IV

THE DOUBLE EMBLEM

The matter could be left to rest there, were it not that Frans van Loenen's place in the picture, and the picture's place in the history of anatomy, suggest a neater and richer interpretation, a refinement of the one we have proposed. The argument starts with a return to the poem by Caspar Barlaeus which was briefly mentioned above.[120]

In the last verse of the poem, Barlaeus summarized Nicolaes Tulp's message to those who attended his anatomical praelections:[121]

> Auditor, te disce, et dum per singula vadis,
> crede vel in minima parte latere Deum.[122]

Auditor means the listener in the anatomy-theatre, singular being used for plural. *Te disce* is a verbal variant of *nosce teipsum,* "know thyself": the present meaning of the phrase remains vague until the context is better defined. *Et* anticipates the introduction of another lesson, whose substance is allied to the acquisition of self-knowledge. *Dum per singula vadis* begins to specify the sense in which the first lesson, *te disce,* is to be understood. *Crede vel in minima parte latere Deum* is the expected second lesson: it explains more precisely what *te disce* had pithily implied. The meaning of the couplet is therefore as follows: the declared purpose of Dr. Tulp's anatomical orations is that everyone attending his anatomies should seek to "know himself" by recognizing that God is present within the human body.[123]

Is Barlaeus here putting his own words into Tulp's mouth, or is he faithfully reporting the gist of what Tulp actually said? The accuracy of the second line at least is corroborated by other evidence of Tulp's praelections,[124] and evidence from the history of anatomy tends to confirm the accuracy of the first line too. For at some time in the early sixteenth century a new intellectual fashion had appeared among anatomists: the invocation of the Greek proverb γνῶθι σεαυτόν (*nosce teipsum,* "know thyself") to justify the study of anatomy. This proverb was one of two or three inscribed in gold letters on the ancient temple of Apollo at Delphi, but its use in an anatomical sense was apparently not derived from antiquity.[125] Although the origin of this anatomical application of the phrase is obscure, the available evidence points to one of the humanistic and anatomical centres such as Venice, Padua, Paris, or Montpellier in the early 1530s.[126] Over the next 150 years, "know thyself" was used as the

[120] p. 22 above.
[121] Cf. n. 93 above.
[122] "Listener, learn yourself, and while you proceed through the individual [organs], believe that God lies hidden in even the smallest part."
[123] On this interpretation of the couplet see Appendix IV, pp. 85–89 below, especially pp. 88–89.
[124] pp. 21–22 above.
[125] In antiquity, only Julian the Apostate seems to have insisted that γνῶθι σεαυτόν demanded a medical knowledge of the body as well as a knowledge of the soul; but even he did not suggest dissection (*Oratio* VI, 183b–c; cf. Wilkins p. 62).
[126] This paragraph is a composite account based on Appendix III, pp. 66–84 below.

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catch-phrase for anatomy. It was exhibited in anatomy-theatres, inscribed on anatomical illustrations and pictures of dissection, and illustrated in anatomical title-pages and frontispieces. It was the text to which anatomists spoke in their inaugural lectures. Again and again it appears in the opening paragraphs of anatomical text-books, and since those books were often reworkings of what the authors had said at their public anatomies,[127] it was probably also conventional to open a public anatomy with an appeal to the Delphic maxim.

What these anatomists meant by "know thyself" is revealed by the context in which they introduced it. After the preliminary prayers for God's favour, a public anatomy would typically begin with an address by the praelector on the subject and purpose of the occasion. This traditionally took the form of a harangue on the pre-eminence (or dignity) of man, *de praestantia sive dignitate hominis*.[128] Man was the microcosm, the sum and peak of the creation, the most perfect animal. The body of man, as the speaker would soon reveal, was a miraculous combination of mutually co-operative organs, made in God's image, and raised above the other animals by certain unique anatomical properties which the praelector would then enumerate. In order to gain knowledge of these divine elements within himself, it was necessary for man to "know himself", as the Delphic oracle had advised, and the path towards knowing oneself in this sense was through anatomy. Hence the honour which the ancients had accorded to the Delphic maxim – here Juvenal's *de caelo descendit* γνῶθι σαυτόν was often cited or alluded to[129] – should be paid to anatomy as the source of this kind of self-knowledge.

