

David Freedberg, *The Life of Christ after the Passion, Part VII of Corpus Rubenianum Ludwig Burchard*. 26 parts. London, Harvey Miller Publishers; Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1984, 425 pp., 175 black and white illus., \$103.75

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been far better to refer to the much more credible researches of Abraham and Letienne (1929), Chefneux (1934), Goldschmidt (1947), and Dodwell (1966). Although I do not take issue with the suggestion of Odo of Bayeux as patron of the Tapestry, this was not first convincingly argued by Fowke (1875), as Wilson states. Fowke took over the suggestion made in 1824 by De-launey. As well, Henry Ellis was not the first to identify Vital and Wadard as Odo's vassals. This had been done earlier by Amyot (1821). A number of points such as these reflect a hasty approach to the bibliography of the Tapestry. Wilson gives no reason to suggest why he feels the embroidery was acquired by Odo for Bayeux. As a transportable secular object, the embroidery could have been destined for a number of locations in Normandy or England.

These criticisms should not be seen as outweighing the valuable material in Wildon's book. Most of the shortcomings will be exasperating only for the small group of scholars who work directly with the Bayeux Tapestry and who will be struck by a certain hastiness in Wilson's survey of the past literature. This book is not aimed primarily at them, but at a wider audience. In the balancing act of producing a popular, yet scholarly, publication, this beautiful book must be considered one of the most skilful efforts.

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DAVID FREEDBERG *The Life of Christ after the Passion*, Part VII of *Corpus Rubenianum Ludwig Burchard*. 26 parts. London, Harvey Miller Publishers; Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1984, 425 pp., 175 black and white illus., \$103.75.

This series is one of the greatest collaborative art-historical enterprises of the late twentieth century. It was planned by the German scholar Ludwig Burchard (1886-1960) "as the complete embodiment of our improved knowledge of Rubens," by which he meant bringing up to date the five-volume catalogue published by Max Rooses between 1886 and 1892. Burchard actually issued a prospectus for a six-volume work in 1939, but the Second World War and his perfectionist personality prevented his plans from being carried out in his life time. Fortunately, his notes were acquired by the City of Antwerp, which set up a foundation to oversee the project. It is a measure of the astonishing growth in our knowledge of Rubens that by 1968, when the first published volume of the series appeared (John Rupert Martin's work on the Jesuit Ceiling paintings) Burchard's six-volume plan had been expanded to twenty-six parts, many in two volumes. In that first volume, the hope was expressed that the project would be complete by *Rubens Year* (1977), but now, more than a decade later, only about one-third of the parts have been published. All volumes take into account Burchard's findings, but each is by a different author who is free to follow his or her own findings and opinions. Although

occasionally one author has written more than one part, the contributors represent a wide spectrum of ages, nationalities, and opinions among *Rubenistes*, and the overall effect of the diversity of authorship is to give this series a great sense of variety.

Dr. Freedberg's volume was completed by late 1978. However, delays in publication meant that it did not appear in print until late 1983. This must have been exceedingly frustrating for the author. Yet, as he notes, it did have one great benefit: it enabled him to take into account the findings and opinions published in 1980 by Professor Julius Held in *The Oil Sketches of Peter Paul Rubens*. This monumental two-volume work by the doyen of *Rubenistes* is arguably the greatest single twentieth-century contribution to Rubens studies.

Yet despite his frequent acknowledgment of debt to Held's 1980 volumes, Dr. Freedberg does not hesitate, on occasion, to disagree with some of the views expressed in them. For example, Held identified the panel depicting an angel and the Virgin Mary, formerly in the Seilern collection and now in the Courtauld Institute Galleries in London, as the *Annunciation*. This was contrary to Count Seilern's view that the subject was really the *Annunciation of the Death of the Virgin*, which he based in part on the fact that the angel carries a palm rather than the traditional lily. Freedberg sides with Seilern, and quotes the passage from the Pseudo-Melito, which is the source for this rarely-depicted event in the Virgin's life: "Behold this palm branch. I have brought it to thee from the Paradise of the Lord, and thou shalt cause it to be carried before thy bier on the third day." Also, while Held describes the Seilern picture as "more a product of the studio than of Rubens himself," Freedberg argues that the Seilern picture is the "superior version" (there is another in Prague) and that the doubts about it are probably due to its condition (pp. 136-37).

Held's views about the quality of the former Seilern picture seem well founded, on visual grounds. On the other hand, Freedberg's point about the poor condition of the panel seems valid. The arguments about the subject-matter of the panel also seem, at first sight, to be equally balanced. Held argues plausibly that Rubens never gives the angel a lily in his other depictions of the *Annunciation*, and that the palm, according to Valerianus, is incorruptible and not subject to the decay of old age—"qualities that evidently apply in the highest degree to the Virgin" (Held, p. 441).

Neither Held nor Freedberg comments on the curious piece of furniture to the Virgin's right in the former Seilern picture. Although the Virgin is resting an open book on it, it is not a *prie-dieu*, since it is too low and has no sloping top. (One sees the usual *prie-dieu* in Rubens's *Annunciation* in Vienna of ca. 1609-10.) Instead, the object in the former Seilern picture appear to be a bed with lion-leg feet, *all'antica*. (A very similar bed-leg appears in Van Dyck's composition drawing in Berlin for the Dulwich *Samson and Delilah*, a picture of Van Dyck's First Antwerp Period, when he was in close contact with Rubens. Also, in Rubens's picture, the bed is on a dais and curtained, as seventeenth-century beds often were. A further point is that the rounded form of the lion-legs recalls the sarcophagi of Florentine *quattrocento* tombs such as Desiderio da Settignano's *Marsuppini Monument* in Santa Croce and Verrocchio's *Medici Monument* in San Lorenzo, whose "bath" shape derives from the antique

(cf. G. Passavant, *Verrocchio* [1969], p. 13). If these observations are correct, then the funeral associations of this bed-sarcophagus-bier would indicate that the former Seilern picture is most likely to be the *Annunciation of the Death of the Virgin*.

