



Pieter de Grebber and the Oranjezaal in Huis ten Bosch

Part II: variations in painting technique

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Introduction

The principles from Pieter de Grebber's *Regulen* (1649) found practical application in the Oranjezaal. As discussed in part I, the first rule stresses the necessity for a painter to know the intended location of his work: 'It is necessary to know where it [a painting] will hang before it is made, for various reasons: because of the lighting; because of the height at which it will hang; so that we can establish our distance and horizon...'. (I, fig. 8 and Appendix, Part I).¹ Indeed, in the Oranjezaal the depicted direction and type of light, the perspective and the height of the horizon are all related to the location of the paintings. For De Grebber's works this implied, for example, that in *Triumphal procession, with spoils of war* (I, figs. 2-3), positioned directly to the right of the windows, bright sunlight was portrayed falling from the left, whereas in his *Triumphal procession, with sacrificial bull* (I, figs. 2, 4) on the north wall, opposite the windows, a frontal light was depicted. The high position of the ceiling painting *The ascension of Frederik*

Hendrik into heaven (I, figs. 2, 5) demanded that the figures were portrayed from a lower viewpoint. Jacob van Campen, who had designed the compositions of the paintings in the ensemble and also coordinated their execution, provided the painters with the necessary information; in his *Memories* he specified the direction of light and, for the triumphal procession, he also gave the height of the horizon and the vanishing-point, while for the canvases on the second level he specified the height of hanging (I, fig. 9).

Apparently, the position of the paintings within the ensemble also had important implications for the painting techniques used. Depending on the light situation depicted and the height at which their works were to be hung in the hall, the Oranjezaal painters chose different materials for their drawing, and varied the types of underpainting; in the final execution of the pictures they also varied the brushstrokes, as well as materials and contours. Of all the artists in the ensemble, De Grebber adjusted his painting manner most strongly and used a different technique for each of his three paintings. The artist had a wide repertoire of painting methods at his disposal, from which he could choose according to his pictorial goal. Stylistic analysis of De Grebber's oeuvre has revealed that he could be flexible in his choice of pictorial means. Today, De Grebber is especially known as one of the key figures of the artistic development in Haarlem in the second quarter of the seventeenth century, commonly referred to as Haarlem Classicism.² However, as Peter Sutton has pointed out, De Grebber seems to have had a 'chameleon-like ability' to shift from stylistic idiom in the thirties, when he made pictures entirely in a 'classicist' manner, as well as in the style of Rubens, and works in which a strong influence of Rembrandt is manifest.³

The reasons behind De Grebber's remarkable flexibility in painting manner in the Oranjezaal is the subject of this article. This is also the first study of the techniques of this Haarlem master. After some short observations on the general characteristics of his painting manner in the Oranjezaal, it will be explained why the painter approached the rendering of contours in each of his three paintings so differently, and how this affected his choice of materials for the underdrawing. It will then be explained why De Grebber varied the colour, modelling and opacity in the underpainting, and why he executed his pictures with a different level of detail, varying brushwork and use of paint. Finally, De Grebber's remarkable use of gold leaf will be discussed.

General characteristics of De Grebber's painting manner

The composition of De Grebber's three works had been largely determined before he started to paint. Jacob van Campen had made detailed designs for the paintings, that were to be followed by all painters. It is known that, in response to these designs, the Antwerp painters made more elaborate sketches, that were to be approved by Amalia van Solms, Constantijn Huygens en Van Campen.⁴ Hence, the painters were actually far from having a free reign regarding their compositions. It is conceivable that De Grebber, too, made sketches for approval, but if he did, none have survived.⁵

The commissioners of the decorations for the Oranjezaal were also responsible for the supports of the paintings. Everyone was sent identical linen canvases prepared with a beige ground, consisting of mainly lead white and umber.⁶ The canvases were of good quality and the ground layer was chosen with the pictures' long-term preservation in mind; a thinly applied lead-white layer formed a flexible and damp-proof priming, while its light colour would not seriously interfere with the colours when the transparency of subsequent paint layers increased with age.⁷ The ceiling paintings, including De Grebber's, all have a grey ground of a somewhat darker tone than the canvases.⁸

The compositions – which had been determined in advance – were accurately copied by De Grebber onto the ground layer by means of a linear sketch. This is evident from sketch lines visible on the paint surface (see below). The elaborateness of this underdrawing however, can be deduced from the accurately positioned and precise underpaintings in all three works, with even individual leaves and flowers drawn in. Moreover, along the contours of the figures often a narrow strip of the ground layer remains visible, which indicates that the figures were filled in painstakingly within the lines of the sketch, like a colouring picture.