Different anatomists emphasized different parts of this doctrine, and organized them in different ways. One notices more uniformity, however, among writers who had read Laurentius's anatomy-book, which was published at the end of the sixteenth century.[130] Laurentius, whom van der Linden and Plemp praised for being methodical,[131] codified the anatomical meanings of γνῶθι σεαυτόν in a

[127] As is shown by the similarity between instructions for, or practices of, praelectors, and the texts of anatomy-books. In the former group: (1) Jean Fernel, *Universa medicina*, Cologne, 1604, vol. 1, *De partium corporis humani descriptione*, lib. I, c. xvi, p. 83, "Qui autem consectioni praeest, enarrata principio humani corporis dignitate, qua id caeteris praestat animantibus, eoque tres in ventres & in artus distributo. . . . Haec praefatus, mox de vniuersa corporis cute deque ei subdito adipe dicere instituat. Quod dum facit iubeat inferiorem ventrem aperire atque detegere"; (2) Nicolas Habicot, *Semaine ou practique anatomique*, Paris, 1610, 'preface anatomique', p. 15 "Or soit en public ou en priué il se faut donner garde que l'excellence des auditeurs, ny la quantité des spectateurs ne facent troubler le discours qu'il conuient faire sur chacune leçon, specialement à la premiere, où il est question de se dilatter sur l'excellence de l'homme, demonstrant les vtilitez qui prouiennent d'vne telle cognoissance, & finallement l'ordre ou methode que l'on veut suiure"; (3) Jean Riolan, *Anthropographia et osteologia*, Paris 1626, lib. I, c.i. p. 1, 'Humani corporis commendatio . . .' with marginal note "Excerpta ex praefationibus quas habui in publicis Anatomiis"; (4) in an autopsy modelled on a public anatomy, as published by Charles Talbot, 'Autopsy on Sir George Douglas, A.D. 1636', *Med. Hist.*, 1978, **22**: 431–437. In the latter group: (1) A. Laurentius, *Historia anatomica*, Frankfurt a.M., 1599, lib. I, "in quo hominis dignitas, anatomes praestantia, utilitas . . . explicantur", pp. 1–35; (2) C. Bauhin, *Theatrum anatomicum*, Frankfurt a.M., 1621, praefatio, pp. 1–4.

[128] See the passages cited in the previous note, and the books cited in Appendix III below.

[129] e.g. Appendix III nos. **2**, **5a**, **22**, **38** below, referring to Juv. *Sat.* XI. 27.

[130] Appendix III no. **11**, pp. 71–72 below.

[131] p. 11 above.

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formula which was already familiar from patristic and other texts.[132] In this scheme, anatomy was held to have two uses: *cognitio sui* and *cognitio Dei*. *Cognitio sui*, knowledge of oneself, was the first use of anatomy. It was supported by the ancient authority of the Delphic oracle. Apart from its intrinsic benefits, which had been enjoyed by the pagans, it also led to the second and more valuable use of anatomy, *cognitio Dei* or knowledge of God, which was possible only for Christians.[133] However, Laurentius introduced no catch-phrase for *cognitio Dei* to match that for *cognitio sui;* for since the divinity to be recognized was to be found within the human self, *γνῶθι σεαυτόν* could govern both knowledge of oneself and the knowledge of God which came of it.

Hence the bipartite doctrine which Caspar Barlaeus put into the mouth of Nicolaes Tulp – *te disce* and *crede . . . latere Deum*[134] – is nothing more than a summary of the two Laurentian justifications of anatomy. *Te disce* urges knowledge of oneself, *crede . . . latere Deum* urges knowledge of God within oneself. Considering how much Tulp and his colleagues read and admired Laurentius,[135] and considering the fact that what we already know of Tulp's anatomies attests their Laurentian character,[136] we surely cannot put down to mere coincidence, or to Barlaeus's imagination, his ascription of the Laurentian doctrine to Nicolaes Tulp in 1639. The final couplet of Barlaeus's poem must therefore be an accurate record of the apology for anatomy which Tulp put forward at the beginnings of his public anatomies at Amsterdam in the 1630s. Tulp would have been a most untypical *praelector anatomiae* if he had not made some such speech, and the Laurentian formula is exactly the one that we should have expected him to choose.[137]

