in *The Embarrassment of Riches* of 1987.<sup>276</sup> This book studies the history of the Dutch Republic not in a

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<sup>272</sup> Exhib. cat. Amsterdam 1976; Alpers 1983.

<sup>273</sup> Gerard Dou (copy by Willem Joseph Laqui (1738-1798)), *Allegory of Artistic Education*, 1748-1771, oil on canvas, 83x70 cm, Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam; J.A. Emmens, 'Natuur onderwijzing en oefening. Bij een drieluik van Gerrit Dou', in: J. Bruyn (ed.), *Album Discipulorum aangeboden aan Professor dr. J.G. van Gelder*, Utrecht 1963, pp. 125-136.

<sup>274</sup> Durantini 1983, p. 297: "The notion that children could, with such consistency, be chosen as representatives of or commentators to adult affairs is unprecedented."

<sup>275</sup> Franits 1985, p. 700; see his chapter on the domestic roles of women as mothers, Franits 1993, pp. 111-160.

<sup>276</sup> Simon Schama, *The Embarrassment of Riches. An Interpretation of Dutch Culture in the Golden Age*, London 1987, pp. 481-558.

chronological sequence of political events, but as an accumulation of cultural mentalities, characterised by an ambiguous moral attitude towards the prosperity of the nation during its Golden Age. Schama believes in the uniqueness of the situation in the Dutch Republic during the seventeenth century with regard to the position of children in comparison to other European countries – something he derived from the large amount of children both in paintings and emblem books. The boundaries between adults and children grew vaguer in this period and great affection was exposed towards them. On the other hand, there was a constant tension between disciplined education and play, learning and joy, obedience and freedom, and security and independence, which was also articulated in art. Childhood was considered to be a vital stage in becoming a virtuous citizen. The family and the children in particular were seen as the *spes patriae*, the hope of the homeland. According to Schama, these tensions also lay at the basis of the young Republic and made him conclude that growing up as a child was reflected in this growing young state, of which the concerns were the same as those in the families from which it was composed. It even made Schama characterise the young Dutch Republic as a ‘Republic of Children’.

Jeroen Dekker and Leendert Groenendijk, representing the group of scholars supporting continuity in the concepts of childhood but with an eye for cultural diversity, strongly objected to Schama’s thesis of the exceptionality of the Dutch situation.<sup>277</sup> They criticised Schama’s interpretation of the visual material without comparison to sources outside the geographical area discussed in his book and his notion that parental affection was connected to Protestantism rather than being rooted in universal emotions of mankind. In another article, Dekker presented his interpretation of Dutch genre paintings with children.<sup>278</sup> He suggests that it was acknowledged that children need a special treatment corresponding to the subsequent stages of their development as humans. Playing was seen as an essential part of the early years, but should be exchanged by study and work as the child grew older. It seems that, for the large part, he agrees with Durantini’s thesis that the paintings were carriers of educational messages intended for the adult audience of the educators. Thus, in response to Schama, Dekker defines the Netherlands in the seventeenth century as the ‘Republic of Educators’.

The main concern of the genre scenes, depicting activities from the daily lives of mothers and children, does not so much seem to be the child but rather the peaceful and perfect parental role fulfilled by the mother. Thus we may believe that the paintings were indeed mainly aiming at an adult public. Of course the adults purchased these works on the market and brought them into the home. Yet that does not mean that the paintings were invisible to the children. Definitely paintings can make a deep impression on young viewers. We probably all have strong childhood memories of the images that were displayed in the home of our parents and grandparents. The genre paintings also contained moralistic messages for children. Serene images of households in order would serve as examples both

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<sup>277</sup> Jeroen J. H. Dekker & Leendert F. Groenendijk, ‘The Republic of God or the Republic of Children? Childhood and Child-Rearing after the Reformation. An Appraisal of Simon Schama’s Thesis about the Uniqueness of the Dutch Case’, *Oxford Review of Education* 3 (1991), pp. 317-335.

<sup>278</sup> Dekker 1996.

for parents and children. Though to the parents children not receiving gifts at St Nicolas's feast may provide amusement, for children it would offer a strict warning. Thus Durantini's and Dekker's analyses are a perhaps bit one-sided. In my view, Schama's connection between the family and the young state is somewhat far-fetched. Although this matter has been addressed in various written sources in the seventeenth century, it seems a bit of an overstatement that every family experienced its daily life as a smaller version of the affairs present in a young republic. It is also objectionable that they would desire to envision exactly this notion in their family portraits rather than their harmony and virtuousness in a commemorative record of the family members.

As modern viewers and humans, it is difficult to believe or accept that once there was a time when parents neglected their children, felt no affection, had an indifferent attitude towards them and childhood was not acknowledged. It is true that the genre paintings and portraits give the impression that certain childlike characteristics were ascribed to children and that love was the main motivation for creating all these images. In this respect, the feelings of parents for their offspring could not have differed much from the present-day ones. There does seem to be one major difference. In the past, childhood was, in essence, regarded as the fundamental stage in which the human being was prepared for his or her future life and in which he or she was introduced to the habits of the culture in which they were raised.<sup>279</sup> Naturally, modern childrearing is considered to be the foundation of a proper future lifestyle as well. But today, childhood is mainly seen as a stage in which children can still be free, do not yet have to worry about adult responsibilities and are given the space to enjoy a carefree childhood, while seventeenth-century children were supposed to grow up as quickly as possible. This notion is not only embedded in the multiple writings of moralists and other advisors, but also in the tough reality that many parents died young and left their children behind.

### **Family Portraits and the Subsequent Stages in the Life of a Child**

In the same way as a connection between contemporary literature and other written sources on the one hand and genre paintings on the other should be made with care, the ideas from genre paintings cannot simply be transferred to portraits. First of all, there is a difference in the nature of genre paintings and portraiture. Both genres are concerned with the representation of human figures, but in the first there is generally more movement, emotion and interaction than in group paintings and they more explicitly tell a story than family portraits. In portraits, the behaviour of sitters is refined and serves as an example of his or her virtuous character, while in genre painting the acts of the figures can be both positive and negative. Genre paintings more readily contain a moralistic message directed at the viewer. These messages are naturally much more complex than has been sketched-out briefly above and the variety of scenes is immense. Though portraits definitely can enclose such messages, they do not so strongly call for an immediate self-reflection on the part of the viewer as genre paintings do.

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<sup>279</sup> Jeroen J. H. Dekker, *Het gezinsportret. Over de geschiedenis van opvoeding, cultuuroverdracht en identiteit*, Baarn 1992.

There are, however, numerous cases in Dutch art in which the two genres are converging and it is not clear at first glance whether an elegant company in an interior is a family portrait or a genre painting.<sup>280</sup> The most important difference is that genre paintings were seen as art objects, while portraits were of course products of artistic creation, but their function was mainly to record a lasting image of the sitter. Another problem is that the height of the development of domestic scenes in genre painting took place after 1650, while the portraits studied here were in general made before that time.

The most straightforward way to analyse whether the ideas of family life in the genre paintings are also applicable to portraits is by examining children accompanied by their parents. Family portraits are a good source to see how notions of the family were translated into pictures. Portraits reflect the average number of family members and show that most families consisted of the parents and several children. Sometimes the grandparents, especially the grandmother, are part of the portrait as well. Very occasionally a servant is also present. In the previous chapter we have already seen that in some family groups there is a larger emphasis on the movements and emotions of the children than in individual portraits. But is it possible to state that children had special needs according to the parents in whose presence they were immortalised?

One of the common practices in family portraiture is that children were portrayed in accordance with the roles they fulfilled inside the family, but also the roles they will be performing in their adult lives. Parents were obliged to find a calling for their children and should assist them in their training from their early years onwards.<sup>281</sup> Of course for boys their future occupation would lie somewhere in public life and thus, in family portraits, the oldest sons are often engaged in reading books, playing music, writing or some other learned activity. Girls would naturally be involved in domestic tasks. Therefore the dolls they hold are not only included as toys, but also allude to their future roles as mothers. Another practice is that boys are usually portrayed close to the father, while girls have gathered around the mother. In this way, the parent sets the example for the children of his or her own sex. The *Portrait of Anthony Reyniers and His Family* by the Flemish artist Cornelis de Vos (1584/1585-1651) of 1631 [fig. 79] illustrates this.<sup>282</sup> The fathers and sons are placed on the heraldic right side of the painting, as in pendants of husbands and wives. The youngest son is still wearing a skirt, but holds an enormous hat in his left hand. His older brother, however, is wearing an adult costume. The same principles are present in the *Family Group* that has been attributed to Michiel Nouts (1628-1693) [fig. 80].<sup>283</sup> The writing father is seated at a table on the left and presents his son,

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<sup>280</sup> See also David R. Smith, 'Irony and Civility. Notes on the Convergence of Genre and Portraiture in Seventeenth-Century Dutch Painting', *The Art Bulletin* 69 (1987), pp. 407-430.

<sup>281</sup> Franits 1993, pp. 130-135.

<sup>282</sup> Cornelis de Vos, *Portrait of Anthony Reyniers and His Family*, 1631, oil on canvas, 170x241 cm, Philadelphia Museum of Art, Philadelphia; Katlijne Van Der Stighelen, "'Op dat het recht gae". Elf familieportretten van Cornelis de Vos (1584/5-1651)', *Nederlandse portretten. Bijdragen over de portretkunst in de Nederlanden uit de zestiende, zeventiende en achttiende eeuw*, Den Haag 1990 (*Leids Kunsthistorisch Jaarboek* 8, 1989), pp. 121-144; Katlijne Van Der Stighelen, *De portretten van Cornelis de Vos (1584/1585-1651). Een kritische catalogus*, Brussels 1990, cat. no. 62.