After the underpainting had dried sufficiently, the composition was worked out in detail. Here, the artist conformed to his underpainting precisely; as a result the paint of adjacent passages sometimes does not meet (fig. 1). De Grebber's orderly working manner is also evident from his working sequence during this phase of the painting process; strictly from the back- to the foreground, in conformity with instructions in seventeenth-century painters' manuals.⁹ Only for the finishing touches did De Grebber return to previously painted passages.

Despite the fact that the compositions in the Oranjezaal

had been established beforehand, various artists must have searched during the painting process for the exact positioning of the forms in their paintings. However, consistent with his orderly working manner, in De Grebber's paintings *pentimenti* are absent, apart from some small shifts (figs. 2-3).¹⁰ Only in his *Triumphal procession, with sacrificial bull* did he add a few small elements, such as the tiny dog that has been painted over the forms behind (I, fig. 4).

Although De Grebber completed his three paintings in the Oranjezaal in a similar systematic way, his working methods are very different. As will be argued, this diversity appears to be related to the physical position of the paintings within the ensemble rather than suggesting that De Grebber was assisted by others. Indeed, the fact that all three works have been signed by the master, does by no means rule out a contribution of others.¹¹ Jacob van Campen and Gerrit van Honthorst were certainly assisted in the Oranjezaal, even in signed paintings.¹² In the first decades of the seventeenth century, Pieter's father Frans Pieterszn de Grebber had a large workshop where not only many young painters were trained, but where paid assistants were employed too.¹³ Pieter de Grebber seems to have taken over the artistic management of his father's workshop in the twenties and probably stuck to the same practices.¹⁴ From the time De Grebber was active for the Oranjezaal several apprentices are known by name, who may well have assisted their master.¹⁵ In the paintings by Van Campen and Van Honthorst different hands can clearly be distinguished. This is not the case in De Grebber's paintings; not only are his figures painted without improvements, but the approach in painting hands, faces, folds etc. is quite consistent. Children's faces, for example, have similar short straight eyebrows, chubby cheeks, a pronounced small mouth and chin, and somewhat thick eyelids. Characteristically his draperies have final zigzag brushstrokes, loosely applied, at times square to the direction of the folds (figs. 4-5). Therefore, De Grebber's assistants - if he used them - must have followed their master's manner closely. Hence, the remarkable variation in materials and painting technique must have been chosen on De Grebber's initiative.

• Variation in the rendering of contours

First and foremost, the position of the three paintings in the ensemble affected the way in which De Grebber rendered his contours. In the seventeenth century, it was common practice to accentuate the contours of figures and objects with lines. However, the extent to which painters applied these linear accents varied enormously;

for example, in the Oranjezaal some artists made abundant use of lines while others applied them sparingly.¹⁶ The lines were used with deliberate care in order to draw attention to particular forms, and clarify their borders. Variation in colour and thickness of the lines was used to amplify the modelling of figures, and to suggest the textures of different objects. This allows forms to seem detached from one another, and contributes to a convincing suggestion of space. Furthermore, a sharp contour line helps a form protrude optically from its surroundings. The art was to apply these linear accents in a subtle way so as not to disturb the illusion of reality.

In the *Triumphal procession, with spoils of war* De Grebber has only sparingly applied contour lines; only occasionally a knee, elbow or shoulder has a short linear accent. Indeed, because of the slanting bright sunlight depicted in this picture, contour lines were not required; after all, the modelling with its strong tonal contrasts and reflections provided the painter with sufficient means to give his figures convincing relief. The figures are effectively detached from each other, since the shadowed side of one figure is always next to the lit side of the one adjacent. The only passage elaborately accentuated is the torso and right arm of the standard-bearer; here, the sharp blue and reddish brown lines make the man optically protrude from the picture plane. As described, occasionally a narrow strip of the ground or underpainting is left visible along a contour, as a consequence of De Grebber's precise technique. This results in a subtle linear accent, that is lighter than the form delineated (fig. 1).

De Grebber's approach in the *Triumphal procession, with sacrificial bull* is totally different: the figures are almost entirely delineated with dark lines. These contour lines are related to the frontal lighting; they imitate the dark linear shadows of convex forms when lit from the front (see part I). By varying the colour and thickness of the lines, De Grebber gave his uniformly lit figures extra volume; protruding forms were given thin light brown lines whereas receding forms were demarcated with dark strokes (fig. 6).