The anatomical application of "know thyself" had been circulating for nearly a hundred years before it reached Nicolaes Tulp by way of Laurentius, and Tulp was not the first Dutch anatomist to invoke the phrase in the anatomy-theatre. Half a dozen contemporary sources state or imply that "know thyself" was one of the lessons that Pieter Paaw, Tulp's anatomy teacher, impressed on the audiences at his anatomies at Leiden between 1589 and 1617. It was thanks to Paaw and his anatomy-theatre that, in the words of one admirer, "NOSCE TEIPSVM, the mystic wisdom of the venerable Spartan, was first understood in the Athens of Holland."[138]

However, the meaning which Paaw found in "know thyself" was not the same as that assumed by Laurentius and also (as Barlaeus tells us) by Tulp. For Laurentius

[132] Cf. Wilkins pp. 69–70.

[133] Appendix III nos. **11** and **16** below.

[134] p. 31 above.

[135] pp. 9–12 above.

[136] pp. 21–22 above.

[137] The lectures which were given by Johan van Beverwijck to introduce an anatomy at Dordrecht in 1634 and by W. van der Straaten to inaugurate the chair of anatomy at Utrecht in 1636 are particularly telling evidence for this interpretation, since both lectures take *γνῶθι σεαυτόν* as their text and both contain extensive extracts from Laurentius. Tulp and van der Straaten were born in the same year (1593), Beverwijck in the following year: all three studied anatomy at Leiden as students of Pieter Paaw. On van der Straaten see Banga, op. cit., note 29 above, p. 388, and Appendix III no. **24**, p. 79 below; on Beverwijck and Tulp see Appendix III no. **22**, pp. 77–78 below.

[138] Appendix III no. **14**, p. 72 below; this quotation from no. **14e**. The Spartan was Chilo, the Greek sage who was thought by some to have invented the proverb.

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and Tulp the phrase meant "recognize the divinity of man".[139] For Paaw it meant the opposite, "recognize the mortality of man". According to this interpretation, which can be traced back through humanistic and medieval texts to Lucian and Seneca, *nosce teipsum* is synonymous with such better-known, because less ambiguous, mottoes of pessimism as *memento mori, pulvis et umbra, homo bulla*, and *respice finem*.[140] It was in this sense that Paaw used "know thyself" as a motto for anatomy. Hence anatomy appeared to Paaw's audience to show that man was ephemeral, and human life the vanity of vanities.[141]

Paaw's use of "know thyself" in what we may call its pessimistic sense is paradoxical, for as we have seen, he held the same optimistic view of man as Galen, Laurentius, and Tulp. It was Paaw himself who stated that he studied anatomy because he was "touched by a kind of numinous quality in that divine temple [the human body]".[142] The reason for this apparent inconsistency can be left till later:[143] at present we are concerned only with the fact that Paaw did teach "know thyself" in the Leiden anatomy-theatre, and that he intended it in the pessimistic sense "recognize that you are mortal".

Now this pessimistic meaning of "know thyself" was diffused not only through speeches and books but also through images. Since the phrase in this sense was equivalent to a special form of *memento mori*, some of the images which traditionally illustrated *memento mori* also served to illustrate "know thyself". They include those images which illustrated the vanity of human life, such as a corpse, a skeleton, a skull, or a person looking in a mirror,[144] but not, of course, those which illustrated the vanity of impersonal things such as money and flowers. One of the neatest and most popular images for "know thyself" was a skull or skeleton reflected in, or significantly associated with, a mirror, the implication being that a person who looks in a mirror and sees a skeleton or skull sees himself as he really is in the long term, and so comes to "know himself" in the sense that he recognizes his mortality.[145]

The pessimistic iconography of "know thyself" is the clue that leads from the professor of anatomy at Leiden, Pieter Paaw, to the praelector of anatomy at Amsterdam in Paaw's time, Sebastiaen Egbertsz., and to Egbertsz.'s successor in 1621, Johan Fonteyn (the immediate predecessor of Nicolaes Tulp). For we have already shown grounds for suspecting that the Tulp anatomy-picture of 1632 may be an emblematic group-portrait.[146] We have also shown that "know thyself" was everywhere used as a motto for anatomy.[147] We have now shown that "know thyself" was illustrated by such traditional *vanitas* images as a skeleton or skull.[148] Considering

[139] Laurentius: p. 20 and n. 133 above. Tulp: p. 31 above, and further discussion in Appendix IV, pp. 85–89 below.

