
'Hidden Persuaders': Religious Symbolism in van Dyck's Portraiture

*With a Note on Dürer's 'Knight, Death and the Devil'**

J. DOUGLAS STEWART

Queen's University

Studies of van Dyck's portraiture have generally followed two lines – connoisseurship and the identification of sitters.¹ Such studies are fundamental for the understanding of the artist. Establishing van Dyck's true *oeuvre* is no easy task. He can at times be extremely close to other artists. Little is known of his studio or followers, and dated or dateable works are rare for much of his life.

It is perhaps for these reasons that less attention has been paid to the 'content' of van Dyck's portraits, than to their 'form.' Another factor is the unfashionable nature of the portrait itself, and hence of its study. Scholars seem, curiously, even reluctant to use stylistic evidence from van Dyck's portraits to date his other works, including his religious pictures.² This may be the result not only of the idea of the portrait as a 'lesser' work of art, but of the habit of thought which is now ingrained of separating the 'religious' and the 'secular.'

This last notion would have been alien to all but a few in van Dyck's time. We should not be surprised to find religious references in all parts of van Dyck's *oeuvre*, not merely in pictures painted for churches, or even those with obvious religious personages in them.

Van Dyck was a member of a deeply religious family. His father was director of the Chapel of the Holy Sacrament in Antwerp cathedral. His younger brother became a priest. One sister became a nun of the Faontaine Convent and three others became *béguines*. When the painter made his will in 1628 he left his property to his two surviving *béguine* sisters, directing that after their death it should be divided between the poor at Antwerp and the Convent of St. Michael. He also joined, at this time, the Brotherhood of Bachelors, a lay religious group directed by the Jesuits. Ac-

ording to Bellori, at his death van Dyck '*rese pietosamente e cattolicamente lo spirito a Dio.*'³

It should also be stressed that van Dyck, although he became steeped in Italian culture, was a Northern European, a Fleming. As such he was heir to a long, proud tradition of painting, and one which included the convention of 'disguised symbolism,' of investing seemingly everyday objects with religious meaning.

Van Dyck's equestrian portrait of Charles I, now in the National Gallery, London, of ca. 1638 (Fig. 1), is one of his few portraits which has re-

* This paper was given in its first form at the Universities Art Association of Canada, Halifax, February 1979 and appeared in the *Abstracts of the Conference*. An extended revised version was given as a lecture at the Department of Art and Archaeology, Princeton University in April 1979. Since then the content of the paper has been considerably expanded. It forms one of a series of studies on the 'Language of the English Baroque Portrait' which will I hope eventually be published in book form. I am very grateful to the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada for its support for these studies. I am also indebted to a number of friends and colleagues who have offered valuable criticism from time to time, especially Sir Oliver Millar, and Professors Christianson, D'Argaville, Finley, Kilpatrick, and McTavish. Of course none of this exempts me from full responsibility for what is expressed here.

¹ Notable exceptions are Julius Held, 'Le Roi à la Chasse,' *Art Bulletin*, XL (1958), 139-49; Roy Strong, *Van Dyck: Charles I on Horseback* (New York, 1972) and Malcolm Rogers, 'The Meaning of van Dyck's Portrait of Sir John Suckling,' *Burlington Magazine*, CXX (1978), 741-5. Shorter notices in *Burlington Magazine*, XCVIII (1956), 52-54; XCIX (1957), 96-97, by Robert Wark and J. Bruyn and J.A. Emmens explore the potential meaning of van Dyck's *Self-Portrait with a Sunflower*.
² See for example H. Gerson and E.H. ter Kuile, *Art and Architecture in Belgium, 1600 to 1800* (Harmondsworth, 1960), ch. 6. Most recently I made this criticism of the Princeton University Art Museum exhibition 'Van Dyck as Religious Artist' in my review in *Burlington Magazine*, CXXI (1979), 467.
³ G.P. Bellori, *Le Vite...* (1672), ed. E. Borea (Turin, 1976), 283; Gerson and ter Kuile, 120; Sir Lionel Cust, *Anthony van Dyck: A Further Study* (New York and London, 1911), 45-6.



FIGURE 1. Van Dyck, *Charles I*. London, National Gallery.

ceived intensive study, formally and iconographically. In an exemplary small monograph, Dr. Roy Strong tackles the picture on numerous levels and explores its sources and meaning from many angles, from antiquity onwards.⁴ But neither he, nor anyone else in print as far as I can determine, seems ever to mention as a possible source Dürer's great 1513 engraving, *The Knight, Death and the Devil* (Fig. 2). Yet the formal connexions seem very close, especially between the poses of the horses, and to a lesser extent the riders. Even van Dyck's employment of a cartouche for the king's title might have been suggested by the plaque which Dürer uses for his monogram and date.⁵

Why has this source been overlooked for so long? One reason may be Bellori's oft-quoted statement, that van Dyck painted Charles I 'a cavallo ad imitazione di Carlo Quinto espresso da

4 Strong, *op. cit.* See also G. Martin, *National Gallery Catalogues: The Flemish School circa 1600 – circa 1900* (London, 1970), 41-7. For the small version in the Royal Collection, see Oliver Millar, *The Tudor, Stuart and Early Georgian Pictures in the Collection of Her Majesty The Queen* (London, 1963), n° 144.

5 I am grateful to Professor Jan Białostocki for helpful discussion concerning Dürer's print and recent literature on it.

6 Bellori, ed. Borea, 279.

7 Martin, 47, is an exception to the general rule. He acknowledges that the 'compositional connections are slight.'

8 See Alan McNairn, *The Young van Dyck* (Ottawa, 1980), n° 51.



FIGURE 2. Dürer, *The Knight, Death and the Devil*.

Titiano.⁶ As a result van Dyck's picture has been seen as a re-interpretation of Titian's equestrian portrait of Charles V now in the Prado.⁷ But the fact that both are in profile, and have landscapes, are really the only formal connexions. Dürer's print is surely far closer.

Of course van Dyck's composition is an amalgam of all sorts of ideas of equestrian portraiture from the *Marcus Aurelius* on. We can probably never unravel the process by which these ideas developed, unless we discover more preparatory material, or documents. But I would maintain that when they first decided to make the picture, both van Dyck and Charles I would, as Northern Europeans, at a very early stage (despite their love of Italian culture) think of Northern images. And the most famous Northern equestrian image was surely still the Dürer *Knight*, an image they would probably have known from their teens. (A youthful copy by van Dyck of the head in Dürer's print, now in the Berlin Print Room, survives.⁸) Dürer was an artist revered by both. We know that van Dyck studied his *Four Books on Human Proportion* before he went to Italy. We also know that Abraham van der Doort, afterwards Surveyor of Pictures to Charles I, presented to the king before his accession a folio volume of the woodcuts for the



FIGURE 3. Dürer, *The Knight, Death and the Devil*, detail of horse's head.



FIGURE 4. Dürer, *The Knight, Death and the Devil*, detail of horse's tail.