In De Grebber's paintings on the vaulted ceiling and the cupola of the lantern, the light depicted also plays a role in the rendering of contours. In the vaulted ceiling the central group with Frederik Hendrik is frontally lit by a bright light (I, fig. 5); the radiant divine light, represented in the small square vault above it (I, fig. 6).

Appropriate to this frontal illumination are the thick dark lines with which the contours of the protagonists have been drawn, and are again used to suggest narrow linear shadows (figs. 3, 5). The swarming cherubs in the different paintings are lit by various light sources. Apart



Fig. 1.
Detail of *Triumphal procession, with spoils of war* (I, fig. 3)
Between the cart and the shadowed side of the man with the vase, which almost have the same colour, De Grebber has left a narrow strip of the beige ground layer visible that functions as a subtle contour line. Notably, where the shadowed side of the man abuts the white horse no such reserve is made

Fig. 2
Detail of *The ascension of Frederik Hendrik into heaven* (I, fig. 5)
The left foot of Fides was underpainted with brown and ochre and worked up with loose garish touches. Compared to the line sketch, the final version of the foot is somewhat broader, as can be concluded from the dark sketch lines that clearly shine through

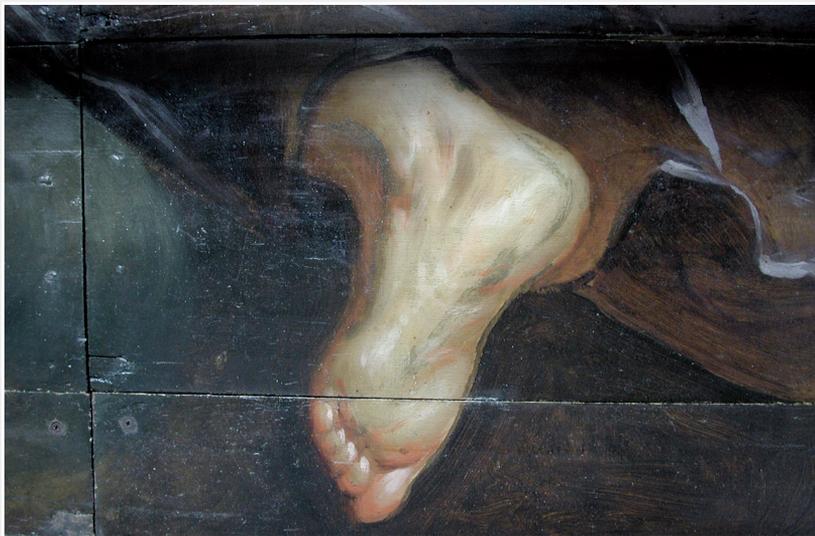


Fig. 3
Detail of *The ascension of Frederik Hendrik into heaven* (I, fig. 5)
The contours of the hand and arm of Spes have been accentuated with short brown, red and black lines. The modelling of the hand is accentuated by their varying thickness and colour. The dark underdrawing shines through the subsequent paint layers. The hand was underpainted with a semi-opaque ochre colour that was partly left visible



Fig. 4
Detail of *Triumphal procession, with sacrificial bull* (I, fig. 4)
In the red dress of the girl to the right, De Grebber has loosely applied many zigzag brushstrokes square to the direction of the folds. The strokes of pure vermillion have turned grey on ageing





Fig. 5
 Detail of *The ascension of Frederik Hendrik into heaven* (I, fig. 5)
 In his underdrawing the painter indicated the contours of Fides' raised arm, although he would subsequently cover them with the sleeve of her purple dress. Since the dark underdrawing unevenly shines through the paint, it appears as a dotted line at the paint surface. The purple dress was underpainted with transparent brown paint. At a later stage contours of the hand have been accentuated with brown lines



Fig. 6
 Detail of *Triumphal procession, with sacrificial bull* (I, fig. 4)
 Along the contours of the leg of the man, the brown lines to the left are darker and thicker than those to the right. The warm ochre underpaint is left visible as a middle tone



Fig. 7
 Detail of *The ascension of Frederik Hendrik into heaven* (I, fig. 5).
 In the face of Caritas sketch lines can be seen along the nose, the jaw, the hair line to the left, and with some difficulty along the eye. The grey ground has been left visible in the right corner of the eye