[140] Appendix V, pp. 90–102 below.

[141] Appendix V no. **18**, pp. 96–97 below.

[142] p. 21 above.

[143] Cf. p. 44 below.

[144] Appendix V nos. **4, 7, 15–17, 19–21, 23–32** below.

[145] Appendix V section III, pp. 98–102 below.

[146] p. 29 above.

[147] pp. 31–33 above, and Appendix III below.

[148] nn. 144, 145 above.

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these three points together, can one doubt that both the Egbertsz. group-portrait painted by Thomas de Keyser in 1619 (Pl. 5), and the Fonteyn group-portrait painted by Nicolaes Eliasz. in 1625 (Pl. 6), are emblematic portraits having as their motto the anatomical slogan "know thyself"?

For years these two pictures have been belittled for lacking the dramatic, historically plausible qualities that we find in Rembrandt's sitters, except Frans van Loenen (Pl. 1).[149] But if they were intended to illustrate a concept, and not to reconstruct a historical event, the accusation is misplaced. De Keyser and Eliasz. would be no more at fault for their lack of narrative fluency in Pls. 5, 6, than Eliasz. alone would be for the artificiality of Tulp's pose in Pl. 18. Considered as sitters in an emblematic portrait, the surgeons in Pls. 5 and 6 would be equally well associated with the motto "know thyself" whether they look at their emblematic object or at the viewer. In each case they impress the usefulness of self-knowledge on the viewer: the former teach the lesson by example, while the latter endorse it by their mere presence in the picture. This liberal convention was a godsend to the portrait-painter, who could hardly have hoped otherwise to find rational attitudes for all his sitters while preserving their facial portraits.

We now have a new view of the position in which Dr. Nicolaes Tulp found himself when he came to devise the iconography for Rembrandt's painting of 1632. Either Tulp's or Rembrandt's two immediate predecessors – that is, either Egbertsz. and Fonteyn, or de Keyser and Eliasz. – had transformed the genre of the anatomy-picture from the attributive portrait, which recorded the fact that the sitters belonged to the guild associated with anatomies (Pls. 3, 4), into the emblematic portrait which instead associated the sitters with the underlying rationale of anatomy, *cognitio sui* (Pls. 5, 6). On the evidence of the kind of portrait Tulp was to commission from Eliasz. in 1634 (Pl. 18) we should have expected Tulp to have approved this trend from historical to conceptual representation, and to have continued it in his own anatomy-picture of 1632. Indeed, we have already proposed independent grounds for thinking that Tulp did intend the 1632 picture (Pl. 1) to be conceptually significant, in impressing on the viewer the lesson of the flexor-tendons, which revealed God's works in the human body.[150]

But according to this interpretation, although Tulp followed his predecessors in their choice of genre – the emblem-picture – he reversed their choice of content. For whereas Egbertsz. and Fonteyn had both chosen to illustrate the pessimistic sense of the anatomical motto "know thyself",[151] Tulp, it seems, ignored the motto, and the view of anatomy which he chose to illustrate was the optimistic one which we summarized in Ovid's phrase *est Deus in nobis*.[152] Does this indicate a real rift between Egbertsz. and Fonteyn on the one hand and Tulp on the other, or does the flaw lie only in our interpretation of the sequence?

[149] B. Haak, *Regenten en regentessen, overlieden en chirurgijns*, Amsterdam, Amsterdams Historisch Museum, 1972, pp. 38–44, reflects a long- and widely-held view.

[150] pp. 28–30 above.

[151] pp. 34–35 above.

[152] p. 29 above.