The section devoted to the *Assumption of the Virgin* is the most extensive in Dr. Freedberg's volume. It includes twenty-five catalogue entries, preceded by a six-page essay. Perhaps the most interesting entry is no. 46, for the oil sketch *The Assumption and Coronation of the Virgin*. This sketch, now in Leningrad, was probably one of the two *modelli* that Rubens submitted to the Antwerp Cathedral Chapter in 1611 in connection with the commission for the High Altar there. This composition differs from the standard Netherlandish way of representing the coronation (by the Trinity) by showing Christ alone. The source for this is the illustrated supplement to Jerome Nadal's *Adnotationes et Meditationes in Evangelia*, first published in Antwerp in 1595.

Dr. Freedberg first published his identification of the connection between the Leningrad panel and Nadal's book in the *Burlington Magazine* (July 1978, pp. 432-41). As he said then, the connection "in itself . . . is not an especially significant discovery; but the immediate context of the print has wide-ranging implications" (p. 433). For Nadal's book (originally written for Jesuit novices) is concerned with the responses of the beholder to images. In his article, Dr. Freedberg analyzed these in great detail and concluded that "one could scarcely wish for fuller evidence of the possible range of associations available to the beholder of the images of the *Assumption*" (p. 436). Unfortunately, in the volume under review, Dr. Freedberg makes no comment about these fascinating discoveries concerning the "response of the viewer" and the marvellous "range of associations." This seems a great pity because of the importance of this material, not only for students of Flemish seventeenth-century painting, but also for anyone interested in the wider historical "meaning" of pictures.

To the very thorough entry on the Antwerp Cathedral *Assumption* (no. 43) I would like to add an observation. The apostle with raised arms at the left seems to derive from Titian's *Descent of the Holy Spirit* in Santa Maria della Salute, Venice. Dr. Freedberg does note the possible connection between this Titian and Rubens's own picture of this theme, now at Munich (p. 107, note 5).

Most of the pictures Dr. Freedberg catalogues in this volume were designed as altarpieces. A few were also intended as epitaph monuments. Dr. Freedberg studied Rubens's epitaph paintings as a group in a long article in a Flemish journal in 1978. It is good to have this material in a more accessible place. The best-known of the epitaph paintings is the Rockox triptych, painted for the Church of the Recollets about 1612-15 but now in the Antwerp Museum. Its central panel is the so-called *Incredulity of St. Thomas*. How often has Rubens's "classical" treatment of this theme been contrasted with Caravaggio's. Such comparisons stress Caravaggio's "realism," in part because he shows Saint Thomas placing his finger in Christ's side. This motif, which Rubens eschews, is also found in later, more "baroque" representations of the theme such as Guercino's in the National Gallery, London. But Rubens's avoidance of the fingering episode turns out to be a positive act. As Dr. Freedberg

notes, "It was probably intended to evoke a theme traditionally connected with the account of Thomas's incredulity, that of belief in the Resurrection of Christ which does not need to depend on the evidence of sight . . . a brilliantly concise expression of an idea which transcended the specifically narrational [*sic*] moment and was self-evidently appropriate for a funeral monument" (p. 83).

Many of the new insights in this volume have to do with iconography. But there are also some interesting new proposals for visual sources. One is the identification of the strong compositional similarity between Rubens's *Glorification of the Eucharist* (no. 17a), an oil-sketch in the Metropolitan Museum, New York, and Marten de Vos's 1590 *Christ Triumphant*, formerly in Antwerp Cathedral and now in the Museum of Fine Arts. The recognition of this link underlines Rubens's debt to his northern predecessors. However, as Dr. Freedberg also points out, as if to redress the balance, "the figure of Christ may well have been derived from Giovanni da Bologna's Christ on the Altar of Liberty in the Duomo at Lucca" (p. 76).

The architectural framework of the Metropolitan Museum oil sketch presents alternatives: a corinthian column at the left and a Solomonic column at the right. The latter, as Dr. Freedberg suggests, "may have been proposed here because of their traditional fitness for the decoration of ciboria" (p. 77). After all, the Shrine of Old Saint Peter's contained the original Solomonic columns that were almost certainly the gift of the Emperor Constantine. But in addition, the Solomonic column, with its motif of putti clambering over grape-vines, is always an apt reference when the Eucharist is of special concern.

This is a fine volume. The scholarship and splendid plates are in the best traditions of this great series.

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LEE I. LEVINE, editor *Ancient Synagogues Revealed*. Detroit, Wayne State University Press; Jerusalem, Israel Exploration Society, 1982, 2 maps, 4 colour plates, many black-and-white illus., 199 pp., \$39.00 (cloth).

CAROL HERSELLE KRINSKY *Synagogues of Europe: Architecture, History, Meaning* (The Architectural History Foundation). Cambridge, Mass. and London, The MIT Press, 1985, maps on end papers, 253 black-and-white illus., 457 pp., \$70.00 (cloth).

The history of the early synagogue is important for Jewish history, but it is also a significant feature in architectural history for its influence on the development of the Christian church and the Islamic mosque. The intention of *Ancient Synagogues Revealed* is to provide for an English-speaking audience a reasonably comprehensive survey of recent archaeological discoveries and some of the major controversies surrounding the history of synagogues. Levine points out that the origins