<sup>283</sup> Michiel Nouts (attributed to), *A Family Group*, c.1655, oil on canvas, 178x235 cm, National Gallery, London.

who has started to wear breeches, to the viewer. The boy has opened a book and looks up to his father. The mother is seated on the right with a young child in skirts and with a typically childish cap on her lap, while a girl offers her a doll.

Another factor is that children have been portrayed with the attributes that were considered appropriate for their age. The youngest children are holding rattles, the slightly older children have been given toys suitable for them, while the eldest are more focused on the objects and activities of adults. All these codes have been included in the *Family of Michiel van der Dussen* of 1640 by Hendrick Cornelisz. van Vliet (1611/1612-1675) [fig. 81], including the difference between child and adult clothing among the children.<sup>284</sup> As Laarmann has shown, the individual objects could all be interpreted independently.<sup>285</sup> But when taking the attributes of the children as a whole, it appears that together they compose the Five Senses, as does Santvoort's series of the Spiegel sisters. Laarmann states that there is a certain hierarchy in the five senses that is reflected by the ages of the children. The youngest child holds the bird associated with touch, while the oldest boy is connected with sight, which is the sense of erudition and knowledge. This is in line with Dekker's comments that playing was seen as an essential element of the child's early years, but that it should be replaced by more adult-like activities as soon as the child grows up. In fact, we may get the impression that the child should grow up the sooner the better. This also means they leave their most vulnerable years behind.

In family groups a distinction is made between the stages of the development of a child with all its appropriate characteristics. In individual portraits the subsequent phases are not that clear. Usually the children have become separated from their siblings. In many cases we do not know whether pendants existed and we see the children as individuals. It is unknown whether Flinck's boy was the only child from his family that has been immortalised. At least, we can say that, since he was about eight or nine years, it was suitable that he was shown in breeches, without toys or pets, but with a cane and gloves. Other boys of around his age are also presented in adult attire and with adult attributes, as were girls. However, before that age the borderline is not very strict and all the mixtures and combinations that we have seen before emerged. In general, all these children were probably very much loved and their special needs were acknowledged, but the foresight of their prosperous and virtuous future was always present.

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<sup>284</sup> Hendrick Cornelisz. van Vliet, *The Family of Michiel van der Dussen*, 1640, oil on canvas, 157x210 cm, Stedelijk Museum Het Prinsenhof, Delft.

<sup>285</sup> Frauke Laarmann, 'Hendrick Cornelisz. van Vliet. Het gezin van Michiel van der Dussen', *Oud Holland* 113 (1990), pp. 53-74.

## CONCLUSION

In the twentieth century, many publications and exhibitions have been dedicated to the representations of children in art. Children are often adored and thought of as cute, playful, cheerful and carefree young persons that are loved by their parents. The authors have repeatedly stressed this aspect. On the other hand, many have said that seventeenth-century Dutch children were portrayed in a stiff and formal manner according to the conventions of adult portraiture. It seems that their modern conception of childhood prevented them to observe the portraits through the eyes of the seventeenth-century public. They have mainly projected their present ideas on paintings from the past, which resulted in a misunderstanding of the portraits and a belief that children during the Golden Age were mainly presented as ‘miniature adults’.

The aim of this thesis was to examine the claim that children were simply portrayed as ‘miniature adults’ and to investigate the relation between the portraiture of adults and children. Govert Flinck’s (1615-1660) *Portrait of a Boy* of 1640 was the starting point of this research. The sitter is possibly David Leeuw (1631/32-1704) at the age of eight or nine in a contemporary landscape. He was the son of the Mennonite merchant Ameldonck Leeuw (1604-1647), who was a direct cousin of the painter. His family lived in great prosperity in a house filled with paintings, despite their Mennonite background. This boy definitely reveals adults features, such as his elegant costume, large hat, pair of gloves, bamboo cane and his formal pose.

Portraits can bear certain social and symbolical meanings that reveal something about the sitter. This message can inform the viewer about the virtuous character of the portrayed person, his or her social position and, with regard to family portraits, express an idea about the mutual relations and love of the portrayed husband, wife and children. In the portraiture of children, we may observe that infants indeed adopted some of the social messages of adults. Boys could be portrayed as shepherds, hunters and military figures and thus allude to the aristocratic positions or pretensions of their parents. Children could be situated in a contemporary landscape and refer to the possible ownership of an estate by their family. They also sometimes appropriated fashionable adult accessories like hats, canes, gloves and fans. The reference to adult conventions is rather obvious and perhaps the children are indeed down-scaled adults.

Flinck’s boy, however, has a hesitant childish smile and his posture is that of a very young person. Some painters were particularly successful in recording an innocent or joyful infant. Many children have been portrayed with seemingly childlike attributes, such as fruits, flowers, pets and toys. These attributes can be associated with the daily reality of the child, but they also bear symbolic meanings of education and proper upbringing. These elements are needed to become decent adults in the Dutch society.

Portraits cannot, however, simply be regarded as carriers of social messages. They are the result of the artistic process of an individual artist. This artist has his own style, development and routine, which for a large part dictates the outcome of his works. In some cases, it is clear that the emulation of adult features is not the effect of a conscious social choice but rather because the painter applied the same standardised types to all his sitters, both adults and children. Flinck's *Portrait of a Boy* is reminiscent of some adult men that the artist portrayed, namely his cousin Dirck Leeuw and an anonymous man with a cane in a landscape in Warsaw. Although these three paintings are very similar, they are not standard types. In Flinck's oeuvre no other examples of sitters in contemporary landscapes are known. Flinck was a very versatile artist, who not only created portraits, but also history pieces and landscapes. In his portraits of children besides his boy of 1640, there is a large variety of iconographies, such as infants in the roles of shepherds, shepherdesses and allegorical figures, but also children with toys.

On the other hand, it must be realised that portraiture as a genre has its own intrinsic conventions. Formality of pose and facial expression is just one of them. Child portraits simply conform to these conventions as well, because as such they form a subgenre of portraiture. Flinck's portrait can be placed in a sequence of other men and boys in landscapes or with canes, hats and gloves that were painted in the same period. Because most portraits were made of adults, we are inclined to think that by using the same formal elements, children are portrayed in accordance with the conventions of adults. Conformity to the demands of portraiture, however, does not automatically imply that children consciously want to imitate the social roles of their parents.

This thesis has shown that in portraiture form and content are inseparable. For a proper interpretation of individual portraits, it is necessary to consider the balance between the portrait as a social messenger and the portrait as an object of artistic creation. Social and cultural ideas about childhood at a given moment in time are essential to our comprehension of these objects. Nonetheless, there must be an awareness that these ideas not simply determine the outcome of the portrait. The portrait is the result of an interplay of the cultural and social background from which it emerged and the role of the artist in the translation of these ideas and of his artistic convictions.

As we have seen, often combinations were made of seemingly adult and childlike features, resulting in mixtures of attributes, poses, gestures and facial expressions from the realms of adults and children. The line between these two categories is therefore difficult to draw. Overall it must be stated that, given the large production of child portraits, a certain significance was assigned to the youngest inhabitants of the Republic. Contemporary ideas on childhood were expressed in painting, such as genre scenes and family portraits. Especially in the latter, children are placed in proportion and relation to their parents and their brothers and sisters. The youngest children were portrayed at play, while the elder children have turned to their grown-up duties. In individual portraits, boys and girls were given more adult features and attributes from around the age of eight or ten. The components of their costumes changed into adult fashion and their garments especially became less colourful as was



appropriate for grownups. Before that age it all seems fairly exchangeable and thus all the combinations of adult and childlike elements and accessories, discussed here, emerged.

We have seen that it is wrong to apply modern conceptions of childhood to the seventeenth-century portraits. The main discrepancy lies in that childhood is nowadays perceived as a stage in which adult duties can be postponed for a while. In the seventeenth century it was definitely recognised that children had special needs and they were loved by their parents, but in the end parents wanted their children to grow up rather quickly. Children were not simply portrayed as adults in miniature, because their specifically childlike qualities were acknowledged, not only in their daily lives but also in their portraits. The main function of the adaptation of adult features was to look forward to the future and to show that the children were aware of the position that they would be fulfilling in society. Flinck's boy was conscious of the prosperous lifestyle of his family and the wealth and high rank that awaited him in the years to come. The children that were given childlike attributes like toys and pets also wanted to express that they were properly educated and were prepared for the life that lay ahead of them. Children imitated some adult aspects, which revealed their and their parents' ambitions not only to gain wealth and status in their future life, but also to become virtuous citizens.

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## LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

Fig 1. Govert Flinck, *Portrait of a Boy*, 1640, oil on canvas, 129,5x102,5 cm, Barber Institute of Fine Arts, University of Birmingham (Barber Institute).

Fig. 2 Rembrandt, *Double portrait of Claes Cornelisz Anslo (1592-1646) and His Wife Aeltje Gerritsdr. Schouten*, 1641, oil on canvas, 176x210 cm, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Preussischer Kulturbesitz, Gemäldegalerie, Berlin (Wikipedia / Google Art Project).

Fig. 3 Frans Hals, *Portrait of Feyntje van Steenkiste (1603/5-1640)*, 1635, oil on canvas, 123x93 cm, Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam (collections online).