Four Books. And Charles continued to acquire prints and pictures by Dürer throughout his reign.⁹

In addition to the formal links between the equestrian portrait of Charles I and the Dürer print, there is the question of content. Roy Strong has stressed the Christian content of van Dyck's image of the king who wears armour on which is conspicuously shown a gold medallion of St. George and the Dragon, the badge of the Order of the Garter, of which the King was Sovereign. 'Charles,' as Dr. Strong points out 'was less interested in the use of the Garter as a public spectacle and more preoccupied with its religious aspect. This was emphasized by the removal of the festival [of the Garter celebrated on St. George's Day] to Windsor Castle away from London and by the organization of Garter services as patterns of the new High Church ceremonial so loathed by the Puritans ... Charles as Garter Sovereign is an apotheosis of the chivalrous knight.' He is 'a saint presiding over his knights at prayer.'¹⁰

It follows that in the making of the portrait of Charles I, a Christian image would have a powerful attraction. At first glance Dürer's *Knight* would seem to fulfil this need. Since the time of Sandrart it has been referred to as 'the Christian Knight – *Der Christliche Ritter*.' In 1875 Hermann Grimm related it to the Erasmian ideal of the Christian soldier. More recently Panofsky attempted to connect the print with an entry in Dürer's 1521 Netherlands Diary in which he addressed Erasmus in stirring words: 'Thou Knight of Christ ... ride

forth at the side of Christ our Lord ... to protect the truth ... and obtain the crown of martyrs.'¹¹ There is a contrary interpretation, also of some antiquity, which sees Dürer's *Knight* as a figure of evil. It has been put most recently by Miss Ursula Meyer, who gives it a Marxist gloss. She argues that by Dürer's time many of the knightly class had become bandits preying on the rest of society. She claims that the print 'contains not one Christian symbol' and is instead an attack on the contemporary knight. 'Familiar with the lawless practices of the *Ritter*,' she says, 'Dürer had no reason to idealize him as a virtuous Christian soldier. The idealistic interpretation of the engraving cannot be reconciled with Dürer's perception of the prevailing reality and with his tendency to depict it factually.'¹²

One major point to be made in this controversy is that Dürer could surely distinguish between the actual lawlessness of some contemporary members of the knightly class and the chivalric ideal of

9 See M. Jaffé, *Van Dyck's Antwerp Sketchbook* (London, 1966), 11, 56^v and 57^v, and Oliver Millar, 'Abraham Van der Doort's Catalogue of the Collections of Charles I,' *The Walpole Society*, xxxvii (1960), xiii and *passim*.

10 Strong, 59-60 and 63.

11 See Joachim von Sandrart, *Teutsche Academie...* (Nurnberg, 1675), 1, 223. For Grimm and the Dürer print, see Ursula Meyer, 'Political Implications of Dürer's *Knight, Death and Devil*,' *The Print Collector's Newsletter*, ix (May-June 1978), 36. I am grateful to Dr. Barbara Dodge for drawing my attention to this article. See also E. Panofsky, *The Life and Art of Albrecht Dürer* (Princeton, 1955), 151, and his 'Erasmus and the Visual Arts,' *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes*, xxxii (1969), 221-22.

12 Meyer, 36.

13 Quoted in Meyer, 36.

knighthood. Indeed, Miss Meyer's own quotations from Dürer demonstrate this. He referred to *Tiraisbulis milites* (ruffian soldiers) in a letter to Pirkheimer of 1506.¹³ Yet his exhortation to Erasmus cited above refers to him as 'Knight of Christ.' If Dürer had possessed only negative feelings about knights he would never have associated them with Erasmus, let alone Christ!

But Miss Meyer's point about the apparent absence of Christian symbolism deserves attention. She points out that the dog, traditionally seen as an emblem of faithfulness (e.g. by Panofsky) has also been compared by Karling to 'Melanchthon's tale of

the devil who followed Faust in the disguise of a dog.' She also notes that the foxtail attached to the tip of the Knight's lance can have negative connotations (meaning a hypocrite – Luther used the term in this sense); although she admits it can also signify a good omen. A very telling observation is that in Urs Graf's woodcut illustration for the title page of the 1520 Basel edition of Erasmus' *Handbook of the Christian Soldier*, the warrior who appears between an angel and a devil displays a cross prominently on his head.¹⁴

There is a potentially Christian emblem in Dürer's print. Attached to both the horse's head and his tail are bunches of oak leaves (Figs. 3 and 4). These seem to have first been noticed by Winkler,¹⁵ who claimed that they alluded to the practice of homeward-bound hunters who decorated their mounts in this way after a successful chase. But Dürer's print is obviously not a hunting picture. However, the oak leaves could carry a very pronounced Christian meaning, since the oak is not only an emblem of endurance, honour and various other virtues, but there is even a legend that it was the wood from which the true Cross was made.¹⁶ It is also doubtless significant that Dürer had previously attached oak leaves to the mount of his St. George in an engraving of 1508.¹⁷

Did Sandrart observe the oak leaves, and consequently name Dürer's image the '*Christliche Ritter*'? Almost certainly Sandrart had some good reason for applying the name. He is too conscientious an historian to be lightly dismissed. And both van Dyck and Charles I may well have known the interpretation.¹⁸

One of the finest subject pictures from van Dyck's Italian period is in the Museo Civico at Vicenza. Since at least the eighteenth century it has been called *The Four Ages of Man* (Fig. 5).¹⁹ But this is a misnomer. There are four figures in the picture, but only three are men, an infant at the lower left, a mature man in the centre, and an old man in the left background. The central man, who is portrayed as a warrior, is being given roses by a beautiful woman at the right. Thus what we have in the Vicenza picture is the 'Three Ages of Man,' as for example in Titian's representation of the theme in the Sutherland Collection.²⁰

The main figure in van Dyck's picture is a warrior, not a shepherd (as in Titian's painting), which points to another important theme, that of Mars and Venus – of manly strength and virtue softened by the presence of beauty, Venus with her roses. The theme was an antique one, revived in the Renaissance, notably in works by Titian and Veronese. It was a doctrine especially popular with the

14 Sten Karling, 'Ritter, Tod and Teufel Ein Beitrag zur Deutung von Dürers Stich,' in *Actes du XXII^e Congrès international d'histoire de l'art, Budapest, 1969* (Budapest, 1972), 1, 733; quoted in Meyer, 38.

15 See F. Winkler, *Albrecht Dürer, Leben und Werk* (Berlin, 1957), 238.

16 See G. Ferguson, *Signs & Symbols in Christian Art* (New York, 1975), 35; also Guy de Tervarent, *Attributs et symboles dans l'art profane, 1450-1600* (Geneva, 1958), 1, 91 (*chêne*). In his essay printed in this volume of RACAR Professor Thomas Glen makes the very important new observations that van Dyck used the oak as a Christian symbol in two early works. It is the tree to which St. Sebastian is bound in the Louvre *Martyrdom of St. Sebastian* (McNairn, n° 14), and in the Indianapolis *Entry of Christ into Jerusalem* (McNairn, n° 48) the prominent foreground figure holds an oak branch.

