

Elleboochsteech that he had purchased in September 1650, he settled first in the Koningstraat and by August 1663 moved to the Veerstraat. The couple had one child, a daughter named Johanna Maria. In 1655 Ostade became guardian of his sister Maeyeken's five children, and from 1668 he was also responsible for the children of his brother Jan. After the death of Anna late in 1666, Ostade inherited considerable sums both from her and from her father. His prolific output must also have provided a substantial income, for by 1670 he was living in relative comfort on the Ridderstraat. In 1672, at the time of the French invasion of the Netherlands, he temporarily fled Haarlem and moved to Amsterdam.

On 21 April 1685, Ostade was a signatory to his daughter's marriage settlement. Six days later he died and was buried in Saint Bavo's on 2 May. According to an announcement placed by his daughter in the Haarlem *Courant* on 19 June, the contents of the artist's studio were to be sold at auction on 3 and 4 July; a second sale is known to have taken place on 27 April 1686.

Ostade's productivity was remarkable. His known works include more than eight hundred paintings, about fifty etchings, and numerous drawings, some of which are subtly tinted with watercolor. The vast majority of this oeuvre consists of genre scenes, but he also produced a small number of portraits and history paintings.

It is likely that Ostade's younger brother Isack (q.v.) was an early pupil, and other artists who may have studied with him include Jan Steen (q.v.), Cornelis Bega (1631/1632–1664), Michiel van Musscher (1645–1705), and Cornelis Dusart (1660–1704).

Bibliography

- De Bie 1661/1971: 258.
Weyerman 1729–1769, 2: 91.
Houbraken 1753, 1: 320, 347–349.
Smith 1829–1842, 1 (1829): 107–178; 9 (1842): 79–136.
Gaedertz 1869.
Van der Willigen 1870: 21–23, 29, 233–241.
Rosenberg 1900.
HdG 1907–1927, 3 (1910): 140–436.
Leningrad 1960.
Miedema 1980, 2: 613, 665–672, 1060–1062.
Schnackenburg 1981.
Philadelphia 1984: 281–289.
Godefroy 1990.
Brown/MacLaren 1992: 297–298.

1977.21.1 (2706)

Tavern Scene

Early 1660s

Oil on oak, 23.8 x 20.4 (9 $\frac{3}{8}$ x 8)

Gift of John Russell Mason

Inscriptions

At lower left: *Av Ostade 166*—

Technical Notes: The cradled panel support is composed of a single oak board with the grain running vertically. There is a slight convex warp. Dendrochronology estimates a felling date of 1650 for the tree and a period of 1655–1670 for the panel use.¹ A thin, off-white ground layer prepared the panel to receive thin paint layers whose low-covering power left the wood grain visible.

Moderate flaking in the past has occurred overall, and damage across the center of the painting has left a series of seven horizontal losses in the hat of the man farthest to the left and in the cardplayers (at the same height), as well as a vertical scratch through the arm of the central standing figure. The figures are slightly abraded, although the faces are free of loss or abrasion. Discolored varnish and old repaints were removed when the painting was treated in 1978.

Provenance: Probably private collection, Belgium, prior to 1930. Mrs. Edwin M. Watson [née Frances Nash], Washington and Charlottesville, about 1930; by inheritance to Ellen V. Nash, Charlottesville; by gift to John Russell Mason [d. 1981], Washington.²

WITHIN the dark confines of a spacious tavern interior peasants have gathered to pass the evening hours warming themselves by the fire, playing cards or backgammon, or just kibitzing while enjoying the soothing effects of tobacco and beer. The trees silhouetted against the moonlit sky, which can be seen through the leaded-glass windows, situate the tavern in a rural setting. One senses that this scene is a recurring evening ritual, in which peasants from the local community play out familiar roles night after night.

Much of the appeal of this small painting comes from the sense of atmosphere that helps unify the composition. One can imagine the quiet din of conversation within the dark recesses of this smoke-filled space. Light from various sources—the fire, the candle attached to the hearth, and the hidden candles on the tables—gives a warmth to the scene that is reinforced by the attitudes and expressions of the figures themselves.