Fig. 4 Govert Flinck, *Landscape with a large tree*, 1642, pen and brown ink and watercolour, 190x195 mm, British Museum, London, (collections online).

Fig. 5 Abraham van den Tempel, *Portrait of David Leeuw (1631/1632-1703) and his family*, 1671, oil on canvas, 190x200 cm, Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam (collections online).

Fig. 6 Govert Flinck, *Portrait of Dirck Jacobsz. Leeuw (1614-1652)*, 1636, oil on canvas, 65x47,5 cm, Het Rijpenhofje, Amsterdam (on loan to Museum Het Rembrandthuis, Amsterdam) (CODART).

Fig. 7 Govert Flinck, *Girl by a High Chair*, 1640, oil on canvas, 114x87 cm, Mauritshuis, The Hague (Geheugen van Nederland, online).

Fig. 8 Huygh Pietersz. Voskuyl, *Portrait of Geertruyd Reael (1600-1652)*, 1640, oil on panel, 121x89 cm, Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam (collections online).

Fig. 9 Johannes Verspronck, *Girl in Blue*, 1641, oil on canvas, 82x66 cm, Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam (collections online).

Fig. 10 Johannes Verspronck, *Portrait of a Woman*, 1640, oil on canvas, 82x65 cm, Rijksmuseum Twenthe, Enschede (collections online).

Fig. 11 Jacob Backer, *Portrait of a Boy in Grey*, 1634, oil on canvas, 94x71 cm, Mauritshuis, The Hague (Geheugen van Nederland, online).

Fig. 12 Paulus Moreelse, *Two Girls in a Pastoral Costume*, 1622, oil on canvas, 120x95 cm, Centraal Museum, Utrecht (collections online).

Fig. 13 Govert Flinck, *Young Shepherdess*, 1650, oil on canvas, 128x94 cm, whereabouts unknown (RKD, The Hague).

Fig. 14 Govert Flinck, *Portrait of an Unknown Boy*, c.1636-1649, oil on panel, 114x85 cm, whereabouts unknown (RKD, The Hague).

Fig. 15 Govert Flinck, *A Girl as Flora*, c.1640, oil on canvas, 117x90 cm, Musée des Beaux-Arts de Nantes, Nantes (Joconde, Catalogue des Collections des Musées de France, online).

Fig. 16 Govert Flinck, *Portrait of Dirck Jacobsz. Leeuw (1614-1652)*, 1636, oil on canvas, 65x47,5 cm, Het Rijpenhofje Amsterdam (on loan to Museum Het Rembrandthuis, Amsterdam) (CODART).

Fig. 17 Monogrammist GTB, *Portrait of a Boy*, second quarter seventeenth century, oil on panel, 55x34 cm, private collection, Almelo (RKD, The Hague).

Fig. 18 Govert Flinck, *Portrait of a Man*, Muzeum Narodowe, Warsaw, further details unknown (Muzeum Narodowe).

- Fig. 19 Anonymous Dutch Painter, *A Young Woman in a Landscape*, 1636, oil on panel, 66x50 cm, The Friedsam Collection, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York (collections online).
- Fig. 20 Anonymous Dutch painter (previously ascribed to Flinck), *Portrait of a Lady Taking a Walk with her Son*, date unknown, oil on panel, 75x60 cm, whereabouts unknown (RKD, The Hague).
- Fig. 21 Govert Flinck, *Portrait of a Boy*, 1640, oil on canvas, 129,5x102,5 cm, Barber Institute of Fine Arts, University of Birmingham (Barber Institute).
- Fig. 22 Frans Hals, *Couple in a Garden (possibly Isaac Massa (1586-1643) Beatrix van der Laen (1592-1639))*, c.1622, oil on canvas, 140x166 cm, Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam (collections online).
- Fig. 23 Govert Flinck, *Portrait of Dirck Graswinckel and Geertruida van Loon*, 1640-1646, oil on canvas, 107,5x91 cm, Museum Boijmans-van Beuningen, Rotterdam (collections online).
- Fig. 24 Herman Doncker, *Portrait of a Couple with Three Children and a Ship in the Background*, 1645, oil on panel, 87x111 cm, whereabouts unknown (scan from exhib. cat. Enkhuizen 1991).
- Fig. 25 Herman Doncker, *Portrait of a Couple with Two Children*, 1645-50, oil on panel, 67x57 cm, whereabouts unknown (RKD, The Hague).
- Fig. 26 Jacob Gerritsz. Cuyp, *Three Children of Sebastiaan Francken and Jacobmijna van Casteren*, 1635, oil on canvas, 130x198 cm, Museum Boijmans-van Beuningen, Rotterdam (collections online).
- Fig. 27 Jacob Gerritsz. Cuyp & Aelbert Cuyp, *Portrait of a Family in a Landscape*, 1641, oil on canvas, 155x245 cm, Israel Museum, Jerusalem (collections online).
- Fig. 28 Bartholomeus van der Helst, *Family Portrait of Jochem van Aras, Elisabeth Claes Loenen and Maria van Aras*, 1654, oil on canvas, 170x198 cm, Wallace Collection, London (scan from van Gent 2004).
- Fig. 29 Douwe Juwes de Dowe, *Double Portrait of Two Boys in a Landscape, One as a Hunter, the Other as John the Baptist*, 1647, oil on canvas, 114x135 cm, Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam (collections online).
- Fig. 30 Bartholomeus van der Helst, *Boy with a Falcon*, 1665, oil on canvas, 77x70 cm, private collection, England (RKD, The Hague).
- Fig. 31 Wallerant Vaillant, *Portrait of a Boy with a Falcon*, c.1650-1674, 75x62 cm, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York (collections online).
- Fig. 32 Jacob Gerritsz. Cuyp, *Michiel Pompe van Slingelandt*, 1649, oil on panel, 106x78 cm, Dordrechts Museum, Dordrecht (collections online).
- Fig. 33 Aelbert Cuyp, *Portrait of a Dutch Merchant and His Wife, with East Indies Fleet in the Bay of Batavia*, c.1650-1660, oil on canvas, 138x208 cm, Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam (collections online).
- Fig. 34 Frans Hals, *Portrait of Pieter van den Broecke (1585-1640)*, 1634, oil on canvas, 71x61 cm, Kenwood House, Iveagh Bequest, London (Wikipedia).
- Fig. 35 Bartholomeus van der Helst, *Portrait of Jacob Trip (1627-1670)*, 1655, oil on canvas, 110x95 cm, Amsterdams Historisch Museum, Amsterdam (collections online).
- Fig. 36 Nicolaes Maes, *Portrait of Captain Job Jansse Cuijter and His Family*, 1659, oil on canvas, 110x151 cm, North Carolina Museum of Art, Raleigh (scan from W.H. Wilson, *Dutch seventeenth century portraiture. The Golden Age*, exhib. cat. The John and Mable Ringling Museum of Art Sarasota Florida 1980-1981, Sarasota 1980).

- Fig. 37 Anonymous Dutch painter, *Portrait of Two Children of the de Potter family*, c.1640, oil on canvas, 98x112 cm, private collection (RKD, The Hague).
- Fig. 38 Jan Daemen Cool, *Portrait of a Boy Holding His Hat in a River Landscape*, 1640, oil on panel, 89x77 cm, Sotheby's, London, 26 October 1994, lot 139 (scan from auction catalogue).
- Fig. 39 Johannes Versponck, *Portrait of a Boy*, c.1650-54, oil on panel, 77x54 cm, Bert & Mia van Deun-Loyens, Oberägeri (scan from exhib. cat. Haarlem & Antwerp 2000-2001).
- Fig. 40 Ferdinand Bol, *Portrait of Otto van der Waeyen (1648-1686)*, 1656, oil on canvas, 158x120 cm, Museum Boijmans-van Beuningen, Rotterdam (collections online).
- Fig. 41 Ferdinand Bol, *Portrait of Michiel Adriaensz. de Ruyter (1607-1676)*, 1667, oil on canvas, 157x138 cm, Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam (collections online).
- Fig. 42 Ferdinand Bol, *Portrait of Michiel Adriaensz. de Ruyter (1607-1676)*, 1668-69, oil on canvas, 130x117 cm, Statens Museum for Kunst, Copenhagen (collections online).
- Fig. 43 Govert Flinck, *Portrait of a Boy as 'Homo Bulla'*, 1640, oil on canvas, 65x56 cm, whereabouts unknown (RKD, The Hague).
- Fig. 44 Jan Albertsz. Rotius, *Three-Year-Old Boy with a Goat*, 1647, oil on panel, 115x85 cm, whereabouts unknown (scan from advert in *Burlington Magazine* 142, no. 1164 (2000)).
- Fig. 45 Jan Albertsz. Rotius, *Portrait of a Boy, probably Johannes Hooghtwoud*, c.1648, oil on panel, 116x86 cm, private collection (RKD, The Hague).
- Fig. 46 Jan Albertsz. Rotius, *Four-Year-Old Boy with a Goat*, 1652, oil on panel, 116x87 cm, Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam (collections online).
- Fig. 47 Jan Albertsz. Rotius, *Portrait of a Boy with a Dog and Goat*, c.1650, oil on panel, 123x90, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston (scan from exhib. cat. Hoorn 2010).
- Fig. 48 Dirck Dircksz. van Santvoort, *Rebecca Spiegel (1625-1651) as Taste*, c.1638-1639, oil on panel, 61x49 cm, private collection (RKD, The Hague).
- Fig. 49 Dirck Dircksz. van Santvoort, *Elisabeth Spiegel (1628-1707) as Hearing*, c.1638-1639, oil on panel, 63x50 cm, The Cleveland Museum of Art, Cleveland (collections online).
- Fig. 50 Dirck Dircksz. van Santvoort, *Petronella Spiegel (1630-1656) as Smell*, c.1638-1639, oil on panel, 63x50 cm, Musée des Beaux-Arts, Rodez (RKD, The Hague).
- Fig. 51 Dirck Dircksz. van Santvoort, *Margriet Spiegel (1631-1670) as Sight*, 1639, oil on panel, 64x49 cm, private collection (scan from Ekkart 1990b).
- Fig. 52 Dirck Dircksz. van Santvoort, *Geertruyt Spiegel (1635-1662) as Touch*, 1639, oil on panel, 63x50 cm, National Gallery, London (collections online).
- Fig. 53 Hendrick Cornelisz. van Vliet, *Portrait of an Unknown Girl Holding a Garland of Flowers*, 1643, oil on panel, 91x73 cm, whereabouts unknown (RKD, The Hague).
- Fig. 54 Circle of Jacob Backer, *Six-Year-Old Boy with an Apple*, 1656, oil on canvas, 53x42 cm, private collection (RKD, The Hague).
- Fig. 55 Bartholomeus van der Helst, *Portrait of a Boy with a Colf Stick*, c.1658-1659, oil on canvas, 112x84 cm, whereabouts unknown (RKD, The Hague).