17 See *The Intaglio Prints of Albrecht Dürer*, ed. W.L. Strauss (New York, 1977), 140-1.

18 On Sandrart's quality as a researcher, see Wolfgang Stechow's description of his 'painstakingly and lovingly compiled report on Grünewald' in *Northern Renaissance Art, 1400-1600* (New York, 1966), 126. Strong, 14, talks of the King on his horse 'beneath an oak tree' in the National Gallery portrait by van Dyck, which would provide another link with Dürer's print. But I cannot see the tree foliage in the picture as very specific. Alistar Smith in a letter to the *Burlington Magazine*, cxvi (1974), 539, tries to tie the National Gallery van Dyck to a passage in Holland's translation of Pliny concerning paintings by Apelles of a helmetless equestrian figure and a squire holding a helmet. He observes that Holland mistakenly conflated what were really two pictures, hence that one has in effect a programme for van Dyck's equestrian portrait of Charles I, bareheaded, with the page bearing his helmet behind him. This is an attractive suggestion, but I believe there are at least two points against it. One is that the king is by no means 'hasting to a battell, calling unto his squire ... for his helmet' in the portrait in London. By contrast, in van Dyck's equestrian portrait of the *Comte d'Arenberg* (Holkham Hall) of 1634-35, the Count is shown very much 'hasting to a battell,' along with his troops in the background. He is shown on a rearing horse, and without a helmet, but there is no sign of an esquire. Interestingly, when Kneller re-worked van Dyck's design for his *Frederick, 1st Duke of Schomberg* (Brocklesby Park), he added a figure of a negro with a helmet to the right: see J. Douglas Stewart, *Sir Godfrey Kneller* (National Portrait Gallery, London, 1971), 66. The idea that van Dyck derived the armoured figure in his *Christ Crowned with Thorns* (versions in Berlin and Madrid) from Dürer's *Knight* is suggested in J. Martin and G. Feigenbaum, *Van Dyck as Religious Artist* (Princeton, 1979), 60. I find it unconvincing.

19 See G. Glück, *Van Dyck, des Meisters Gemälde. Klassiker der Kunst* (Stuttgart and Berlin, 1931), references to the early inventories on 535.

20 For the iconography of the Titian, see E. Panofsky, *Problems in Titian* (New York, 1969), 94-6.



FIGURE 5. Van Dyck, *The Four Ages of Man* here identified as *The Three Ages of Man*. Vicenza, Museo Civico.

Neo-Platonists. But of course it was given a Christian gloss: Mars became the Christian virtue Fortezza and Venus became Carità. In van Dyck's picture this Christian content is reinforced by the column behind the warrior, the emblem of Fortitude. The fact that three, not four ages, are shown may be significant since there is possibly a 'vestigial reference' to the Christian Trinity here. ('It is,' said John Donne in a sermon preached on Trinity Sunday, 1620, 'a lovely and religious thing, to finde out *Vestigia Trinitatis*, Impressions of the Trinity, in as many things as we can.'²¹) Confirmation of this reference to the Trinity is suggested by van Dyck's Munich *Rest on the Flight*, a work depicting the 'Trinity on earth' (Joseph, Mary, Christ) where the artist re-employs the beautiful sleeping child of the Vicenza *Three Ages of Man*.²²

The Vicenza *Three Ages of Man* does not seem to be a portrait. The unity of van Dyck's approach is shown by his carrying over its theme of Mars and Venus, or Fortezza softened by Carità, into his portraiture in a number of instances, none of which seems to have been noticed. The earliest appears to be the *Lomellini Family* (Fig. 6) in Edinburgh. This work, perhaps van Dyck's largest group portrait until many years later, presents a problem. As the Edinburgh catalogue puts it, 'There is a break in feeling between the warrior ... with a broken lance in his hand, who stands like an apparition at the left, and the group filling the centre and right ... no explanation for the unusual composition has ever been suggested.'²³

One of the keys to the meaning of the picture (and of its composition) is the broken lance, which is an attribute of St. George, the Christian warrior saint. Van Dyck could easily have encountered examples of this iconography in Italy, for example in Mantegna's *Madonna della Vittoria*, now in the



FIGURE 6. Van Dyck, *The Lomellini Family*. Edinburgh, National Gallery of Scotland.

Louvre, but then in Mantua.²⁴ The figure at the left is thus a Christianized Mars, or Fortezza.

On the opposite side of the picture is another key, a statue of Venus, of the Pudica type (Fig. 7). Also at the right are the objects of this didacticism, a girl (with a rose in her hair) who stands beneath the Venus statue, her hands folded modestly, and a small boy. The latter is dressed in red, whose 'fierceness' is compounded by his sword, on which he has his left hand. But the boy's right hand is in that of his Mother, the other 'Venus,' the central and most stable figure in the picture. His 'martial' ardour is thus already being softened by the virtue of *carità*.

21 Dennis R. Klinck, 'Vestigia Trinitatis in Man and His Works in the English Renaissance,' *Journal of the History of Ideas*, XLII (1981), 13. (I am indebted to Professor Paul Christianson for this reference.)

22 For the Mars-Venus theme, see E. Wind, *Pagan Mysteries of the Renaissance* (London, 1958), 85 ff., and Panofsky, *Problems in Titian*, 126 ff. The Munich van Dyck is in Glück, 228. For the doctrine of the 'vestiges of the Trinity,' see Wind, 41 f. and app. 2.

23 National Gallery of Scotland, *Catalogue of Paintings and Sculpture* (Edinburgh, 1957), 77. According to this the probable sitters are 'Giovanni Francesco, son of Doge Giacomo Lomellini, his wife Paola, daughter of Doge Ambrogio Doria, and their two eldest children, Agostino and Lavinia. The second man could then be either Giovanni Francesco's brother Niccolo Lomellini, or his wife's brother Paolo Doria.'

24 See E. Tietze-Conrat, *Mantegna* (London, 1955), pl. 126; the *St. George* in the Accademia, Venice (pl. 34) is another example. See also Ferguson, 177. According to legend St. George's lance broke in the dragon, which he finally killed with his sword.



FIGURE 7. Van Dyck, *Venus Pudica*, detail from the *Lomellini Family*. Edinburgh, National Gallery of Scotland.

25 Oliver Millar, *The Age of Charles I* (London, 1972), n° 100. See also J. Douglas Stewart, 'Catalogues of Two Famous Collections,' *Burlington Magazine*, cxx (1978), 240. The Venus statue in the Edinburgh *Lomellini Family* seems very close to that in 'Titian's *Feast of Venus*, now in the Prado but in van Dyck's day in Rome, in the Palazzo Ludovisi. Van Dyck copied its pendant, the *Bacchanal*; see G. Adriani, *Anton Van Dyck: Italienisches Skizzenbuch* (Vienna, 1940), 36.