Fig. 8
 Detail of *Triumphal procession, with sacrificial bull* (I, fig. 4).
 In the face of the woman, the final flesh colours are loosely applied, leaving the ochreish underpaint in sight around the eye. De Grebber applied some final yellow-white brushstrokes on the nose, the nostrils and the brow

from the divine light in the small square vault, to the extreme right of the vaulted ceiling a bright sunlight is depicted that breaks through the clouds, whereas in the cupola of the lantern a radiant light is suggested of which the brightest centre is screened by the portrait of Amalia held by cherubs (I, fig. 7). As these lights affect the cherubs in a variety of ways, their contours are quite different. In the arched ceiling the children, who are mainly lit from the front, have been strongly outlined, whereas in the small square vault the cherubs are laterally lit by the bright divine radiance and thus exhibit only inconspicuous linear accents (I, fig. 6).

In each kind of lighting the contour lines in the ceiling paintings are much more pronounced than in the triumphal processions. The lines have also been drawn more loosely; often consisting of a series of short brushstrokes of varying colour and thickness (figs. 3, 5). The more pronounced delineation is required by the great distance between ceiling and cupola and the spectator. Indeed, the pictorial function of contour lines – i.e. enhancing volume and accentuating specific forms – is particularly useful when viewing high positioned paintings, as the lines ensure that the figures can be made out at a distance. They also contribute to a considerable shortening of the painting process, since a convincing effect of rounding is more readily achieved with linear accents than with careful modelling in light and dark nuances. It is for this reason that Rubens, who is known to have attached great importance to the rendering of contours, gave the figures in his large altarpieces more pronounced contour lines than those in smaller works. Likewise, in the altarpieces the figures at the top have stronger lines than those below. Certainly in his ceiling paintings De Grebber also used pronounced lines to shorten the painting process. In many places it can be seen how he was able to economize a great deal on the modelling by the deliberate use of dark and light contour lines (figs. 3, 5).

- *Variation in underdrawing*

For the elaborate drawing on the ground layer (see above) De Grebber chose different materials. In *The ascension of Frederik Hendrik into heaven* the composition is sketched with dark brown or black paint, which is visible on the surface (figs. 2, 3, 5). Fluent lines define the figures throughout, but they are precise enough to specify details such as facial features (fig. 7). In the *Triumphal procession, with sacrificial bull* fluent black lines are visible as well, although since this painting is executed more opaquely than the ceiling painting, these only shine locally through the paint layer, as in the back of the

white bull. In the *Triumphal procession, with spoils of war* not a single trace of a line drawing was found, although an elaborate drawing must certainly have been applied, given the precise character of the underpainting. Because of the open contours, but particularly because of the thin paint application in this work, any dark lines present would surely have been visible. Instead of black or dark brown paint, the painter must have selected a material that left no trace in the final result, such as white chalk or very light coloured paint.

The different choice of materials appears to be related to De Grebber's varied rendering of contours. Examination of all the paintings in the Oranjezaal revealed a remarkable interrelation between the materials the painters chose for their underdrawing and the way they depicted contours. Painters who delineated many contours with lines, invariably used bold brown, red or black paint lines for their underdrawing, whereas the painters who only made sporadic use of linear accents, chose a drawing material that left no trace in the final result. This is a logical choice in view of the pictorial effect this last group of painters aimed at. After all, a dark sketch can easily shine through the subsequent paint layers, especially as the transparency of oil paint increases over time. This must be the reason why De Grebber selected a drawing material that left no trace for his *Triumphal procession, with spoils of war*, where contour lines are almost absent, whereas in his *Triumphal procession, with sacrificial bull* a dark line sketch was more suitable since the figures would be given narrow linear shadows along their contours. In the large ceiling painting that is very rich in contour lines due to the lighting and its distance from the spectator, left his black and brown sketch lines visible to act as contour lines in the end result.