Fig. 56 Ludolf de Jongh, *Boy Training His Dog*, 1661, oil on canvas, 98x71 cm, The Arthur and Margaret Glasgow Fund, Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, Richmond (scan from exhib. cat. Haarlem & Antwerp 2000-2001).

Fig. 57 Maarten van Heemskerck, *Portrait of Pieter Jan Foppesz. and his Family*, c.1530, oil on panel, 119x140 cm, Staatliche Museen, Kassel (Wikipedia).

Fig. 58 Pieter Claesz. Soutman, *Portrait of Emerentia van Beresteyn*, 1628, oil on canvas, 145x105 cm, Waddesdon Manor, Buckinghamshire.

Fig. 59 Frans Hals, *Family Portrait in a Landscape*, c.1620, oil on canvas, 153x163 cm, Viscount Boyne, Bridgnorth, Shropshire (scan from exhib. cat. Washington, London & Haarlem 1989-1990) + Frans Hals, *Three Children with a Goat Cart*, c.1620, oil on canvas, 152x107 cm, Musées Royaux des Beaux-Arts de Belgique, Brussels (collections online).

Fig. 60 Frans Hals, *Family Group in a Landscape*, c.1647-1650, oil on canvas, 148x251 cm, National Gallery, London (collections online).

Fig. 61 Anthony van Dyck or his follower, *Portrait of Three Boys*, after c.1620, oil on canvas, 84x108 cm, Victoria Art Gallery, Bath (The National Inventory of Continental European Painting, UK, online).

Fig. 62 After Gerard van Honthorst, *The Duke of Buckingham and His Family*, 1628, oil on canvas, 145x198 cm, National Portrait Gallery, London (collections online).

Fig. 63 Gerard van Honthorst, *Portrait of a Girl, possibly Isabella Charlotte van Nassau-Oranje (1632-1642)*, c.1632, oil on canvas, 108x83 cm, Mauritshuis, The Hague (Geheugen van Nederland, online).

Fig. 64 Ferdinand Bol, *Portrait of Two Children in Full Length in a Landscape*, 1640s, oil on canvas, 129x117 cm, current whereabouts unknown (RKD, The Hague).

Fig. 65 Rembrandt, *Family Portrait*, c.1668, oil on canvas, 126x167 cm, Herzog Anton Ulrich-Museum, Braunschweig.

Fig. 66 Jan Daemen Cool, *Portrait of a Family in a Landscape*, 1637, oil on panel, 128x175 cm, Musées Royaux des Beaux-Arts en Belgique, Brussels (scan from Franits 1993).

Fig. 67 Anonymous Dutch master, *Boy with a 'Colf' Stick*, 1615, oil on panel, 107x66 cm, Markiezenhof, Bergen op Zoom (scan from exhib. cat. Haarlem & Antwerp 2000-2001).

Fig. 68 Anonymous Netherlandish master, *Portrait of a Girl with a Parrot*, c.1640, oil on canvas, 112x79 cm, National Gallery, London (collections online).

Fig. 69 Willem Jansz. Ploy (ascribed to), *Portrait of Elisabeth van Oosten (1660-1714)*, 1663, oil on canvas, 118x83 cm, Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam (collections online).

Fig. 70 Dirck Dircksz. van Santvoort, *Boy in White, probably Simon van Alteren (1640-1674)*, c. 1641, oil on panel, 87x68 cm, private collection (scan from exhib. cat. Haarlem & Antwerp 2000-2001).

Fig. 71 Claes Jansz. Visscher, *Trap des Ouderdoms*, 1620-1630, etching, 36x41 cm, Museum Boijmans-van Beuningen, Rotterdam (ALMA database, Museum Boijmans-van Beuningen).

Fig. 72 Titlepage to Jacob Cats, *Silenus Alcibiadis, sive Proteus...*, Amsterdam 1622 (Emblem Project Utrecht, online).

Fig. 73 Gabriel Metsu, *The Sick Child*, third quarter of the 17<sup>th</sup> century, oil on canvas, 32x27 cm, Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam (collections online).

Fig. 74 Jan Miense Molenaer, *Woman Playing a Virginal*, 1630-1640, oil on panel, 38x29 cm, Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam (collections online).

Fig. 75 Nicolaes Maes, *Young Woman at the Cradle*, c.1655, oil on canvas, 32x28 cm, Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam (collections online).

Fig. 76 Pieter de Hooch, *A Woman with a Child in a Pantry*, c.1658, oil on canvas, 65x60 cm, Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam (collections online).

Fig. 77 Gerard Dou (copy by Willem Joseph Laqui), *Allegory of Artistic Education*, 1748-1771, oil on canvas, 83x70 cm, Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam (central part) (collections online).

Fig. 78 Jan Steen, *'Soo voer gesongen, soo na gepepen'*, c. 1663-1665, oil on canvas, 134x163 cm, Mauritshuis, The Hague Hague (Geheugen van Nederland, online).

Fig. 79 Cornelis de Vos, *Portrait of Anthony Reyniers and His Family*, 1631, oil on canvas, 170x241 cm, Philadelphia Museum of Art, Philadelphia (collections online).

Fig. 80 Michiel Nouts (attributed to), *A Family Group*, c. 1655, oil on canvas, 178x235 cm, National Gallery, London (collections online).

Fig. 81 Hendrick Cornelisz. van Vliet, *The Family of Michiel van der Dussen*, 1640, oil on canvas, 157x210 cm, Stedelijk Museum Het Prinsenhof, Delft (scan from Laarmann 1990).

APPENDIX A  
ARCHIVAL DOCUMENTS RELATED TO THE LEEUW AND VAN LENNEP FAMILIES

SAA = Stadsarchief Amsterdam

AMELDONCK LEEUW (1604-1647) X MARIA RUTGERS (1603/04-1652)

**1. SAA 88 (Archives of the Brants family and related families) – 805:** Testaments for the notary at Amsterdam and codicil of Ameldonck Leeuw and Maria Rutgers, 1645-1647; copies of 1650 and 1680.

**2. SAA 88 – 806:** Proof for the notary at Amsterdam by Maria Rutgers for her sons David and Jacob Leeuw for their part of the legacy of their father, 1650.

**3. SAA 88 – 807:** Documents concerning a process between Jan le Pla, married to Maria Rutgers, and Laurens Jansz., silversmith, about the attached buildings of the house ‘De Vergulde Cater’ on the Singel, which she bought from Willem de Wolff. 1651; with documents concerning the transfer by Willem de Wolff to Laurens Jansz, silversmith, of the house ‘De Cater’ next door, 1646-1647.

**4. SAA 88 – 808:** Receipt for Maria Rutgers from W. Cats for fl. 520, 1651.

**5. SAA 88 – 809:** Division of the household items in the legacy of Maria Rutgers, 1653.

**6. SAA DTB (Register of intended marriages) – 671, fol. 38 (Pui), 10 February 1628:** Ameldonck Leeuw (son of Jacob Leeuw, died 1635) x Maria Rutgers (daughter of Josina Lambrechts (c.1565-1638)), 10 February 1628: *“Compareerden voor [?] Ameldonck Leeuw van A. out 23 jaren geasst met Jacob Leeuw zijn vader woonende op de fluwelen Burgh wall en Mayke Rutgers van Haerlem out 24 jaren geasst met Josijntie Lambers haer moeder, [?] woonende op de coninxgracht”*

**7. SAA 5075 (Notaries registered in Amsterdam) – 17 (Jacob Jacobs) - 420A, fol. 60-66v, 28 July 1639:** Testament of Ameldonck Leeuw (fol. 66v: further deeds 8 November 1640). In this document it is said that Ameldonck had a house opposite the stable on the Nieuwezijds Voorburgwal and an estate on the Regulierspad outside town, named De Leeuw, which cannot be sold and should be inherited to his children.

BARBARA LEEUW (1629-1682)

**8. SAA 5075 – 174 (Dirk van der Groe) – 4101, p. 374-442, 20 February 1682:** Inventory of Barbara Leeuw, including the paintings she inherited from her parents’ legacy.