26 See Panofsky, *Problems in Titan*, 127, and Wind, 86 ff.

27 For details of the picture and its history, see *The Frick Collection: an Illustrated Catalogue* (New York, 1968), I, 186-90. Lady Strange, née Charlotte de la Tremouille, was the eldest daughter of Claude, Duc de Thouars. The suggestion about the sovereignty of the Isles of Man is made in the Frick catalogue.

28 The relief is an Augustan grave stone, now in the Galleria Lapidaria of the Vatican. My illustration comes from the 1647 edition of Cartari's *Imagini delli Dei degl'Antichi* but it appeared in the 1580 edition, and in many other places in the sixteenth century; see P.L. Williams, 'Two Roman Reliefs in Renaissance Disguise,' *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes*, iv (1940-41), 47 ff. Williams thought that the inscriptions had been added by someone in the Renaissance who knew Neo-platonism, but in 1961 Roberto Weiss demonstrated this to be erroneous, since the relief was copied as early as 1478; see Wind, 250, n° 36. Yet it is clear that commentators in the late sixteenth century understood the relief as a 'fidei symbolum,' and also as a prefiguration of the Trinity; see Wind, 250-1. In the Herzog Anton Ulrich-Museum at Braunschweig there is a family group by an unknown Flemish artist (Fig. 14) about 1620 which also appears to use the design and meaning of the 'fidei symbolum' relief, although this has not been noticed; see *Die Sprache der Bilder: Realität und Bedeutung in der niederländischen Malerei des 17. Jahrhunderts* (Braunschweig, 1978), cat. 11; for further discussion of the iconography of this picture see below. As late as 1713 Sir Godfrey Kneller employed the 'fidei symbolum' relief in his *1st Duke of Chandos and his Family* (Ottawa, National Gallery); see J. Douglas Stewart, *Sir Godfrey Kneller and the English Baroque Portrait* (Oxford University Press, forthcoming).

There is in the Edinburgh picture another theme which adds a sort of counterpoint to the main one. In contrast to the agitated 'active' pose of the armoured figure at the left, that of the man next to him is subdued, and he is withdrawn behind the lady's chair, but he looks across the picture – to the statue symbolizing the 'contemplative' life and the pursuit of beauty in the platonic sense. Suitably, he is dressed in black. Years later in his double portrait of Lords Russell and Digby now at Althorp, van Dyck again took up this theme of the active and contemplative life, with splendid results.²⁵

According to legend, Mars and Venus married and produced a child, Harmonia. Indeed this legend provided the Renaissance with the justification for its fascination with the Mars-Venus theme.²⁶ This aspect, although always implicit in representations of the subject, is specifically brought out in three pictures from van Dyck's English period. Again the interpretation seems not to have been understood by modern scholars. In the group of Lord Strange (afterwards 7th Earl of Derby), his wife and child (Fig. 8), in the Frick Collection, the conspicuous display of Lord Strange's sword provides the allusion to Mars, while his lady holds a rose, the emblem of Venus. Between them, in the centre of the composition, is their child, 'Harmonia.' (In fact they had several children by the late 1630s. The one in the picture perhaps stands for them all.) In the background is a sea-scape with an island. This may be a reference both to the sovereignty of the Isle of Man, then held by the Derby family, and to the fact that Lady Strange was French, from overseas. There may also be an allusion here to 'sea-borne' Venus.²⁷ Yet another layer of meaning may be a reference to an antique relief (with a Renaissance inscription) which supposedly represented the ancient God of Faith (Fig. 9). It was also seen as a pagan prefiguration of the Trinity.²⁸

In the pair of portraits of King Charles I and Queen Henrietta Maria, now in the Hermitage, we seem to see again the Mars-Venus-Harmonia iconography. It is known that these pictures were presented to Lord Wharton by the Queen in 1638, the year after he married for a second time. The Mars-Venus iconography would have been appropriate for such an occasion. But the pictures were no ordinary royal wedding gift. Lord Wharton had been for many years a ward of the crown, and a great favourite at the court. As a ward he was, in a sense, a royal 'child.' He thus becomes the third element of the composition, the royal child of Mars and Venus, Harmonia. And this is not merely a polite, 'familial' gesture. Despite his

courtly upbringing, Wharton had, by the late 1630s developed Puritan sympathies. The royal wedding present was perhaps also a political appeal, that he should play the role of the 'Harmonious Son,' peer and subject.²⁹

It is important to note in all these Mars-Venus pictures that a new understanding of them as subjects also helps us to appreciate them more in formal terms. Without the new interpretation one might suspect that the armoured figure at the left of the *Lomellini Family* is rather isolated; that Lord Strange in the *Stanley Family* is striking an awkward pose; or that Charles I and Henrietta Maria are oddly isolated from each other in the Hermitage pictures, while both are looking at the spectator.

As always with van Dyck one sees how much hands matter. A reading of the hands of the *Lomellini Family* corresponds precisely with the Mars-Venus interpretation. And this unification of the picture is strengthened by the interpretation of the 'Contemplative,' and the Venus statue. Nor is the agitated pose of the left-hand figure in the *Lomellini Family* to be interpreted as 'bad drawing,'³⁰ any more than that of Lord Strange. Both show the aggressiveness of Mars, being softened by Venus. But according to the myth, and the mode of conduct it sanctioned, Mars never lost

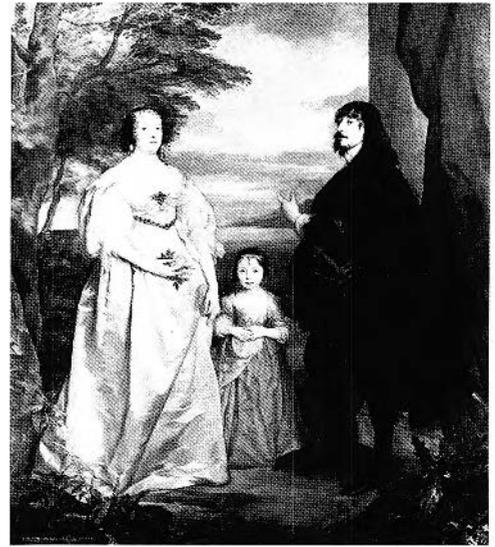


FIGURE 8. Van Dyck, *James, 7th Earl of Derby, His Lady and Child*. New York, The Frick Collection.

his strength. It is also surely significant that van Dyck, having painted the Lomellini 'Mars,' when he came to paint the same subject for Charles I many years later, used virtually the same pattern. Yet in the Hermitage picture there is a new suppleness of pose which indicates van Dyck's greater

29 See Glück, 390-91 and notes; Millar, *The Tudor...*, n^o 145; G.F. Trevallyn Jones, *Saw-Pit Wharton* (Sydney, 1967), 18-19. As is pointed out in Strong, 88, the royal masques used the Mars-Venus-Harmonia theme, and it is also found in Sir John Denham's *Cooper's Hill* (1642). Van Dyck's earliest use of the Fortezza-Carità theme for an English patron may be in his *Contemence of Scipio* (Christ Church, Oxford) painted for the Duke of Buckingham, 1620-21; see J. Douglas Stewart, 'The Young van Dyck at the National Gallery of Canada,' *Burlington Magazine*, cxxiii (1981), 123. The Mars-Venus theme is perhaps present in two of Lely's large canvases of the Duke of York and his wife, now in the Scottish National Portrait Gallery; see Oliver Millar, *Sir Peter Lely* (London, 1978), n^{os} 32 and 33. And the iconography appears in English royal portraiture as late as Zoffany's 1771 portraits of George III and Queen Charlotte; see J. Douglas Stewart, review of R. Paulson's *Emblem and Expression: Meaning in English Art in the Eighteenth Century* (London, 1975), forthcoming in the *Art Bulletin*.