- *Variation in underpainting and working up due to the different light situation in the triumphal processions*

Observations of the paint surface in combination with paint cross sections indicate that in both triumphal processions the underpaint was done in subdued colours that approximate to the final result: red clothing was prepared in light red or subdued orange, white draperies in off-white, blue passages in a greyish blue, while an ochre colour was used for the bright yellow dress in the *Triumphal procession, with sacrificial bull*. The underpaint in the flesh tones was carefully chosen in relation to the final complexion. For example, in *Triumphal procession, with sacrificial bull*, the face of the woman has a ochreish preparation (fig. 8), while the preparation for the pale face of the girl in the red dress was done in pink. In *Triumphal procession, with spoils of war*, the underpaint for

the flesh tones varies from a cool dark brown for the subdued shadows of the man with the vase (fig. 1) to a reddish brown for the glowing shadows of the kneeling man (fig. 9). Another similarity between the underpaint in both pictures is that opaque paints were consistently used for the textiles. However, in the flesh tones of the two paintings, the character of the underpainting differs greatly; this differentiation is clearly a consequence of the different lighting depicted, which has, in turn, affected the further elaboration of the two images. In the procession next to the window, the strongly contrasting modelling of the figures - required for the effect of slanting sunlight - was already precisely indicated in the underpainting. Here the modelling of each figure was done in a variety of brown tones, as can be seen at the paint surface (figs. 1, 9). These browns were only applied to the figures in the shadow passages, while their lit parts were not put in the underpaint; here the ground layer was left visible. For the lit parts, which are very pale - almost overexposed - appropriate to the effect of bright sunlight, the beige ground provides a fitting undercolour on which these passages could be worked up *alla prima*. To avoid making the pronounced and dark shadows of the bodies appear heavy and massive, the painter has chosen a thin flowing, transparent paint for the brown underpaint, and for the further elaboration a semi-opaque paint (figs. 1, 9). This translucent paint application assists the luminosity of the dark passages because the daylight is reflected from the light ground layer. As might be expected, the uniformly lit figures in the *Triumphal procession, with sacrificial bull* require a different type of preparation since shadows are absent here, apart from the narrow lines along the contours mentioned above, and a single strong cast shadow. De Grebber did indicate the cast shadows in his underpainting, but with no more than a broad black line, as in the breast of the man. Since the figures further consist of lit skin tones, De Grebber would have had to leave the ground layer entirely visible had he followed the method of his other triumphal procession. Instead, he chose to apply an almost uniform flesh colour to the bodies which matches the intended complexion of the various figures more accurately than the light beige ground (figs. 6, 8). This underpaint is still rather light in tone and therefore contains a relatively large amount of lead white, producing an opaque and smooth paint. The same is true for the paints with which De Grebber successively worked up the skin tones. The coloured underpaint allowed a rapid finishing of the figures. Thus, by leaving the pinkish-brown undercolour visible as a middle tone, De Grebber could effec-

tively model the man with very little paint (fig. 6). More often the paint was applied as a covering layer, yet usually quite carelessly. It seems the painter made no effort to fill in every passage neatly to the edge; after all, this was not needed since the underpaint did already have the correct colour (fig. 8).

In *Triumphal procession, with spoils of war*, the lit parts of the bodies have been worked up much more carefully. Of course, this was necessary since the light and middle tones were painted *alla prima* on the ground layer. Here, cream coloured as well as grey and red brushstrokes have been carefully blended into one another, forming a smooth paint layer that almost entirely covers the ground (fig. 1).

- *Variation in underpainting and working up due to the distance to the spectator.*

Because of the high location of the ceiling paintings - varying from eight to nineteen metres above the floor - the painters naturally did not need to depict their figures with as much detail or as neatly as below. Thus De Grebber used vigorous paint strokes, often without blending these garish touches into each other (figs. 2, 3, 5). In part I it was explained that seventeenth-century treatises advise a bold brushwork for paintings meant to be seen from afar, and that De Grebber must have referred to this type of paint handling when emphasizing in the first of his *Regulen* the necessity for artists to know the height at which their pictures would hang 'so that we can establish our distance...'. De Grebber's use in his ceiling painting of an underdrawing in dark paint and distinct contour lines, shows that he was alluding to these aspects of the painting process as well. De Grebber must also have taken into account the type of underpaint and its role in the final result.

As explained, besides assuring the legibility of the figures from a distance, the marked contour lines in De Grebber's ceiling paintings were also used to speed up the painting process. With an eye to this, the artist certainly adjusted the character of his underpainting as well, as can be seen in *The ascension of Frederik Hendrik into heaven*. Although the main group around Frederik Hendrik, as well as most of the cherubs, is lit from the front - just like the figures in the *Triumphal procession, with sacrificial bull* - they have not been prepared with similar opaque, smooth colours. Instead, the vaulted ceiling has been given an under layer with thin and fluent translucent browns, including the textiles (figs. 5, 10), which were consistently laid in with opaque undercolours in the triumphal processions; here only the ochreish brocade on the lap of Frederik Hendrik and the



fig. 9
Detail of *Triumphal procession, with spoils of war* (I, fig. 3).
In the shaded face of the kneeling man, the first transparent reddish brown lay-in is clearly visible at the paint surface