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The evidence allows room for reconciliation from both sides. From the side of Tulp's predecessors, Egbertsz. and Fonteyn, it is far from certain that they endorsed the pessimistic interpretation of "know thyself" which their images for the proverb originally illustrated. No anatomist of the time, I believe, saw anatomy exclusively in its pessimistic aspect. Those who did take an exclusive view chose the optimistic sense: for them, *cognitio sui* meant man's *agnitio Dei in se.*[153] But when the need arose to illustrate the proverb in an anatomical context, whether the optimistic or the pessimistic sense was intended, it was the pessimistic images – skull, skeleton, corpse – that were chosen, because they alone illustrated "know thyself" in the physical sense that linked the proverb with anatomy. So the skeleton and skull in Pls. 5 and 6 could have been intended to denote *γνῶθι σεαυτόν* without further connoting any particular interpretation of it. The particular interpretations favoured by Egbertsz. and Fonteyn could, however, have been read into the pictures by those who had heard the two praelectors expound the phrase to the public in the anatomy-theatre at Amsterdam.

Such an inconsistency, between pessimism in image and optimism in word, may seem far-fetched, but it is quite common among sixteenth-century anatomists. We have already noted Pieter Paaw's self-contradiction,[154] and among other examples one could cite Felix Platter of Basle (1536–1614) and the Frisian anatomist Volcher Coiter (1534–?1600). In Platter's engraved portrait of 1578 (Pl. 14), the legend declares that "The marvellous construction of the human body is a miracle of the ingenuity of God",[155] while the historiated border of the same portrait carries images illustrating the opposite view: Adam and Eve, skeletons, and worm-hollowed human skulls all remind the viewer of the body's subjection to death. In a similar manner, Coiter put the optimistic view of anatomy in the text of his anatomy-book:

> Anatomy offers a view of that omnipotence and justice which the good Lord has used in constructing and forming the bodies of animate beings. Since the providence of the Creator has expressed itself nowhere more certainly than in the structure of the human body, for this reason above all the study of anatomy must commend itself to us . . . .[156]

while the illustrations in the same book, designed by Coiter himself, treat the human skeleton as a *vanitas* motif, with the pessimistic legend "O man . . . death itself, as you see, inheres in your bones" (Fig. 5). Such an inconsistency in Egbertsz. and Fonteyn would therefore be well precedented,[157] and despite appearances (Pls. 5, 6) we

[153] e.g. Appendix III nos. **10**, **11**, **17**, below.

[154] p. 34 above.

[155] p. 19 above.

[156] Appendix III no **8**, p. 70 below.

[157] Hence, to those who were firstly concerned with the image, such as professional painters, anatomy seemed exclusively pessimistic, while to those concerned firstly with the concept, it seemed almost entirely optimistic. Among the former are painters as different as Filippo Napoletano (whose etchings of *zoologie moralisée* are discussed by Philip Hofer, 'Some little-known illustrations of comparative anatomy, 1600–1626', *Essays in honour of Erwin Panofsky*, New York University Press, 1961, pp. 230–237) and Carel Fabritius (with reference to the figure of the dead son looking at an anatomy-book in a painting by him, now destroyed but recorded in a watercolour copy reproduced by Christopher Brown, *Carel Fabritius*, London, Phaidon, 1981, fig. 30, and in *Apollo* 1979, **110**: 478. The fidelity of this watercolour copy is confirmed by the description of the destroyed painting in a catalogue entry of 1862, quoted by Brown (1981) p. 37, and not impugned by the drawing reproduced by Brown as fig. 31, which, since it varies from both the watercolour copy and the description (which agree with each other) seems not to be related to the oil-painting by Fabritius.) In the latter group: almost every genuine anatomist of the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries.

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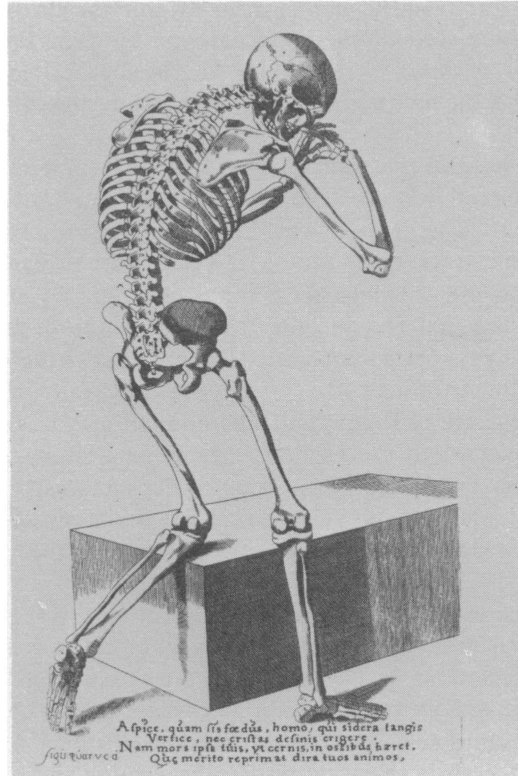