30 Van Dyck employs an agitated pose for several other Genoese martial portraits, e.g. the Washington *Admiral Raphael Ravius*, the Cincinnati *Portrait of a General*, the Edinburgh *Nobleman of the Gentili(?) Family*, and the ex-Hopetoun House *Marchese Filippo Spinola* (Fig. 10); Glück, 161, 179, 186 and 190. There is an interesting parallel here with some of the works and theories of Monteverdi. In the Foreword to his *Madrigali guerrieri ed amorosi*, published in Venice in 1638, Monteverdi wrote: 'I have reflected that the principal passions or affections of our mind are three, namely, anger, moderation, and humility or supplication; so the best philosophers declare, and the very nature of our voice indicates this in having high, low, and middle registers. The art of music also points clearly to these three in its terms 'agitated,' 'soft,' and 'moderate' (*concitato*, *molle* and *temporato*). In all the works of former composers I have indeed found

examples of the 'soft' and the 'moderate,' but never of the 'agitated,' a genus nevertheless described by Plato in the third book of his *Rhetoric* in these words: "Take the harmony which would fittingly imitate the utterances and the accents of a brave man who is engaged in warfare" ... After reflecting that according to all the best philosophers the fast pyrrhic measure was used for lively and warlike dances and the slow spondaic measure for their opposites, I considered the semibreve, and proposed that a single semibreve should correspond to one spondaic beat; when this was reduced to sixteen semiquavers, struck one after the other, combined with words expressing anger and disdain, I recognized in this brief sample a resemblance to the passion which I sought ..." - Oliver Strunk, trans. and ann., *Source Readings in Music History: The Baroque Era* (New York, 1965), 53-4. Not only is there a clear parallel between the agitated poses of some of van Dyck's martial portraits and the *concitato* mode of Monteverdi, but the latter was being developed in the same period. 'If the *stile concitato* as exemplified by the "madrigali guerrieri" emerged in 1624, it follows that all those works grouped together in the first half of the book belong to the period 1624-38, or (allowing for an average lapse of time between composition and performance, also between assembly and publication) 1623-37' - *The Monteverdi Companion*, ed. D. Arnold and N. Fortune (New York, 1972), 236. (I am very grateful to my colleague Dr. Rudolf Schnitzler for helpful discussions on this, and for providing me with these references.) It would certainly have been possible for van Dyck to have met Monteverdi in Venice, or in Mantua in 1622. But this would not be necessary for van Dyck to have learnt of the *stile concitato*. Monteverdi himself says later in his 1638 Foreword to the *Madrigali guerrieri ed amorosi* that '... this genus found such favour with the composers of music that they not only praised it by word of mouth, but, to my great pleasure and honor, they showed this by written work in imitation of mine.' - Strunk, 54.



FIGURE 9. *Fidii Simvlacrum*, from Vincenzo Cartari, *Imagini delli Dei de gl'Antichi* (Venice, 1647); facsimile reprint, Graz, 1963, 8.

maturity. One also notes that the king, unlike the Genoese noble, keeps his right gauntlet on — as Mars — but has discarded his left. This hand has, presumably, already been softened by his Queen, Venus-*Carità*. And of course, the Hermitage pictures are more 'Baroque,' the figures 'break the space' to include the spectator, Lord Wharton.

The fact that the *Lomellini Family* originated in Genoa was doubtless another reason for the inclusion of a motif taken from the legend of St.

³¹ See Elias Ashmole, *The Institution... of the... Order of the Garter* (London, 1672), 117. Rubens' *St. George and the Dragon*, now in the Prado, was probably painted ca. 1606, but nothing is known of its patron. Hence, as Hans Vlieghe has said, 'we may take into consideration Jaffé's suggestion, supported by Müller-Hofstede, that it may have been a Genoese, as St. George was the patron of Genoa and the Slaying of the Dragon was a popular subject there.' — *Saints II, Corpus Rubenianum Ludwig Burchard* (London and New York, 1973), 37. In the Palazzo Durazzo Pallavicini, Genoa, there is a painting of a family group once attributed to van Dyck, but now given to a follower, Vincenzo Malò; see P. Torriti, *La Galeria del Palazzo Durazzo Pallavicini a Genoa* (Genoa, 1960), fig. 222. However, elements of the design of this picture clearly derive from the *Lomellini Family*.

³² See Glück, 190; and Thos. Agnew and Son Ltd., *Master Paintings: Recent Acquisitions* (June-July 1977), cat. 22. I am much indebted to Mr. Evelyn Joll for providing me with photographs of this picture. What is apparently its pendant, the *Marchesa Geronima Spinola*, (Glück, 191) is known to me only from photographs. But from the coloured plate shown in J. Lassaigne and R. Delvovoy, *Flemish Painting: From Bosch to Rubens* (New York, 1958), 156, the Marchesa seems to be carrying a rose. This could cast her in the role of Venus in contrast to the Marchese as Mars, and might well also account for the *concitato* pose of the latter.

³³ See above, note 1.

³⁴ Held, 144-6, sees the references to hunting in these pictures, and the 1626 *William, Earl of Salisbury* (Hatfield) by George Geldorp as becoming 'progressively weaker' and observes that 'they have virtually disappeared from van Dyck's work.' However, no mention is made of Daniel Myten's life-size *Charles I and Henrietta Maria Departing for the Chase* (Royal Collection) of ca. 1630-32; see Millar, *The Tudor...* n^o 120.

³⁵ See E. Auerbach, *Nicholas Hilliard* (London, 1961), pl. 98.

³⁶ Glück, 400.

George, for he was the patron saint of that city. The Order of St. George was also the highest order of chivalry in the Genoese Republic.³¹

There may also be a connexion between St. George, as the archetypal Christian knight, and another Genoese van Dyck portrait, the *Marchese Filippo Spinola* of ca. 1625, once at Hopetoun House (Fig. 10).³² Its qualities of painterliness and design make this one of van Dyck's outstanding Italian male portraits. But it is also a key picture iconographically, and has not yet received the attention it deserves.