DAVID LEEUW (1631/1632-1703) X CORNELIA HOOFT (1631-1708)

**9. SAA DTB (Register of intended marriages) – 681, fol. 71 (Pui), 14 April 1651:** David Leeuw x Cornelia Hooft (their intention to marry was signed at Weesp, but also registered in Amsterdam): *“Compareerden als voorn David Leew van A oud 19 Jaer woonende op het rockin overleggende acte van de inteeckeninge tot Weesp onder de hant van [?] ende Claes Jansz commissaris met Cornelia Hooft J.d. tot Weesp”*.

**10. SAA 5075 – 95 (Adriaen Lock) - 2262B, 14 June 1677:** Testament of David Leeuw.

**11. SAA 5075 – 95 (Adriaen Lock) - 2262B, 23 June 1678:** Codicil of David Leeuw.



**12. SAA 5075 – 174 (Dirk van der Groe) – 4102, 29 June 1682:** Testament of David Leeuw (further deeds 7 March 1692, 22 February 1694).

**13. SAA 5075 – 257 (Pieter van der Meulen) – 6744, p. 1103-1117, 9 March 1702:** Testament of David Leeuw and Cornelia Hooft.

**14. SAA 88 – 822:** Legal explanation of the testamentary disposition of David Leeuw and Cornelia Hooft of 9 March 1702.

MARIA LEEUW (1653-1721) X AMELDONCK BLOCK (1702)

**15. SAA 5075 – 209 (Caspar Ypelaer) – 5335, p. 289-330, 24 March 1702:** Testament of Ameldonck Block including the paintings from the collection of his mother Agneta Leeuw (1630-1694).

**16. SAA 5075 – 174 (Dirk van der Groe) – 14 August 1709:** Maria and Cornelia Leeuw become each other's heirs.

**17. SAA 5075 – 174 (Dirk van der Groe) – 4259, 17 September 1717:** Maria declares that the portraits of her parents and ancestors are to remain in the family: “...dat haer huijsraet, imboel, schilderijen, [linraet?] porceleynen en tgeen verder onder huysraet en imboel gerekent wert onder malcanderen zal worden gedeelt doch dat de portraicten van de ouders en voorouders altijd zullen moeten worden bewaert wel verdeelt wordende maer sullen altijd aen de bloede moeten blijven gelijk mede het familiestuck altijd aen den bloede van de testatrice zal moeten verblijven en eerst berusten onder haer oudste suster Weijntje Leeuw en nae desselfs afsterven onder haer suster Susanna Leeuw en na haer overlijden aen de oudste van de kinderen tsij soon of doghter van de voorsz Weijntje Leeuw en soo vervolgens van d'een op d ander, altijd onder de naaste van dien bloede.”

**18. SAA 5075 – 174 (Dirk van der Groe) – 4259, fol. 409, 17 December 1717:** Final division of the legacy of David Leeuw: Maria receives half of the items, because she was also Cornelia's heir, Weyntje and Susanna both receive a quarter.

ANNA VAN LENNEP (1695-1758) X PIETER ROETERS (1695-1755)

**19. Lugt number 1029:** auction of painting formerly owned by Anna van Lennep + Pieter Roeters/Rueters, 30 January 1759, Amsterdam (also an advert in *Amsterdamsche Courant*, 27 January 1759) (Rembrandt's *Thomas bij Christus* from the collection of Ameldonck Leeuw and David Leeuw is sold.).

JACOB VAN LENNEP (1686-1725) X PETRONELLA DE NEUFVILLE (1688-1749)

**20. SAA 238 (Archives of the van Lennep family and related families) – 10:** Testaments of Petronella, 1746, 1749.

AERNOUT DAVID VAN LENNEP (1728-1795) X CATHARINA DE HAAN (1736-1776)

**21. SAA 238 – 6:** Inventory of Aernout David, 1795.

**22. SAA 238 – 7:** Division of the household items of Aernout David, 1796.

AARNOUD VAN LENNEP (1718-1791)

**23. Lugt number 4939:** auction of paintings formerly owned by Aarnout van Lennep, 24 July 1792, Amsterdam.

SIR FRANCIS SEYMOUR HADEN (1818-1910)

**24. Lugt number 38483:** auction of 6 June 1878, London (porcelain, faience, objects d'art)

**25. Lugt number 41982:** auction of 28 April 1882, London (porcelain, faience, objects d'art, furniture)

**26. Lugt number 49978:** auction of 13 May 1891, London (porcelain, faience, objects d'art, furniture)

**27. Lugt number 50011:** auction of 23 May 1891, London (paintings, drawings, photographs)

**28. Lugt number 50091:** auction of 15 June 1891, London (drawings, prints, books)

PIETER VAN EEGHEN (1911-1968)

**29. SAA 752: Collectie Mr. P. van Eeghen**



APPENDIX C

DESCRIPTION, ANALYSIS AND TRANSCRIPT OF THE DIVISION OF HOUSEHOLD ITEMS OF AMELDONCK LEEUW (1604-1647) AND MARIA RUTGERS (1603/4-1652) IN AMSTERDAM, 7 FEBRUARY 1653

SAA 88 (Brants Archief) – 809 Scheiding van de roerende goederen in de nalatenschap van Maria Rutgers. 1653 (Appendix A, document no. 5).

After the death of Maria Rutgers in 1652, her household items and those of her husband Ameldonck Leeuw were divided among their four surviving children Jacob (1636-1704), Agneta or Angen(i)eta (1630-1694), Barbara (1629-1682), and David (1631/1632-1703) in Amsterdam on 7 February 1653. The first part of the document is a statement written by Jacob in which he reports what part was given to him.<sup>286</sup> It is said that the division was made “*bij lotinge*” (by means of a lottery), but apparently quite a careful selection of paintings and other objects was given to each child. All four children were given about ten paintings, of which around eight were painted by famous or high-quality masters. Jacob, Agneta and David also received one or two paintings of lesser quality, which are indicated by “*Een slegt stuck*”. Other objects were recorded as well, such as drawings, prints and plates. Besides the art works, there are hundreds of other items, such as cutlery, linen, tablecloths, curtains, furniture, mirrors, jewellery, golden coins and books. There is also a part that was given to Jacob “*buijten de Lotingge*” (outside the lottery).

Dudok van Heel states that Flinck portrayed all the members of the Leeuw family.<sup>287</sup> However, it is interesting to see who actually was portrayed by him. In the document we read that Jacob received “*Een contrefeitsel van Jacob Leeuw den ouden*”. Although we do not know the artist of this painting, we may be quite sure that this is not a portrait of Jacob himself. The words “*den ouden*” refer to some-one called Jacob older than himself, namely his grandfather or his uncle.<sup>288</sup> In the next object on the list Jacob clearly speaks about “*Een stuck gedaen van Wlenburgs soon, daerin mijn tronie gedaen van Ovens*” (A piece done by Uylenburgh’s son with my face done by Jürgen Ovens), which probably was not a portrait, but rather a larger piece or landscape in which Jacob’s portrait was incorporated. Apparently, there was also a large vertical family piece of Maria with her children, “*Een capt. stuc staende daerin moeder met ons haer kind[eren]*”, but again no artist is mentioned here.

The next section is written in another hand and records the part that was given to Agneta Leeuw. The first portrait by Flinck on the list was given to her and is indicated as: “*een conterfeytsel van A. Leeuw van G. Flinck*”. Although this may be a portrait of herself, it could also refer to her father Ameldonck. The latter seems to be more likely, as normally her own likeness would be specified as something like “a portrait of herself”.<sup>289</sup> Another possibility is that it was a portrait of Ameldonck the Younger (1628-1643), the eldest son of Ameldonck and Maria, who died before reaching the age of adulthood.<sup>290</sup> Agneta also owned

<sup>286</sup> “*Memorie van tgene mijn Jacob Leeuw, bij lotinge te beurt gevallen is in de verdelinge van den inboel ofte huysraedt naergelaten bij mijn Salige moeder Maria Rutgers...*”, see Van Eeghen 1953, p. 173.

<sup>287</sup> Dudok van Heel 1980, p 110: “De hele familie Leeuw werd in de loop der jaren vereeuwigd door Flinck’s penseel.”; Jeroense 1997, p. 76: “Im Laufe der Jahre wird Flinck Mitglied der Familie Leeuw auf der Leinwand verewigen.”

<sup>288</sup> Barbara’s husband Anthony Block (1619/1620-1681) is also mentioned on the same page receiving the “*Contrefeitsel van den ouden Jacob Leeuw*”.

<sup>289</sup> This suggestion was made by prof. dr. R. Ekkart in The Hague on 3 January 2011.

<sup>290</sup> He is recorded in the notes of Pieter van Eeghen (Appendix A, document no. 29): *Ameldonck de Jonge, begraven Oude Kerk 24 Aug 1643*.

a portrait by Flinck of Susanna Rutgers.<sup>291</sup> Barbara only received a portrait made by Jacob Backer of her grandmother Josina Lambrechts (c.1565-1638).<sup>292</sup>

In the last section, we find the next portrait by Flinck on the list, which is the portrait of David Leeuw. There is no other family member named David, so the likeness must certainly be his. We may believe that not just was David Ameldonck's only child that was portrayed by Flinck, but also the only one that was immortalised at all in a single portrait. This is a remarkable fact, because usually all the children would be portrayed and if not, then at least the oldest son would be conveyed and not just the second son. In 1640 David's older brother Ameldonck was still alive! If he is indeed the person referred to as *A. Leeuw* and Barbara and Agneta received already their portraits at the time of their marriages in 1646 and 1648, the situation would not be so surprising after all. Although David was Ameldonck's third surviving child, he was, in 1653, the eldest son and therefore the heir to greatest fortune. However, this cannot be concluded from the document, as Jacob's part covers six pages and the part of the other three children just three pages. Maybe David already received part of his share at his marriage in 1651.