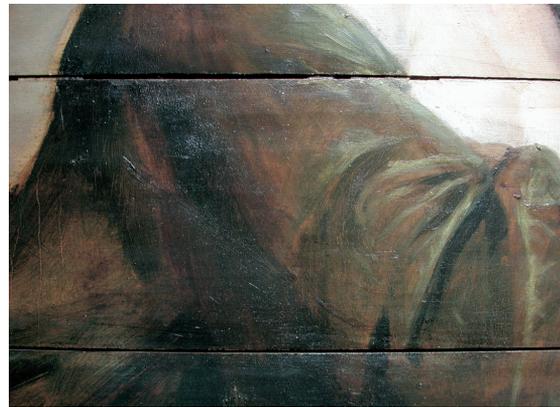


fig. 10
Detail of *The ascension of Frederik Hendrik into heaven* (I, fig. 5).
On the even brown underpainting, the folds in the dress of Spes were rendered with green and blackish paint strokes

red sash around the middle of Fides received a coloured preparation.

The monochrome underpaint was applied very rapidly with little variation of tone. The dark green and purple cloths received little more than a uniform washing (figs. 5, 10), and in the skin tones the careful selection of underpaint colour according to the final complexion, as is evident in the triumphal processions, is nowhere to be found. The shaded parts of the bodies have been laid in with brown washes, which assist the legibility of the dark passages in this poorly lit ceiling (fig. 2). This preparation is reminiscent of the underpainting in the *Triumphal procession, with spoils of war*. In the ceiling however, the ground layer is unfit as an undercolour for the lit flesh tones, because of its grey tone. Here, the lit passages in the bodies of the protagonists and the cherubs in the foreground have been underpainted in semi-opaque and transparent ochres (fig. 3). Occasionally the ground was deliberately left visible to function as a delicate shadow in the end result (fig. 7). For the cherubs in the background, De Grebber chose an even more time-saving preparation, since now the lit forms were underpainted with the same browns as used in the shadows, sometimes applied pure as a transparent layer, but more often mixed with lead white into a semi-opaque greyish brown (fig. 11). Also the further elaboration of the image is characterized by considerable efficiency, in which - as in the underpainting - a careful distinction was made between the protagonists and minor characters. Only the faces of the main figures have been worked up with natural skin colours, to some extent blended into each other, although the brushstrokes are still discernible

from close by. The eyes, noses and mouths have been indicated as well, though only allusively and without accurate definition (fig. 7). Compared to these passages, the rest of the bodies and garments of the main characters, have - like the cherubs - been rendered more loosely (figs. 2, 3, 5, 10). In the remainder of the ceiling the finishing is done even more swiftly and sketchily, with separate bright touches on the underpaint (fig. 11). As explained, the modelling of these figures was chiefly accomplished with contour lines. Some cherubs have been rendered in one go onto the ground without even a linear sketch and underpainting, clearly to allow speed in the painting process.

• Variation in the rendering of gold

For the depiction of gold, De Grebber took the actual light situation in the Oranjezaal into account. In the *Triumphal procession, with sacrificial bull*, gold leaf has been used for the tiara, tassels and beads of the decoration of the white bull (I, fig. 4, 11), whereas in *Triumphal procession, with spoils of war*, the golden objects have been represented with paint only (I, fig. 3, 10). The procession with the bull is the only canvas in the Oranjezaal on which gold leaf was used. De Grebber's application of gold leaf is noteworthy since its use in seventeenth-century (Netherlandish) easel painting is rare.¹⁷ For the rendering of a convincing three-dimensional effect, the use of gold leaf has a significant drawback. Leon Battista Alberti had noted in his *De pictura* (1435) that golden objects could be better depicted with paint than with gold leaf, since: '...it is also true that, when done in gold on a flat panel, many surfaces that should have been

presented as light and gleaming, appear dark to the viewer'¹⁸ The same phenomenon was described by Karel van Mander (1604).¹⁹

However, there is one light situation in which this problem does not occur and in which the lustre of gold leaf is used to good effect, and that is frontal illumination. Therefore in De Grebber's *Triumphal procession, with sacrificial bull* opposite the windows, gold leaf could be used, while in his triumphal procession square to the windows, because of the lateral illumination, the golden war booty had to be depicted in paint only. Here, the artist imitated the splendour of the objects with blobs of yellow paint (I, figs. 3, 10). These impastoed highlights contrast with the smooth paint surface of the rest of the metalwork. Since the lateral daylight reflects from the protruding highlights, their light intensity is considerably increased, and a lustrous effect is nevertheless achieved. In *Triumphal procession, with sacrificial bull*, gold leaf has only been used for the decorations of the white bull in the foreground while the ornaments of the black bull behind were made with paint. This variation relates, as explained in part I, to the suggestion of depth, as gold leaf would have made the forms in the background advance too much optically.