When Julius Held published in 1958 his important study of the iconography of van Dyck's *Le Roi à la chasse*, now in the Louvre,³³ he shed much light on its varied sources and meanings, and its importance as an early instance of what might be called the 'dismounted' equestrian portrait, i.e. a standing figure with a horse held by another in either the foreground or the background. As a type it was to become popular in later British portraiture, Dobson, Kneller, Closterman, Gainsborough and Reynolds being only a few of the artists who painted this type of portrait.

Yet oddly, Held did not cite the *Spinola* as one of the sources for *Le Roi à la chasse*. However, it has all of the ingredients of the 'dismounted' equestrian type, including the page with the horse behind. (The latter is of course small, and the page, because of the cropping on the right and the fact that his head is foreshortened, is difficult to read.)

From where did van Dyck get his ideas for the *Spinola*? The artist had made his first English journey (1620-21) before going to Genoa. He could certainly have come into contact with the English hunting portrait (which is a major source for *Le Roi à la chasse* as Held has shown), e.g. the 1603 *Henry Prince of Wales and Lord Harrington* (Metropolitan Museum) by Robert Peake, or van Somer's 1617-18 *Anne of Denmark* (Collection of Her Majesty the Queen).³⁴ Another possible English source is the 'tournament' portrait, e.g. Nicholas Hilliard's miniature of *Robert Devereux, 2nd Earl of Essex* (Lady Lucas Collection) of about 1595,³⁵ which shows the sitter full-length in armour, while in the background is his tent and an equerry with his horse. Nor is the *Essex* the first of its kind. The Yale Center for British Art possesses a life-size full-length of a *Sir William Drury*, who was apparently killed in a duel in 1589. He is shown in tilting armour, with a tent behind. It would seem to be this tradition which inspired van Dyck's *Mountjoy Blount, Earl of Newport* (also in the Yale Center)³⁶ where a full-length figure is shown with a tent behind. But as with the *Sir William Drury*, there are no horses in the background.



FIGURE 10. Van Dyck, *Marchese Filippo Spinola*. Brisbane, Queensland Art Gallery.

It seems likely that van Dyck's *Spinola* is more indebted to Italian sources, and ultimately perhaps to religious pictures. In his discussion of the sources for *Le Roi à la chasse* Held cited Moroni's full-length of a man in the Kress Collection as 'the only Italian example known to me in which a full-length figure is portrayed with a horse standing near him.' But he went on to point out that apart from these points the similarity to the portrait of King Charles went no further. He even thought that it was 'not very likely that Van Dyck ever saw it. In the genesis of the Louvre portrait, at any rate, it probably had no part.'³⁷

Despite Held's statement, the connexions between the Kress Moroni and the *Spinola* (and hence with *Le Roi à la chasse*) seem too strong, especially as regards the horses' heads behind, for them not to have some connexion. Professor Millard Meiss apparently suggested the figure of St. George and his horse in Pisanello's *Madonna and Child with Saints George and Anthony Abbott* (London, National Gallery) as the idea behind the Moroni.³⁸ Another Italian picture which has elements of this tradition is Vincenzo Catena's *Warrior Adoring the Infant Christ and the Virgin* in the same collection. But perhaps more important than any of these is Carpaccio's *Francesco Maria della Rovere, Duke of Urbino* (Lugano, Thyssen Collection, of about 1510), for this is one of the earliest surviving life-size full-length portraits in Europe.³⁹

Thus the van Dyck *Spinola* appears to derive ultimately from religious imagery and still carries



FIGURE 11. Van Dyck, *Marchese Filippo Spinola*, detail.

overtones of the embattled Christian knight. And indeed there seems to be an added Christian element in the portrait. On the Marchese's breast-place is some device or insignia, painted in gold, which is at present indecipherable. One element, however, is quite clear – it contains a cross (Fig. 11).

In the case of another van Dyck portrait, we can be much surer of its sources, and perhaps also of its meaning. This is the splendid full-length of William Fielding, 1st Earl of Denbigh in the National Gallery, London (Fig. 12). At one time, presumably because of its rather mannered pose, it was doubted as a van Dyck. But its presence in the inventories of the Duke of Hamilton (the sitter's son-in-law) together with its tremendous style and quality place it beyond doubt.⁴⁰

In the years 1631-33 Denbigh travelled to Persia and India, using the ships of the East India Company. Although he was a courtier and much favoured by Charles I, his journey was evidently not an official one. In a letter written to his son prior to his departure Denbigh stated that he travelled 'to better my understanding.' The earl is wearing a Hindu jacket and pyjamas, apparently

³⁷ Held, 144, and fig. 2.

³⁸ Held, 144, n° 39.

³⁹ See A. Rosenbaum, *Old Master Paintings from the Collection of Baron Thyssen-Bornemisza* (Washington, 1979), n° 6 (with reference to Roberto Weiss's identification of the sitter in 1963).

⁴⁰ See Martin, 52-5, and Millar, *The Age of Charles I*, n° 97.



FIGURE 12. Van Dyck, *William Fielding, 1st Earl of Denbigh*. London, National Gallery.

the kind of clothing often worn by Europeans travelling in the East. According to family tradition (now generally discounted) the picture describes an incident when the earl lost his way and was led to safety by a native boy.⁴¹

⁴¹ Cecilia Mary Fielding Countess of Denbigh, *Royalist Father and Roundhead Son* (London, 1915), 76-7.

⁴² See H. Wetthey, *The Paintings of Titian* (London, 1969), 1, 133, and Adriani, 40'.

⁴³ Panofsky says nothing about the symbolism of the parrot in his *Early Netherlandish Painting* (Cambridge, Mass., 1953) in connection with van Eyck's *Madonna of the Canon van der Pæle* (Bruges). But he was aware of it in his last publication *Problems in Titian* where he discussed its use by Dürer in his *Adam and Eve*, 28-29. (I am indebted to my colleague Dr. David McTavish for suggesting this source to me.) Panofsky acknowledged that the information about the symbolism of the parrot had been obtained from E.K.J. Reznicek, 'De reconstructie van 't'Altaer van S. Lucas' van Maerten van Heemskerck,' *Oud Holland*, LXX (1955), 233-246. Reznicek gives a thorough discussion of the history of the legend of the parrot back to its origins in antiquity. The citations from the 1470 block book (of Franciscus de Retza's *Defensorium Inviolatae Virginitatis*) and Konrad von Würzburg are taken from Reznicek. (I am most grateful to my colleagues Professors D'Argaville and Kilpatrick, and Father Michael Sheehan, CSB for help with the translations.) The Latin epigram which Reznicek quotes from Isidor of Seville about the parrot who had been taught to say 'Caesar, Ave' appears to have originated with Martial (*Epigrams*, with an English translation by W.C. Ker [1920], xiv, 73). Dr. Charles Pullen has suggested to me that in the parrot symbolism in van Dyck's *Earl of Denbigh* there may be a pun on the Greek word *Paraclete*, meaning Advocate or Comforter, and one of the titles of the Holy Ghost. The word was certainly used in English from at least the fifteenth century. And the suggestion is strengthened by the absence of any clear etymological origin for the word 'parrot.'