Adding Flinck's likeness of Dirck Jacobsz. Leeuw to the portraits of A. Leeuw and David Leeuw, we may bring the number of portraits of the family by Flinck down to three. However, the document only records the situation in 1653. We do not know which paintings were given to the children before their parents' deaths.<sup>293</sup> In total nine works by Flinck are mentioned in the document, of which three portraits, three landscapes, one study of an old man, and two history paintings being a crucifixion and a scene from the life of the prophet Elijah. Besides the paintings mentioned so far, the document also reveals that the family possessed many other works. Jaap van der Veen attempted to illustrate that the Leeuw family had close contacts with the art business of Hendrick Uylenburgh, in whose workshop both Rembrandt and Flinck were active.<sup>294</sup> Because Ameldonck's collection contained so many paintings by contemporary artists, such as de Vlieger, Moeiaert, Pieter Claesz, Ruisdael, Backer, Rembrandt and Adriaan van Ostade, he was a true art collector. Since he owned *Een stuck van Flinck, sijnde een koeijwij naer 't leeven gedaen* (A piece by Flinck, being a meadow with cows done after life) and *Een lantschap, sijnde de bleeck van Gerrit Uyllenburgh* (A landscape, being the bleachery by Gerrit Uylenburgh), van der Veen suggests Ameldonck commissioned these works because of his cattle business and bleachery near Bennebroek.

Other paintings also refer to Ameldonck's relation with Uylenburgh, such as the kitchen piece by his brother Rombout Uylenburgh and works by Simon de Vlieger and Claes Moyaert – both part of a consortium that lent Uylenburgh a great sum of money in 1640 –, but especially the works by Rembrandt. The latter's *Thomas with Christ* must be the painting currently in the Pushkin Museum dated 1634, when Rembrandt was still working for Uylenburgh.<sup>295</sup> Also the fact that Ameldonck owned drawings by Rembrandt is very

<sup>291</sup> “*Een conterfeytsel van Susanna Rutgers van ditto*”. Perhaps this is Maria Rutgers's sister.

<sup>292</sup> “*Een conterfeytsel van bestemoeder Josynna Lambrechts, van Backer.*”; see Dudok van Heel 1980, pp. 120-121; van der Veen 2008, p. 19: Because Backer was active in Amsterdam from around 1632 and Josina died in 1638 the portrait was painted somewhere within that period. Josina's husband died in 1623, so there would not have been a pendant made for her portrait.

<sup>293</sup> Tom van der Molen suggests that a painting of 1636 by an anonymous Dutch painter in the collection of the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York might represent David Leeuw's mother Maria Rutgers, even though this painting is not listed in the document (Spoken suggestion by Tom van der Molen, The Hague, 16 February 2011); Anonymous Dutch painter, *Portrait of a Young Woman in a Landscape*, 1636, oil on panel, 66x50 cm, The Friedsam Collection, Metropolitan Museum of Art New York. Dated and inscribed: “Ao 1636 / AETA. 32” Perhaps Flinck's portrait of a man with a cane in a dune landscape in the Muzeum Narodowe in Warsaw represents Ameldonck Leeuw.

<sup>294</sup> Van der Veen 2006, pp. 173-175.

<sup>295</sup> For more details on this painting see the comments in the transcript of the archival document.

remarkable as these were hardly ever found in the collections of private individuals before the middle of the seventeenth century. According to van der Veen, another significant fact is that Hendrick Uylenburgh valued the collection of Jan le Pla, the second husband of Maria Rutgers.<sup>296</sup> One may wonder whether there would have been an alternative art dealer to whom his fellow-Mennonites might turn or whether Uylenburgh simply monopolised the market.

## Transcript

### [page 1]

Memorie van tgene mijn Jacob Leeuw, bij lotinge te beurt gevallen is in de verdelinge van den inboel ofte huysraedt naergelaten bij mijn Salige moeder Maria Rutgers, als volght. Eerst den 7 february anno 1653 in amsterdam, Inde schilderijen

*(Memory of those things that have come to me, Jacob Leeuw, by means of a lottery, in the division of the household items left by my late mother Maria Rutgers, as follows. On the 7th of February in the year 1653 in Amsterdam, Paintings)*

Een contrefeitsel van Jacob leeuw den ouden<sup>297</sup> *(A portrait of Jacob Leeuw the elder)*

Een stuck gedaen van wlenburghs soon, daerin mijn Tronie gedaen van Ovens<sup>298</sup> *(A piece made by Wlenburgh's son, with my face done by Ovens)*

Een stuck zijnde een batalitie *(A piece being a battle)*

Een capit.[ael] stuc staende daerin moeder met ons, haer kind[eren]<sup>299</sup> *(A capital vertical piece with mother and us, her children)*

Een stuck een lantschap met koeijen in een vergulde lijst *(A piece a landscape with cows in a gilded frame)*

Een stuck wtbeeldende de belegeringe van sHartogenbos *(A piece depicting the siege of 's-Hertogenbosch)*

Een stuck zijnde een oude mans tronie, van Govert Flinck<sup>300</sup> *(A piece being an old man's face, by Govert Flinck)*

Een ,, lantschap van G. Flinck *(A landscape by G. Flinck)*

Een stuck zijnde een crucifix van Govert Flinck<sup>301</sup> *(A piece being a crucifix by Govert Flinck)*

Een stuck zijnde een zeestrand van Simon de Vlieger<sup>302</sup> *(A piece being a beach by Simon de Vlieger)*

Een stuckje zijnde een ruyne lantschap *(A piece being a ruin landscape)*

Vijf stuckies de vijf sinnen heel klein *(Five little pieces the five senses very small)*

Two clene slegte voddige lantschapies *(Two small bad sloppy little landscapes)*

1 cleen slegt stuckie met glas overdeekt *(1 small bad piece covered with glass)*

Een klein gestickt bortien met glas daer over *(A small ... .. with glass over it)*

En zyn de bovengenoemde 20 schildereien(?) in Handen van, als volght

*(And the above-mentioned 20 paintings are in the Hands of, as follows)*

Dirck block dese ses volgende *(Dirck Block the following six)*

Het stuck van onse moeder contrefeitsel met de kinderen *(The piece of our mother's portrait with the children)*

Een lantschap van govert flincq *(A landscape by Govert Flinck)*

Een stuck zynde een(?) Batalie *(A piece being a battle)*

Een sruck zynde een ruijn een lantschap *(A piece being a ruin a landscape)*

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<sup>296</sup> *Schilderijen berustende tot Amsterdam, gestelt achtervolgende de prisatie door Hendric Uylenburch...*, RAL (Regionaal Archief Leiden), notary K. Outerman, NA 444, deed 173, 17 August 1651.

<sup>297</sup> This must be a portrait of Jacob Leeuw (died 1635) or Jacob Leeuw (1636-1704) by an unknown master.

<sup>298</sup> Dudok van Heel 1980, p. 121: This is the first document confirming the long cooperation between Gerrit Uylenburgh (c.1625-after 1677) and Jurriaen Ovens (1623-1678); Van der Veen 2006, p. 174: "This was a landscape painted by a son of Hendrick Uylenburgh – certainly Gerrit – that included a painted portrait of Jacob Leeuw the Younger by Jürgen Ovens."

<sup>299</sup> This is a portrait of Maria Rutgers (1603/1604-1652) and her four children Jacob, Agneta, Barbara, David.

<sup>300</sup> Govert Flinck, *An old man*, unidentified

<sup>301</sup> Van Eeghen 1953, p. 173: Govert Flinck, *Golgotha*, 1643, oil on panel, 117x85cm, Öffentliche Kunstsammlung Basel (and other suggestions of scenes including a crucifix by Flinck in art sales's catalogues). Dudok van Heel 1980, p. 121: perhaps Govert Flinck, *Crucifix*, 1649; Van der Veen 2006, p. 174 also suggests *The crucifixion of Christ* at Basel "that Leeuw would have bought for the house in Amsterdam he had built for himself a few years earlier."

<sup>302</sup> Van der Veen 2006, p. 174: de Vlieger belonged to the consortium that lent Uylenburgh money in 1640.

Twe cleyne lantschapies (*Two small landscapes*)

In den Anthonij Block dese vier onderge. (*To Anthony Block these four mentioned below*)

Contrefeitse van den ouden Jacob Leeuw (*Portrait of the old Jacob Leeuw*)

Zeestrandje van de Vlieger<sup>303</sup> (*Little beach by de Vlieger*)

Een slegt stuckjen met glas overdect (*A bad piece covered with glass*)

Een gestict bortie met glas daerover (*A ... .. with glass over it*)

In bewaring van David Leeuw d'ondervolgende 10 .. (*In safeguard of David Leeuw the 10 mentioned below*)

De belegeringe van SHartogenbosch (*The siege of 's-Hertogenbosch*)

Een lantschap met koeijen in een verguld lijst (*A landscape with cows in a gilded frame*)

Een oude mans tronie van flinck (*An old man's face by Flinck*)

T stuck daer ... schilderilles (*The piece in which ...*)

Crucifix gedaen van Govert flinck (*Crucifix done by Govert Flinck*)

Vijf stuckjes zijnde vijf zinnen (*Five pieces being five senses*)

[page 2] Den 10 februario mijn te beurt gevallen bij lotinge int hysraet

[...] ¼ part in een Donck tafelaken daar ieder van zal hebben alst gebleekt is vijf ellen

Ditto int porcelijn end Cledenstuck [...]