In De Grebber's *The ascension of Frederik Hendrik into heaven*, gold leaf is used for the golden flame of the heart held by Caritas. The material has also been applied in the arched ceiling by Jacob van Campen, and the arched ceiling ascribed (by the present authors) to Pieter Claesz. Soutman (c.1580-1657).²⁰ Seen from below, the gold in these three paintings radiates towards the spectator, thanks to the daylight from the lantern that is reflected

on the shiny wooden floor, so that it illuminates the arched ceilings frontally.

Conclusion

According to Pieter De Grebber's *Regulen* (1649), it is essential that a painter knows the intended location of his work, so that he can take into consideration the lighting and the height at which it will hang. In this article it has been shown that the intended location not only influenced the fall of light and the perspective depicted, but also the painting technique in De Grebber's three paintings in the Oranjezaal. Depending on the direction and type of light depicted, and the height of his paintings, De Grebber selected various materials for the underdrawing, varied his underpainting, elaboration and handling of paint, and chose different approaches for the depiction of golden objects. The great variety in the materials and painting techniques used is remarkable since De Grebber's three paintings were made for the same commission within a relatively short time span, and - as with the two triumphal processions - are similar in size, and have comparable compositions. In art historical and art technological literature it is specifically these factors that are considered as a reason for similarity in style and technique. A similar diversity in execution according to the location of their pictures has also been observed in the works of other painters in the Oranjezaal. Therefore, when placing undated works in the oeuvre of an artist into a chronological ranking, it needs to be remembered that the technique of a painter may vary considerably even in works from the same period.



Fig. 11
Detail of *The ascension of Frederik Hendrik into heaven* (I, fig. 5).
The face of the cherub at the right bottom of the cross was made of a thin brown underpaint on which few more bright coloured touches were placed

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Notes

- 1 Pieter Franz. de Grebber, *Regulen: welcke by een goet Schilder en Teyckenaer geobserveert en achtervolght moeten werden; Te samen ghestelt tot lust van de leergierighe Discipelen* (Haarlem 1649), Noord-Hollands Archive, Haarlem, (portef. Plano 2, no. 4).
- 2 See references in note 2 in part I.
- 3 P.C. Sutton, 'Rembrandt and Pieter de Grebber,' in: *Shop Talk: Studies in honour of Seymour Slive*, (Cambridge, 1995), 241-245.
- 4 Of Jacob Jordaens, Thomas Willeboirts Bosschaert and Gonzales Coques sketches have been preserved. Sketches of the Antwerp painters are also mentioned in the correspondence of Constantijn Huygens: D.F. Slothouwer, *De paleizen van Frederik Hendrik*, (Leiden, 1945), 355-358.
- 5 Some preliminary drawings of De Grebber are known for other paintings, some of which are discussed in: K. Andrews, 'On some drawings by Pieter de Grebber,' *Master Drawings*, 22 (1984), no. 3, 294-298.

6 In some grounds also chalk is present and sometimes small amounts of fine yellow or red ochre and black.

7 The canvases have a threadcount that varies between 10 and 17 threads per cm. The seams have been carefully finished so that they would not become visible at the front. On the knowledge of seventeenth-century painters on permanent ground layers and the increased transparency of oil paint upon ageing, see chapter two in: M.H. van Eikema Hommes, *Changing Pictures: Discoloration in 15th-17th-century oil paintings*, (London, 2004), 17-50.

8 The ground in De Grebber's ceiling painting consists of two layers: first a chalk-glue ground and on top an oil ground with lead white, charcoal black and umber.

9 This working sequence is, among others, recommended by: G. de Lairese, *Het groot schilderboek...*, (Amsterdam, 1707), 2 vols. vol. 1, 13-14.