What has escaped notice is the source of Denbigh's peculiar pose. It is a reworking of Titian's *St. James*, one of his most Mannerist works, painted for the Church of S. Lio in Venice about 1550. We have certain evidence that van Dyck knew and admired this picture, because he made a sketch of it, in the so-called *Italian Sketchbook*, now in the British Museum (Fig. 13).⁴²

But the parrot is the real key to the meaning of the Denbigh. Hitherto the bird has been seen merely as an exotic adjunct, a piece of local colour. But this is to ignore the 'hidden' meaning of the parrot. (Yet such ignorance is perfectly understandable. As great an iconographer as Panofsky was apparently unaware of the symbolism of the parrot, until late in his life.⁴³)

Put simply, the parrot is a symbol of the Virgin Birth of Christ, and of Salvation. Why? Because according to mediaeval legend, the young Julius Caesar while riding through the forest one day was accosted by a parrot with the salutation 'Ave Caesar.' Such brilliant powers of recognition and foresight seemed in themselves miraculous. But 'Ave' reversed is 'Eva'; and the 'New Eve' is the Virgin Mary. The sources of this legend lie in antiquity, in an epigram by Martial about a parrot which had been taught to say *Caesar Ave* (the epigram was included in Isidore of Seville's compilations). Persius also mentions in his first satire a parrot which had been taught to say *Ave*.

But the sources of the legend are of less importance than the glosses on it by late mediaeval writers and artists. In 1470 a block book illustration appeared in Germany showing a parrot with a latin inscription beneath. It has proven difficult to determine the precise literal meaning of this, but the general sense is clear:

If according to Persius in his first satire the parrot is able to say *Ave* by nature; Why should not a pure virgin generate (or give birth) through experiencing the Holy Ghost (who accosted her with *Ave Maria*).

The connexion between the Madonna's purity, the parrot and salvation had already been made in the thirteenth century by Konrad Von Würzburg, who wrote:

Just as the wild parrot glows green as grass,
It is still rarely wetted by rain or dew;
In the same way you Madonna are not wetted by the
flood of uncleanness,
So your birth has reunited us all with God.

The parrot as a religious symbol remained very much alive during the Renaissance and Baroque periods, especially in Northern Europe. Van Eyck employs it in the *Madonna of the Canon van der Pæle* (Bruges), where the Christ Child holds the bird. It also appears in Dürer's engraving of *Adam and Eve*.



FIGURE 13. Van Dyck, copy of Titian's *St. James* (Venice, S. Lio), pen and ink, from the *Italian Sketchbook*. London, British Museum.

I have encountered much opposition to the idea that the parrot could have a religious meaning in portraits, i.e. in a 'secular' context. But this resistance has not been without its use. It has forced me to search for earlier instances of the parrot, with a religious meaning, in a portrait.

I have found a number, but the most important perhaps, for van Dyck, is a group portrait in the Herzog Anton Ulrich-Museum at Braunschweig (Fig. 14). Neither the sitters nor the artist can be identified, but it is generally thought to be Flemish about 1620. In a recent exhibition catalogue, the parrot was simply noted as a symbol of virginity, and related to the child. But the child may or may not be female. In any case it seems more likely that we have here the wider theme of Salvation, especially as we have below the parrot, the dog (of faith) opposed to the sensuality and sin of the chained monkey. In addition we may have yet again, as in van Dyck's *Earl of Derby and His Family*, a reference to the antique relief thought to represent the God of Faith.⁴⁴

Unfortunately we know little of Lord Denbigh's religious views, although we know his wife was a convert to Roman Catholicism. There is nothing inherently against the van Dyck portrait as the record of some kind of religious experience. Such an interpretation would readily explain van Dyck's adaptation of the Titian *St. James* pose. It would also make sense of what appears to be another borrowing – the pointing gesture of the native boy, from Leonardo's *St. John* (Louvre), formerly in Charles I's collection.⁴⁵ Above all it would give meaning to the earl's look and pose, of exultant

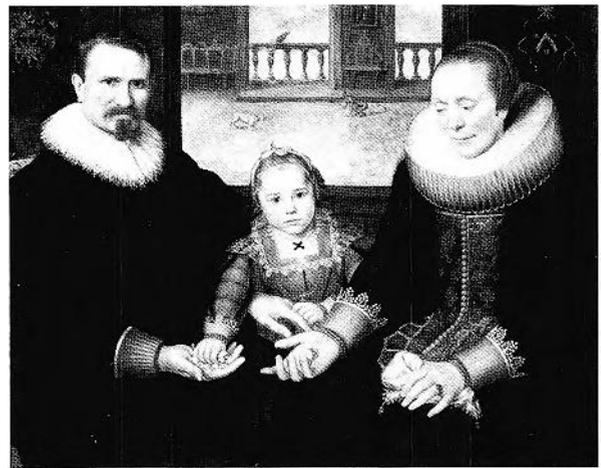


FIGURE 14. Anonymous, Flemish School, *Family Group*, ca. 1620. Braunschweig, Herzog Anton Ulrich-Museum.

surprise. This is surely not the attitude he would have adopted at merely seeing a parrot. Parrots were familiar sights in upper-class households in Europe.⁴⁶

44 *Die Sprache der Bilder* (Braunschweig), n° 11. It should also be noted that the form of the central chair-back is strongly suggestive of the 'IHS' monogram. Also in Braunschweig, in the Städtisches Museum, is a group portrait of the children of Duke Augustus the Younger of Braunschweig-Wolfenbüttel, which is signed and dated S.E. 1637. This picture also contains a parrot, dog and chained monkey; see E. Berckenhagen, *Barock in Deutschland Residenzen* (Berlin, 1966), n° 192. The fact that the Flemish group is by a third rank artist, and the other is a 'primitive' indicates how deeply embedded the parrot symbolism was in the early seventeenth century. Rubens employed the parrot, presumably as an emblem of Salvation, in one of the latest of his self-portraits, the *Self-Portrait with Hélène Fourment and a Child on a Leading String* now in the Wrightsman collection, and on loan to the Metropolitan Museum, New York – see M. Jaffé, 'Ripeness is All: Rubens and Hélène Fourment,' *Apollo*, cvii (1978), 290-93 – and also in his *Deborah Kip, Wife of Sir Balthasar Gerbier, and Her Children* of ca. 1630, Washington, National Gallery – see Wolfgang Stechow, *Studies in the History of Art* (National Gallery of Art, 1933), 2-22. The parrot also appears in three of Rubens' female Genoese portraits, at Kingston Lacy, Karlsruhe and Buscot Park; see my review of F. Huemer's *Portraits I, Corpus Rubenianum Ludwig Burchard* (London, 1977), in the *Burlington Magazine*, cxxiii (1981), 365-66.