Figure 5. The human skeleton with pessimistic inscription, anonymous engraving after a drawing by Volcher Coiter for his *Externarum et internarum . . . partium tabulae*, Nuremberg 1572, tab. IV.

must accept that they may have proposed the same optimistic meaning for "know thyself" as was to be put forward later, according to Caspar Barlaeus, by their successor Nicolaes Tulp.[158]

It is the reconciliation with Egbertsz. and Fonteyn from Nicolaes Tulp's side that finally returns us to the question of Frans van Loenen's role in Rembrandt's painting (Pl. 1). The argument is as follows. Rembrandt's picture is the third in a series of emblematic group-portraits of surgeons with a *praelector anatomiae*. In each of the first two in the series, the pictures painted by de Keyser in 1619 and by Eliasz. in 1625 (Pls. 5, 6), we see in the centre one demonstrative hatted figure (the praelector), who demonstrates one motto ("know thyself"), which was put forward to sum up the use of anatomy.[159] But in Rembrandt's picture of 1632 (Pl. 1) there are two demonstrative hatted figures, and Rembrandt's praelector taught (following Laurentius) that anatomy had two uses: *cognitio sui*, which was expressed through the phrase "know thyself", and *cognitio Dei*, which was expressed in some form of words equivalent to

[158] See note 139 above.
[159] pp. 31–35 above.

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est Deus in nobis.[160] If we read the picture from left to right, the second hatted figure (Dr. Tulp) illustrates the second lesson of anatomy, by using the flexor-tendons to demonstrate *est Deus in nobis.*[161] It remains for the first hatted figure (Frans van Loenen) to demonstrate the first lessòn óf anatomy, "know thyself", which he does by pointing to the corpse.

In this hypothesis we find the simultaneous fusion of three questions with three answers. The flaw is closed between Tulp's predecessors and himself: far from rejecting their idea of using γνῶθι σεαυτόν as the unifying motto, Tulp accepted it and built a more ambitious structure on top of it. The gesture of Frans van Loenen – a man pointing at a corpse – coincides with the iconography of "know thyself", although we did not use that fact in order to establish the meaning of his action. Finally, we discover why two hats were needed in Rembrandt's picture, but only one in each of the two preceding paintings.

The question of the genre of Rembrandt's painting, it may be recalled, arose from the problem of its relation to the earlier anatomy-pictures by Aert Pietersz., the Mierevelds, de Keyser, and Eliasz. These four earlier pictures (Pls. 3, 4, 5, 6) were grouped together as attributive portraits of a traditional kind, while Rembrandt's contribution (Pl. 1) was kept apart as a new kind of painting, the group-portrait as a history-picture.[162]

Our interpretation, presented above, gives a different view. There is no sharp break in the tradition from Pietersz. to Rembrandt, but if a line has to be drawn anywhere, it should be between the pictures which attribute to the sitters a certain profession, and those which impute the endorsement of a certain concept or concepts; that is, between the predecessors of Thomas de Keyser on the one hand (Pietersz. and Miereveld), and de Keyser with his successors (Eliasz. and Rembrandt) on the other. Pietersz. and Michiel van Miereveld had apparently each been commissioned to portray a whole guild, and had provided recognizable details of an anatomy as attributes which would serve to identify the guild portrayed. In Pietersz.'s picture of 1603 (Pl. 3) these details included the barber's bowl (left) for holding blood or viscera, two pairs of scissors or forceps (right), and the corpse properly presented for dissection of the abdominal cavity. In the Miereveld picture of 1617 (Pl. 4) one sees more again of the typical paraphernalia of an anatomy-theatre, and also a corpse which is being realistically dissected. In de Keyser's picture of 1619 (Pl. 5), however, sitters and attributes have been at once reduced in number, enlarged in significance, and, from a naïvely documentary point of view, distorted by selection. Six surgeons represent the guild as a whole, and the single piece of anatomical equipment shown, a skeleton, was chosen for its capacity to replace numerous superficial details of a dissection-scene with an allusion to one of the fundamental ideas behind anatomy, *cognitio sui.*[163]