[page 3] Anno 1653 den 10 februarij is mijn Jacob Leeuw te beurt gevallen bij lotinge in ..., kussens, deeckens ende beddekleden [...] Ditto in Verscheijde coper en tinne.. kannen en and.. Comme...

[page 4] Anno 1653 11 februario gedeelt de grote spiegel met diverse behangsels en 6 tapijtte kussens ende 16 door mij ten dele gevallen [...] Ditto mijne portie inde bedden [...] Een 12 dito by lotinge in de sch.derommelinck(?) mijn te beurt gevallen [...]

[page 5] Anno 1653 12 februarij voor mijn tafelkleden, ... en gordijnen

[...] Den 13 ditto gelooft int Silver ... in presenten van mijn Jacob Leeuw voor mijn deel [...]

Noch mij toebehoorende buijten de Lotingge [...]

[page 6] Den 14 februario bij lotinge in silvere en goude penningen ... mij te beurt gevallen als volght

[...] Volgt t hysraet t'geen mijn Sa moeder maria Rutgers voor mijn Jacob Leeuw in leven heeft naegel.. [...]

Noch compt mijn de helfft inde boecken van mijn Vader en Moeder ....

item tgeheel oft portijs musicboecken ...ende

ditto den haertijser met groene .een..en. .aende inde beeldkens

Blijvende ongedeelt oft ge...

Sijnde in alles gedeelt ... den 19 februario anno 1653 in Amsterdam

Sijnde dit voorge.. copie van de originele notitie ge.onden en onderteekent S(?) J C/G Ansloo

. Moij Jacob Leeuw

[page 7, in another hand]

Memorijs van tgene door Angeneta Leeuw inde verdeelinge van der Inboel oft huisraet bij Lootinge waert(?) 46 gulden(?)

(*Memory of the things by Agneta Leeuw in the division of the household items by means of a lottery [worth 46 guilders?]*)

Een conterfeijtsel van A. Leeuw van G. Flinck<sup>304</sup> (*A portrait of A. Leeuw by G. Flinck*)

Een conterfeijtsel van Susanna Rutgers van ditto<sup>305</sup> (*A portrait of Susanna Rutgers by the same*)

Een stuck, sinde een seestrant van S. de Vlieger<sup>306</sup> (*A piece, being a beach by S. de Vlieger*)

Een stuck, sinde een wafelbackertie van H/D.M. Sorgh (*A piece, being a waffle baker by H/D.M. Sorgh*)

Een stuck, sinde een lantschap van C. Moiaert, vlucht van Egipten<sup>307</sup> (*A piece, being a landscape by C. Moiaert, flight into Egypt*)

Een stuck, sijnde een carstnacht van Lomper (*A piece, being a nativity by Lomper*)

Een stuck, sijnde een schael met een roemer van P. Claesz. (*A piece, being a plate with a ... by P. Claesz.*)

Een stuck, sijnde een lantschap van Ruisdael (*A piece, being a landscape by Ruisdael*)

Een stuck, sijnde een seestrant, copie (*A piece, being a beach, copy*)

<sup>303</sup> Van der Veen 2006, p. 174: de Vlieger belonged to the consortium that lent Uylenburgh money in 1640.

<sup>304</sup> This is a portrait of either Agneta Leeuw (1630-1694), her father Ameldonck Leeuw (1604-1652) or her brother Ameldonck Leeuw (1628-1643).

<sup>305</sup> This is a portrait of Susanna Rutgers, probably the sister of Maria Rutgers.

<sup>306</sup> Van der Veen 2006, p. 174: de Vlieger belonged to the consortium that lent Uylenburgh money in 1640.

<sup>307</sup> Van der Veen 2006, p. 174: Moeyaert belonged to the consortium that lent Uylenburgh money in 1640.

Een stuck, sijnde een wintertgen (*A piece, being a winter scene*)  
Een stuck met een schapenbout, een stuck ditto toebackgereetschap (*A piece with a sheep ..., a piece of the same tobacco tool*)  
2 printen van de prins en prinses (*2 prints of the prince and princess*)

[page 8]

[page 9]

[page 10, in another hand]

Voor Barbara Leeuw .. inde verdeelingh van den Inboel & huysraet by lootinge te deel gevallen naervolgende Schylderyen  
(*To Barbara Leeuw .. in the division of the household items by means of a lottery on her part the following*)  
(*Paintings*)

Een conterfeijtsel van bestemoeder Josynna Lambrechts van Backer<sup>308</sup> (*A portrait of grandmother Josina Lambrechts by Backer*)

Een stuck, sijnde een offerhande gedaen van Claes Moyaert<sup>309</sup> (*A piece, being a sacrifice done by Claes Moyaert*)

Een stuck, sijnde twee blindemans (*A piece, being two blind men*)

Een stuck, sijnde een lantschap van Govert Flinck (*A piece, being a landscape by Govert Flinck*)

Een groot stuck, sijnde lantschap (*A large piece, being landscape*)

Een stuck, het danckertie van Molenaer (*A piece, the ... by Molenaer*)

Een stuck, een zee met de have van Middelburgh (*A piece, a sea with the port of Middelburgh*)

Een lantschap, sijnde de bleeck van Gerrit Uylenburgh<sup>310</sup> (*A landscape, being a bleachery by Gerrit Uylenburgh*)

Een slecht stuck, dry musycanten; een ditto, de liefde (*A bad piece, three musicians; the same, love*)

Een slecht stuck, een ontbijt; een liermannetje met de pen gedaen (*A bad piece, a still life; a little ... done by pen and ink*)

Twee printen, d'ouden prins en prinses (*Two prints, the old prince and princess*)

Linnewaeren

[...]

[page 11]

[page 12]

[page 13]

Voor David Leeuw .. inde(?) verdelinge vand inboel & hijsraedt bij lootinge ten dele gevallen naervolgende  
(*To David Leeuw .. in the division of the household items by means of a lottery on his part as follows*)  
Schilderijen  
(*Paintings*)

Een conterfeijtsel van David Leeuw door Flinck gedaen<sup>311</sup> (*A portrait of David Leeuw done by Flinck*)

Een stuck van Rembrandt, sijnde Thomas bij Christus<sup>312</sup> (*A piece by Rembrandt, being St. Thomas with Christ*)

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<sup>308</sup> Dudok van Heel 1980, p. 120-121; Josina Lambrechts (c.1565-1638) was Maria Rutgers' mother.

<sup>309</sup> Van der Veen 2006, p. 174: Moeyaert belonged to the consortium that lent Uylenburgh money in 1640.

<sup>310</sup> Van der Veen 2006, p. 174: "In my view, it is not insignificant that the text here attaches the definite article to the bleachery. It was not previously mentioned that the Leeuw family owned property at Bennebroek, including a house and a bleachery; so this painting too may well have been specifically commissioned."

<sup>311</sup> Dudok van Heel 1980, p. 121: Govert Flinck, *Portrait of a boy*, 1640, oil on canvas, Barber Institute of Fine Arts, Birmingham.

<sup>312</sup> Van Eeghen 1953, p. 173: Rembrandt, *Doubting Thomas*, 1645?, oil on canvas, 62x55cm, collection E.F.

Weber Berlin (1912) / Rembrandt?, *Doubting Thomas*, oil on canvas, 80x108cm, collection Osborn Kling

Stockholm (1928) / Rembrandt, *Doubting Thomas*, auction David Ietwaard, Amsterdam 22 April 1749.

Dudok van Heel 1980, p. 121: "Het schilderij 'Thomas bij Christus' van Rembrandt, dat vermoedelijk rechtstreeks door Ameltonck Leeuw van de schilder werd verworven, blijkt liefst honderdvijfentwintig jaar in de familie te zijn gebleven. Het kwam in 1703 aan de dochter Susanna Leeuw (1669-1726), die in 1692 huwde met de koopman Dirck van Lennep (1665-1720), en werd op 30 januari 1759 geveild met de boedel van hun dochter



Een stuck, sijnde een boerekermins van Ostade (*A piece, being a peasant's fair by Oostade*)  
 Een stuck van Flinck, sijnde een koeijneij/koeijwij naer 't leeven gedaen<sup>313</sup> (*A piece by Flinck, being a meadow with cows done after life*)  
 Een stuck, sijnde Elias door Flinck gedaen<sup>314</sup> (*A piece, being Elias done by Flinck*)  
 Een groote koocken van Ulenborch<sup>315</sup> (*A large kitchen by Uylenburgh*)  
 Een principael van onbekende meester daer Cain Abel in comen (*A ... by an unknown master with Cain and Abel*)  
 2 tijckeningen van Rembrant<sup>316</sup>; 2 albaste bortkens (*2 drawings by Rembrandt; 2 alabaster plates*)  
 1 stuck, daer een bakermat in comt met een vergulde lijst (*1 piece, with a ... with a golden frame*)  
 1 slecht stantien; 1 prent daer een kasteel in comt (*1 bad little beach scene; 1 print with a castle*)  
 1 bloempot gesteecken (*1 flower pot ...*)

Linnewaeren

[...]