45 See Millar, 'Abraham Van der Doort,' 89.

46 Van Dyck had used the parrot in his Genoese full-length of the Marchesa Brignole-Sale (Palazzo Rosso). The parrot also appears (together with a chained monkey) in another Genoese portrait, the so-called *Fanciullo Bianco* (Palazzo Durazzo Pallavicini); see P. Torriti, *La Galleria del Palazzo Pallavicini a Genova* (Genoa, 1960), fig. 55; I am most grateful to the Marchesa Cattaneo for allowing me to come and study this picture. Also in this Genoese palace is an *Offering to Cybele* which contains a parrot and two chained monkeys. Torriti, 96-7, figs. 80-2, dates the picture ca. 1596, and attributes it to 'Velvet' Breughel and Henrick Van Balen, van Dyck's first master. In England the parrot is found in

Van Dyck painted many portraits without using symbols. It is also fascinating to see him take a pose from a picture like Titian's *St. James* and, having perhaps used it with religious meaning in the *Earl of Denbigh*, employ it for other sitters but gradually reduce the religious element, or secularize it as we would say. In a portrait of the engraver Karel Van Mallery of ca. 1627-32 (studio version Munich,

Pinakothek; original apparently Oslo, private collection)⁴⁷ one sees the upper half of the Titian design used, still in a quasi-religious context, since the broken column behind is the symbol of Fortitude. But in the *William Howard, 1st Viscount Stafford* (Cardiff, Marquis of Bute) of ca. 1638⁴⁸ one sees only the gesture of the hand, here used simply to evoke dramatic pathos.

portraits by Lely, Kneller, Dahl, and minor Late Stuart painters. It appears in eighteenth-century English portraits down at least to the time of Reynolds, who uses it in his *Lady Cockburn and Her Children* (London, National Gallery) which was exhibited at the Royal Academy in 1774. The earliest instance of the appearance of a parrot in an English portrait known to me is in *William Brooke, 10th Lord Cobham and His Family*, of 1567, at Longleat, which is attributed to the Master of the Countess of Warwick; see R. Strong, *English Icon Elizabethan and Jacobean Portraiture* (London, 1969), 110. It is perhaps significant that there is also a monkey in the picture. At Woburn Abbey there is a full-length of a young girl, attributed to Robert Peake the Elder, of ca. 1600-05, which contains no fewer than four parrots! The girl holds two small ones in her hand, while on either side of her head there are shown two adults. At her right foot is a monkey, and at her left a dog; see Strong, *English Icon*, 242. In Italy and Spain the parrot as a religious symbol seems to have been used in portraits down to the late eighteenth century; see Victor Chan, 'Time and Fortune in Three Early Portraits by Goya,' *Arts Magazine*, LV (December, 1980), 117, n° 77; I am indebted to Professor Gerald Finley for this reference. Professor Chan cites two articles by A.P. Mirimonde, 'Le Symbolisme musical chez Jérôme Bosch,' *Gazette des beaux-arts*, VI/LXXVII (1971), 19 ff., and 'Les Vanités à personnages et à instruments de musique,' *Gazette des beaux-arts*, VI/XCII (1978), 116 ff. Mirimonde is aware of the Salvation symbolism of the parrot. But he also sees it as a symbol of the *logos*. In this he follows Jérôme Carcopino, *De Pythagore aux Apôtres* (1956), 356, who cites passages from Plutarch attempting to demonstrate that the parrot was an ancient symbol of the *logos*, and of reason. But the Plutarch passages cited by Carcopino do not seem to justify such an interpretation. (I am indebted to Dr. Ross Kilpatrick for his help with this problem.) The loss of knowledge of the symbolic meaning of the parrot is vividly illustrated by a passage in Henry James' *Wings of the Dove* (1902) where Milly Theale gives a costume party in her rented Venetian palace, and Mrs. Stringham ruminates on their joint roles: 'She's lodged for the first time as she ought, from her type to be ... It's a Veronese picture ... with me as the inevitable dwarf, the small blackamoor, put into a corner for effect. If I only had a hound or something of that sort I should do the scene more honour. The old housekeeper, the woman in charge here, has a big red cockatoo that I might borrow and perch on my thumb for the evening.' (Penguin edition, p. 329).

⁴⁷ Glück, 331 (known to me only from the photograph).

⁴⁸ See M. Hervey, *The Life ... of Thomas Howard, Earl of Arundel* (Cambridge, 1921), pl. xvi. This portrait is also known to me only from this reproduction.

⁴⁹ I would like to suggest that the traditional view of van Dyck's *Lord Stafford* (of which there is a three-quarter length version at Petworth and a full-length at Welbeck Abbey) as deriving exclusively in pattern from Titian's *Marchese Del Vasto* (now in the Prado but once in Charles I's collection) needs to be modified. In certain respects the *Lord Stafford* seems much closer to an unknown Titian portrait which van Dyck copied in his Italian sketchbook. It was then in the 'Casa di Nicolò Doria' (presumably in Genoa) but seems not to have been identified; see Adriani, 104.

⁵⁰ Heumer, n° 19.

⁵¹ See Adriani, fols. 19 and 113.

Van Dyck's affinity to Titian has long been recognized, at any rate in the formal sense.⁴⁹ But it seems clear from this examination of the content of some of van Dyck's portraits that he was also powerfully attracted by Titian's Christian humanism, and by many of the means by which the Venetian expressed these ideas.

Yet, as has long been realized, van Dyck eschews one symbolic method which was very common among both Titian and other North Italian artists, as well as many of van Dyck's successors in England, notably William Dobson, Lely and Kneller. This is the relief, done in grisaille, and often shown as the decoration of a plinth. Usually it carries some message about the sitter.

Rubens followed the North Italians in using the narrative relief. Thus his *Catharina Grimaldi(?) and a Dwarf* (Kingston Lacy) of ca. 1606 includes one underneath the portico.⁵⁰ The Borghese *Entombment* of ca. 1600 also employs the device.

Not only does van Dyck avoid narrative reliefs, but in his drawn copies of two Titians which use them, viz. *Sacred and Profane Love* in the Borghese Gallery and *Pope Alexander VI and Jacopo Pesaro before St. Peter* (Antwerp), he pays virtually no attention to them and indicates the reliefs by meaningless squiggles.⁵¹

Why does van Dyck avoid this time-honoured device, especially in portraiture, where it would seem so useful? I think the answer may be that he wants his sitters to be more directly involved with any symbolism which he employs. From an early age a feature which distinguishes him most clearly from Rubens is his sense of the dramatic. When he reworks a Rubens composition, as he so often does in his early period, he always heightens its dramatic content, by emphasizing gestures, poses and so on.

Hence in portraiture it is not surprising that he should want his sitters to act. If sculptural accessories are used (occasionally he employs statuettes or busts) then his sitters are usually physically or psychologically engaged with them, in ways that would not be easy with narrative reliefs. Van Dyck as an artist is seldom content with mere statement. His nervous, passionate High Baroque temperament demands persuasion, open or hidden.