[160] pp. 32–33 above.
[161] p. 29 above.
[162] p. 2 above.
[163] However, this suggestion of de Keyser's originality would have to be slightly modified if the equipment in the Miereveld picture of 1617 (Pl. 4) were already intended as a composite *vanitas*-symbol of the double-edged type to be described on pp. 42–43 below. The objects shown around the corpse are (anti-clockwise) a barber's bowl holding a sponge; a smoking taper in the left hand of the surgeon in the left foreground; some probes and forceps across the left thigh of the corpse; a burning candle; a ball of string; an 8vo book

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The subtler allusiveness of de Keyser was preserved in the works of both of his immediate successors: in Eliasz.'s picture of 1625 (Pl. 6) and, in a more elaborate form, in Rembrandt's of 1632 (Pl. 1). In all three works we find an abandonment of the attempt to give a literally accurate picture of instruction in anatomy. The tell-tale features are the fewness of the spectators and the premeditated selection of the "anatomical" device in accordance with the iconography of the relevant philosophical ideas. De Keyser's skeleton, Eliasz.'s skull, Rembrandt's dissected forearm attached to an undissected trunk, are all deliberately unrealistic where Pietersz. and Miereveld were, by contrast, positively documentary. How ironic that Rembrandt's picture of 1632 should have been praised for its supposed truth of observation, whereas the two earlier and more accurate pictures were blamed for supposedly lacking it!

One would like to know whether the innovation in Thomas de Keyser's picture of 1619 (Pl. 5) was due to the painter or the praelector, to de Keyser himself or to Dr. Sebastiaen Egbertsz. In matters of iconography, de Keyser could have been as much under Egbertsz.'s orders as Rembrandt in 1632 appears to have been under Tulp's. Dr. Egbertsz. had already been portrayed as praelector in one anatomy-picture, that painted by Pietersz. in 1603 (Pl. 3). Why did he wish to be immortalized twice over? Was it because the 1603 picture, empty as it was of emblematic significance, had become by 1619 unbearably old-fashioned to Egbertsz.'s eyes, irrespective of de Keyser's preference?

As to the innovations in Rembrandt's picture (Pl. 1), although we get the impression that Tulp was a more inspiring orator than his predecessors,[164] we cannot attribute the heightened atmosphere of the 1632 picture merely to the greater eloquence of the praelector. The Rembrandtian element can be separated from the Tulpian by easy stylistic arguments: for example, Rembrandt's anatomy-picture of 1632 (Pl. 1) is to de Keyser's of 1619 (Pl. 5) as Rembrandt's "Rijcksen" double-portrait of 1633 (London, Buckingham Palace) is to de Keyser's Huygens double-portrait of 1627 (London, National Gallery).

We have proposed that the anatomical group-portraits painted at Amsterdam by de Keyser, Eliasz., and Rembrandt between 1619 and 1632 have uninscribed mottoes which express the traditional uses of anatomy. In favour of this hypothesis one can also point to two similar pictures, both produced away from Amsterdam, on which the mottoes were actually inscribed. The first is the earliest group-portrait of a surgeons' guild depicted as present at an anatomy: the anonymous picture in Glasgow which shows John Banester holding an anatomy at Barber-Surgeons' Hall, London, in

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with top-edge marked GALENUS; a smoking bowl; some pellets or petals lying in an unfurled paper or cloth; two dissecting-instruments; a branch of bay; a sprig of thyme; a silver pomander; and a knife (in the anatomist's right hand). While only *some* of these objects could be *vanitas*-symbols (taper, candle, bowl, pellets/petals), *all* of them can be explained as functional anatomical implements used either for dissecting the corpse or for sweetening the air. After much vacillation, I feel that the latter, more comprehensive, explanation is the more plausible, and that Houtzager was right to reject the other (op. cit., note 97 above). Even if these objects were *vanitas*-symbols, however, they would not be specific enough to denote "know thyself", as the skeleton does (according to our interpretation) in de Keyser's picture (Pl. 5).