10 In the background and archway of *Triumphal procession, with spoils of war* De Grebber has made several radical changes. This is because De Grebber and several other painters of parts of the triumphal procession were kept in uncertainty by the commissioners about the desired appearance of the archway. The problems with the construction of the perspective in the archways will be discussed in detail in the forthcoming book on the Oranjezaal. see note 7 in part I.

11 J. van der Veen, 'By his own hand. The valuation of autograph paintings in the seventeenth century', *A Corpus of Rembrandt paintings*, vol. IV, forthcoming, 3-44.

12 Cat. nos. 2, 18, 30 (Van Campen), and 12, 20, 21, 30 (Van Honthorst) in the forthcoming publication on the Oranjezaal, see note 7 in part I. In the paintings the contributions of pupils and assistants can be recognized since their figures have been executed less skilfully and were only accomplished with many improvements.

13 M.E.W. Goosens, *Schilders en de markt: Haarlem 1605-1635*, [Ph.D. thesis University of Leiden] (Leiden, 2001), 96-98.

14 Goosens 2001, 96-98.

15 From the period Pieter de Grebber was active for the Oranjezaal, the following pupils

are known: Egbert van Heemskerck (c. 1634-1704) was apprenticed to De Grebber around 1648, while the apprenticeship or Dirck Helmbreecker (1624-1683 or 1694) must have been before 1652. De Grebber also had a pupil from Denmark, a certain Dyvert Rave, who in 1652 was indebted to De Grebber a hundred guilders for tuition fees; see J.A. Welu, P. Biesboer (eds.), *Judith Leyster: schilderes in een mannenwereld*, [exh. cat., Frans Halsmuseum, Haarlem], (Zwolle, 1993), 221, note 16. Possibly De Grebber was also helped by his younger brother Albert (1613/14-after 1649), who was a painter as well. Albert de Grebber was member of the Haarlem St. Luke guild; see H. Miedema, *De archiefbescheiden van het St. Lukasgilde te Haarlem 1497-1798*, 2 vols, (Alphen aan den Rijn, 1980), 932, 1033. On 30-11-1649 Albert made his will and left abroad (Noord-Hollands Archive, Haarlem ONA 196, f. 11v.). In 1638 Albert had assisted Pieter when the latter made a large *trompe l'oeil* ceiling painting in the hall of Huis Honselaarsdijk. Here, Albert painted the flower pots for which he was payed 50 guilders: Slothouwer 1945, 271.

16 M.H. van Eikema Hommes, 'The contours in the paintings of the Oranjezaal, Huis ten Bosch' in: T. Weststeijn et al. ed. *The learned eye, Regarding art, theory, and the artists' reputation: Essays for Ernst van de Wetering*, (Amsterdam, 2005), 58-84.

17 Gold leaf was used by Pieter Saenredam in some interiors of churches: G. van Heemstra, 'Ruimte, licht en stilte. Een beschrijving van Saenredams schildertechniek', L.M. Helmus et al., *Pieter Saenredam, het Utrechtse werk*, (Utrecht, 2000), 73-90, 82-89. Heemstra also mentions some other examples of the use of metal leaf in seventeenth-century Netherlandish easel paintings. In the majority of these examples, the metal leaf was covered with more or less transparent paint layers.

18 L.B. Alberti, *De pictura*, C. Grayson (ed.), (Rome, 1975), 89 (book 2, no. 49): 'Nam cum maior in coloribus sit artificis admiratio et laus, tum etiam videre licet ut in plana tabula auro posito pleraque superficies, quas claras et fulgidas repraesentare oportuer-

at, obscurae visentibus appareant, aliae fortassis quae umbrosiores debuerant esse, luminosiores porrigantur.' Translation by Grayson, 93.

19 K. van Mander, 'Den grondt der edel vry schilderconst: waer in haer ghestalt, aerdt ende wesen de leerlustighe jeught in verschyden deelen in rijm-dicht wordt voorghedraghen', *Het schilder-boeck waer in voor eerst de leerlustighe iueght den grondt der edel vry schilderconst in verschyden deelen wort voorghedraghen...*, (Haarlem, 1604), 1-55, 54.

20 Jacob van Campen, *Apollo and Aurora*, panel, maximum width 752 cm. Pieter Soutman, *Allegory on the excellent rule of Frederik Hendrik*, panel, maximum width 752 cm. The attribution of this ceiling painting to Pieter Soutman will be underpinned by the authors in the forthcoming book on the Oranjezaal, see note 7 in part I.