

K. G. BOON *Geertgen tot Sint Jans* or *Mostaert*

The Tree of Jesse with a donor of the Magdalen Order, formerly kept in the Von Pannwitz-collection, has been ascribed by several authors to Geertgen tot Sint Jans since its incorporation into the collection of the Rijksmuseum. The arguments which were brought against Friedländer ascribing it to the youthful Mostaert, however, were of such a nature that they not only stressed features common to compositions of Geertgen's in general but also to compositions deriving from his environment. The Mostaert-qualities which are especially noticeable in details, e.g. the light edges of dark shadows, were entirely overlooked in this discussion. An early phase during which Mostaert still worked under the spell of Geertgen's art thus tended to be overlooked.

This influence is clearly traceable in a triptych of which unfortunately only a nineteenth century drawn copy exists. Fortunately however the copyist has copied the original so faithfully that the artist of the hitherto unknown work could easily be ascertained. Various details point to Jan Mostaert.

Between the triptych and Jesse's Tree are several clear points of similarity. There is even in the background of the left panel a building which appears in precisely the same way in Jesse's Tree. So both are probably part of Mostaert's juvenile work which now, due to the fact that the founder and his family can be identified on the triptych, can be dated with more certainty than before. On the wings of the lost triptych namely the Haarlem patrician and mayor Gherryt van Schoten and his wife Luytgard van Swieten are portrayed, whose date of marriage is not known but who had children

whose date of birth could be ascertained. The founder himself died in 1513. From the ages and the number of children portrayed can be concluded that the triptych must have been painted in about 1507.

Closest to this triptych seems to be the Copenhagen portrait of a man which Friedländer had already dated early and which due to a recent find has been recognized as a portrait of Jacob Jansz. van der Meer who died on June 23, 1510. Jesse's Tree has probably been painted another two or three years before the triptych, so at about 1504/5.

Winkler's theory, who thought that between 1499 and 1504 Mostaert had worked for Margaretha of Austria at Brussels and afterwards at Geneva and Chambéry, a supposition which already had not taken into account the important order for the altar of the St. Bavo church in 1500, becomes even more improbable with this fixation of the time of Mostaert's juvenile period.

The iconography of the middle panel of the van Schoten-triptych also gives rise to another problem. For it appears that there is a direct connection with the iconography of the Last Judgment on the memorial panel of Christian II and his wife Isabella of Austria in the National Museum of Copenhagen. Probably this last work is partly taken from Mostaert's van Schoten-triptych and the question even arises, as a result of the recent X-ray examination, whether it cannot have been painted in Mostaert's studio, this if one does not suppose, like Glück did in 1940, that this badly preserved panel has been painted by Mostaert himself before 1514.