[164] Barlaeus's tribute to Tulp's eloquence, *docti facundia Tulpi* (cf. p. 85 below) is one of many. I have not found any such to Egbertsz., though Tulp (1641), II, c. 13, p. 120, praised his *profunda eruditio*.

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1581.[165] Here the motto is taken from Coiter's book, published ten years previously: "Anatomia scientiae dux est, aditumque ad dei agnitionem praebet".[166] The second picture is a portrait of an unidentified German anatomist which was destroyed in the Second World War. The picture was apparently never photographed; the only writer who described it, the medical historian E. Holländer, dated it to the beginning of the seventeenth century.[167] It is said to have portrayed an anatomist dissecting with his right hand, while with his left he pointed to a large notice hanging on the wall. Inscribed on the notice were German verses extolling the uses of anatomy. One wonders if the "large notice" in the Tulp picture was originally intended for the same function.

Because of the long duration of Nicolaes Tulp's praelectorate at Amsterdam (1628–1653), no new anatomy-picture was commissioned there until the 1650s, when Dr. Johan Deyman succeeded to the post of praelector. Although he repeated Tulp's choice of painter, by that time taste had changed again, and the emblematic mode was apparently either abandoned or not enforced.[168] After Nicolaes Tulp died in 1674, there were probably few people left alive who remembered exactly how (if our interpretation is correct) Rembrandt's picture of 1632 was intended to be understood.

So much for the genre of Rembrandt's painting. As it stands, the interpretation presented here is new, but two scholars have in the past discovered separate elements of it. William S. Heckscher suggested towards the end of his study of the subject (1958) that the picture "may be said to approximate an emblematic attitude, in as much as a motto may serve to unlock its enigma" [*sic*] (pp. 120–121). Prof. Heckscher had already noted both the use of anatomy to demonstrate the presence of God in man, and the anatomical sense of "know thyself" (p. 112), without realizing that these two concepts together might supply the missing motto. The other scholar was a Scottish divine and translator of Kant, William Hastie (1842–1903), who published his interpretation of Rembrandt's picture in 1891.[169] Although Hastie did not use the word "emblem", he interpreted the painting as an emblem-picture designed to illustrate the presence of God in the human body. The manifestation of the "Divine Art" in the flexor-tendons of the fingers, was, in Hastie's words, "the central point of the whole picture, the key to its deeper meaning, *the* lesson in the 'Lesson'." The few writers who have mentioned Hastie's interpretation have tended to reject it,[170] but it seems to explain correctly half of the painting's meaning. However, our hypothesis grew not from these intuitions but from the otherwise inexplicable contrasts of mood to be seen among the surgeons listening to Dr. Tulp.

[165] Glasgow University Library, Hunterian MSS. no. 364 (V.1.1.), frontispiece; Cetto no. 250.

[166] Appendix III no. **8**, p. 70 below.

[167] E. Holländer, *Die Medizin in der klassischen Malerei*, Stuttgart, F. Enke, 1923, pp. 80–82, described this "jetzt in der medizin-historischen Sammlung des Kaiserin-Friedrich-Hauses befindliches Gemälde". Cetto, p. 318, mentions its destruction. Holländer had earlier described a similar (or the same?) picture in his own possession, in the *Katalog zur Ausstellung der Geschichte der Medizin . . . zur Eröffnung des Kaiserin Friedrich-Hauses 1. März 1906*, Stuttgart, F. Enke, 1906, p. 43, no. 1.2.

[168] Rembrandt's 'Anatomy of Dr. Deyman', of which a fragment is in the Rijksmuseum and a drawing in the Rijksprentenkabinet, Amsterdam.

[169] W. Hastie, 'Rembrandt's Lesson in anatomy', *Contemporary Review*, August 1891, **60**: 271–277.

[170] e.g. de Lint (Heckscher [288]) pp. 46–48, in two minds; D. S. Meldrum, *Rembrandt's paintings*, London, Methuen, 1923, pp. 44–45. Hofstede de Groot (Heckscher [299] p. 387) adopted Hastie's nomenclature of the dissected muscles, as did H. L. T. de Beaufort, *Rembrandt*, Haarlem, Tjeenk Willink, 1957, p. 21.

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