Ostade, perhaps more than any other Dutch artist, devoted himself to the depiction of the lower echelons of Dutch society. Almost certainly influenced by Adriaen Brouwer (1606–1638) in his early years, Ostade initially executed images of peasant



Adriaen van Ostade, *Tavern Scene*, 1977.21.1

life that were far from flattering. By the 1660s, when he executed this small panel, his images had changed considerably. Instead of raucous behavior within taverns that look more like barns than public structures, the peasants here enjoy their leisure hours with exemplary deportment. Despite the presence of beer, tobacco, playing cards, and a backgammon game, none of these peasants has succumbed to vices so often associated with those who have yielded to sensual pleasures: no one has passed out, vomited, or threatened a fellow cardplayer with a knife or jug. The tavern itself is substantial and well kept: the fireplace is large, the leaded windows and ceiling beams in good order.

As the character of his peasants changed during the course of Ostade's career, so did his style of painting. By the 1660s, his technique became more refined as he sought to develop a more subtle use of light and dark. This evolution in style might have developed in conjunction with his extensive work in etching during the 1640s and 1650s. Many of his etchings of interior scenes, for example, explore the subtle effects of various light sources to establish mood. Certainly the smallness of this painting and the delicacy of his touch bring to mind the scale and character of his etchings.

Since the last digit of the date is illegible it is not certain when during the 1660s this scene was actually painted. The general disposition of the interior, however, is comparable to Ostade's 1661 *Peasants in an Interior* (Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam, inv. no. C200). Not only are the architectural elements similar, but the peasants are likewise organized in two groups, one situated before the hearth and the other around a table set in the background beneath the leaded-glass windows. It thus seems probable that this work also dates from the early 1660s.

Ostade must have composed his scenes with the aid of individual figure studies, of which many exist.³ Although no such study from the 1660s exactly matches any of the figures in this composition, a watercolor from the 1670s, part of a series by Ostade recording earlier studies, depicts the seated man before the fireplace (fig. 1).⁴

Notes

1. Dendrochronology by John Fletcher, Research Laboratory for Archaeology and the History of Art, Oxford University, 16 November 1979.

2. The provenance information was provided by John Russell Mason.

3. See Schnackenburg 1981. For a discussion of Ostade's use of drawings, see Peter Schatborn in Washington 1981, 79–80.

4. Schnackenburg 1981, 1: cat. 336 (Ashmolean Mu-



Fig. 1. Adriaen van Ostade, *Seated Peasant*, 1670s, watercolor, Oxford, Ashmolean Museum

seum, Oxford, inv. no. P.I. 170/7). Schnackenburg 1981, 1: 42, makes the point that a characteristic of Ostade's late drawings is that they depict motifs from his earlier work.

References

1985 NGA: 295, repro.

1942.9.48 (644)

The Cottage Dooryard

1673

Oil on canvas, 44 x 39.5 (17³/₈ x 15⁵/₈)

Widener Collection

Inscriptions

At lower left center: *Av. Ostade 1673* (Av in ligature)

Technical Notes: The support is a moderately coarse-textured fabric, tightly woven in a plain weave. It has been lined with the tacking margins trimmed, but cusping visible in the x-radiograph indicates the dimensions have not been altered. The fabric weave is visible through the thick, smooth white ground.

Paint is applied in thin layers with no appreciable brushmarking or impasto. The vehicular pastes of the figures, architecture, and sky give way to fluid opaque washes in the foreground. Lean granular yellows and transparent green glazes are employed in the foliage. A pentimento is visible in the upper left tree. The condition of the painting is excellent. Abrasion is slight, and losses are confined to the edges and an area of flaking around the foreground figures at right.

In 1975 a double lining was removed and the support relined. An aged surface coating was removed.

Provenance:¹ Adriaen Swalmius [1689–1747], Schiedam; (sale, Rotterdam, 15 May 1747, no. 2); Jacob de Roore [1686–