[page 14] Voor David Leeuw

[...]

Kooper /

[...]

Tin / blick / Iser

[page 15]

...

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Anna van Lennep (1695-1758), weduwe van Pieter Roeters (1695-1755). In de advertentie van deze boedelverkoop in de *Amsterdamsche Courant* van 27 januari 1759 staat het schilderij als volgt omschreven: 'een excellend schoon stuk van Rembrandt het beste ooit van hem gekend, hoog 1 voet 10 duim, breed 1 voet 9 duim'. Deze maten (omgerekend 53,8 x 51,1 cm) blijken overeen te komen met het paneel 'de ongelovige Thomas' uit 1634, dat thans in het Pushkin Museum in Moskou hangt. Op de veiling van Roeters-Van Lennep werd het voor fl100,- gekocht door de Gebroeders de Neufville, wier bankiershuis in 1765 op gerucht makende wijze faillierde. Het schilderij is toen via een Berlijnse collectie in het bezit van Catharina II van Rusland geraakt.'': Rembrandt, *Doubting Thomas*, oil on panel, 54x51 cm, Pushkin Museum Moscow.

Dudok van Heel 2006, pp. 202-204: "In dit atelier [van Hendrick Uylenburgh] ontpopte Flinck zich direct als een heel goede Rembrandt-navolger. Mogelijk mogen wij in de variant van Rembrandt's schilder 'De ongelovige Thomas' een leerstuk van Flinck zien, die 'zig die behandeling der verwen en wyze van schilderen gewende, welke hij in dien korte tijd zoodanig heeft weten na te bootsen dat verscheiden van zyne stukken voor egte penseelwerken van Rembrandt wierden aangezien en verkogt.' In 1653 hing er 'een stuck van Rembrandt, sijnde Thomas bij Christus' in de boedel van Flincks neef, de doopsgezinde koopman Ameldonck Leeuw (1604-1647), samen met nog een zevental andere werken van Flinck. Ruim een eeuw later werd het paneel voor fl100,- door de nazaten verkocht aan het doopsgezinde bankiershuis De Neufville." It seems that Dudok van Heel suggests here, in contrast to what he stated earlier, that this painting was not by Rembrandt, but by Flinck closely following Rembrandt's style and sold as a work by his teacher.

Van der Veen 2006, p. 174 believes it must be Rembrandt's work in the Pushkin Museum of 1634. "In the context of the other paintings, it would seem an obvious inference that either Jacob Leeuw the Elder or his son Ameldonck acquired this history piece not very long after it had been painted. Rembrandt was still working with Uylenburgh in 1634."

<sup>313</sup> Van Eeghen 1953, p. 173: Govert Flinck, *Field with cows*, auction J.L. Strantwijk, Amsterdam 10 May 1786, no.76. This is probably the same painting as Govert Flinck, *Veldgezicht*, auction Amsterdam 5 December 1785.

Van der Veen 2006, p. 174: "To date, virtually no attention has been paid to this work in the literature. The rather insistent specification that the landscape had been painted from real life is especially interesting, for Ameldonck Leeuw was involved with cattle and cattle pasture and it is very well possible that he expressly commissioned Flinck to portray his profitable business."

<sup>314</sup> Dudok van Heel 1980, p. 121: perhaps Govert Flinck, *Elias in the Wild*, 1642?

<sup>315</sup> Van der Veen 2006, p. 175: "undoubtedly a kitchen piece by Rombout Uylenburgh."

<sup>316</sup> Van der Veen 2006, p. 175: "The appearance of two drawings by Rembrandt in Leeuw's legacy is particularly exceptional: these are hardly ever seen in the inventories of private persons' possessions before the middle of the seventeenth-century."

APPENDIX D  
RECONSTRUCTION OF THE PROVENANCE OF DAVID LEEUW'S PORTRAIT

**1640?** David Leeuw (1631/32-1703) was the son of Ameldonck Leeuw (1604-1647), a Mennonite merchant living on the Nieuwezijds Voorburgwal in Amsterdam, and his wife Maria Rutgers (1603/4-1652). Ameldonck asked his cousin, the painter Govert Flinck (1615-1660), to paint a portrait of his son, possibly in 1640 at about eight or nine years of age. Possibly this painting is the *Portrait of a Boy* in the Barber Institute of Fine Arts, Birmingham. The cousin of Flinck and brother of Ameldonck, called Dirck Jacobsz. Leeuw (1614-1652), was Flinck's neighbour on the Amsterdam Lauriergracht since 1644 and was already portrayed by Flinck in 1636.

**1647** Ameldonck Leeuw died.

**14 May 1651** David Leeuw marries Cornelia Hooft (1631-1708). He moves to a house on the Rokin. Perhaps he inherits a part of his parent's legacy at this moment.

**1652** Maria Rutgers died.

**7 February 1653** The collection of household items of Maria Rutgers (and her late husband Ameldonck Leeuw) was divided among their four surviving children. In the document it is written that David Leeuw received "*Een conterfeytsel van David Leeuw door Flinck gedaen*" (A portrait of David Leeuw made by Flinck).

**1653** Maria Leeuw, first daughter of David Leeuw and Cornelia Hooft, born.

**1657** Pieter Leeuw, only son of David Leeuw and Cornelia Hooft, born.

**1659** Weyntje Leeuw, second daughter of David Leeuw and Cornelia Hooft, born.

**1663** Cornelia Leeuw, third daughter of David Leeuw and Cornelia Hooft, born.

**1669** Susanna Leeuw, fourth daughter of David Leeuw and Cornelia Hooft, born.

**1671** Abraham van den Tempel (1622-1672) paints the family portrait of David Leeuw, Cornelia Hooft and their five children, currently in the Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam.

**1674** Maria Leeuw marries Ameldonck Block, the son of Agneta Leeuw (1630-1694) and thus Maria's direct cousin from her father's side, and moves to a house on the Warmoesstraat.

**1677** Pieter Leeuw dies at the age of twenty.

**1682** Weyntje Leeuw marries Aernout van Lennep (1658-1728) and moves to a house on the Warmoesstraat.

**1683** David Leeuw van Lennep Aernoutsz. (1683-1745), first son of Weyntje Leeuw and Aernout van Lennep, born.

**1684** David Leeuw acquires the estate De Rijk near Heemstede, converted into Leeuwenhooft.

**1686** Jacob van Lennep (1686-1725), second son of Weyntje Leeuw and Aernout van Lennep, born.

**1692** Susanna Leeuw marries Dirck van Lennep (1665-1720), the brother of Aernout van Lennep, and moves to a house on the Fluwele Burgwal.

**1695** Anna van Lennep (1695-1758), first daughter of Susanna Leeuw and Dirck van Lennep, born.

**1702** Ameldonck Block dies, Maria Leeuw becomes a widow and moves back in with her parents in the house on the Rokin.

**9 March 1702** David Leeuw and Maria Rutgers make their final testament. It is stated that the widow Maria Leeuw and Cornelia Leeuw (who never married) will inherit the house of the Rokin and the estate Leeuwenhooft (Appendix A, document no. 13).

**1703** David Leeuw died.

**1708** Maria Rutgers died, Maria Leeuw inherits the collection of portraits.

**14 August 1709** Maria Leeuw and Cornelia Leeuw become each other's heirs (Appendix A, document no. 16).

**1716** Cornelia Leeuw died.

**17 September 1717:** Maria Leeuw declares in her testament that the portraits of the parents and ancestors are to remain in the family (Appendix A, document no. 17).

**1721** Maria Leeuw died, Weyntje inherits the collection of portraits and the estate Leeuwenhooft.

**1726** Susanna Leeuw died; although she never owned the collection of portraits, her daughter Anna van Lennep received Rembrandt's *Thomas bij Christus* from the collection of Ameldonck Leeuw and David Leeuw probably at this moment.

**1728** Weyntje Leeuw died, the portraits are probably given to her son David Leeuw van Lennep Aernoutsz.

**30 January 1759** Rembrandt's *Thomas bij Christus* is sold on an auction on Amsterdam from the estate of Anna van Lennep, who was married to Pieter Roeters (1695-1755) and died in 1758 (Lugt no. 1029).

**24 July 1792** The collection of paintings of Aarnoud van Lennep (1718-1791), grandson of Weyntje Leeuw, sold at auction in Amsterdam, but no trace of Flinck's portrait (Lugt no. 4939).

**1795-1796** Inventory of Aernout David van Lennep (1728-1795), grandson of Weyntje Leeuw, but no trace of Flinck's portrait.

**1902** Abraham van den Tempel's family portrait is donated to the Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam by J.H. Willink van Bennebroek, a descendant of Weyntje Leeuw's son David Leeuw van Lennep Aernoutsz.

**Late-nineteenth / early twentieth century** Flinck's *Portrait of a Boy* was in the collection of Sir Francis Seymour Haden (1818-1910). He sold the picture to his brother Charles Sydenham Haden Esq. in France. The picture passed to the latter's only son Charles Sydenham Haden Jr. His daughter and her husband sold the painting at Christie's, London.

**12 April 1940** Flinck's *Portrait of a Boy* sold at Christie's, London, lot 60, by the Great Nephew of Haden as the seller and bought by Agnew's.

**8 June 1940** Flinck's *Portrait of a Boy* purchased by the Barber Institute of Fine Arts, University of Birmingham, from Messrs Thomas Agnew and Sons on for £1,100.

