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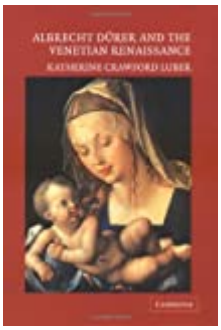
Dagmar Eichberger, Charles Zika, eds. *DÖÂ¼rer and His Culture.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998. 255 pp. $64.95 (paper), ISBN 978-0-521-61988-2.



Katherine Crawford Luber. *Albrecht DÖÂ¼rer and the Venetian Renaissance.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005. xvi + 268 pp. $75.00 (cloth), ISBN 978-0-521-56288-1.

Lisa Pon. *Raphael, DÖÂ¼rer and Marcantonio Raimondi: Copying and the Italian Renaissance Print.* New Haven: Yale University Press, 2004. 240 pp. $55.00 (cloth), ISBN 978-0-300-09680-4.

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Revisiting the Canon: DÃ¼rer, Raphael, and Marcantonio Raimondi

Each of the three books under review sets out by quite disparate methods to question received ideas about its subject and to offer, either explicitly or by inference, a fresh approach to older historical and interpretative problems. Each is broadly concerned with the relationship between art and "culture" in all the myriad possibilities of that term. Collectively they offer multiple new insights into the worlds of trans-alpine sixteenth-century art.

In her robustly argued book, Katherine Crawford Luber brings the techniques of painting conservation to the problem of Albrecht DÃ¼rer's relationship with Venetian art. Her larger ambition, laid out in her introductory chapter, is to integrate these techniques as legitimate interpretive tools into the mainstream study of art history, a position that today would seem to require no special pleading. Nonetheless, in the ensuing study, Luber presents much new, at times startling, material about the artist's painting technique and offers a number of stimulating and imaginative interpretations. Her book is divided into seven chapters together with useful appendices–one on the history of the condition of the *Feast of the Rose Garlands* (1506), DÃ¼rer's largest Venetian altarpiece commission, and a second, equally useful compilation and translation of DÃ¼rer's theoretical writings on color.

Luber's thesis proceeds from the premise that DÃ¼rer's paintings have received less critical attention than his prints and have been gravely undervalued in what they can offer as evidence for the artist's development, artistic outlook and practice. She traces this imbalance as far back as Erasmus's famous encomium of the artist as an "Apelles of black lines," which, she asserts (with perhaps too broad a sweep of the brush), "most modern scholars have interpreted ... as a critical judgment about the relativistic artistic merits of DÃ¼rer's paintings and prints" and which "initiated the critical partition between DÃ¼rer's painted and graphic works" (p. 1). Luber's revisionist enterprise begins with a bold attempt to demolish the well-entrenched idea that DÃ¼rer made a journey to Venice in 1494-95, before the well-documented "second" sojourn of 1505-7. The contention that DÃ¼rer never undertook a first journey was last seriously made by Alasdair Smith, who traced the origin of the theory back to Johann Dominik Fiorillo, erstwhile tutor to the novelist and critic, Wilhelm Heinrich Wackenroder, in his work *Geschichte der zeichnenden KÃ¼nste*, written between 1815 and 1820.[1] Oddly, though Luber cites Smith's article in her bibliography, she attributes the origins of the theory instead to Hermann Grimm, placing it in the critical aftermath of the publication of Jacob Burckhardt's *The Civilization of the Renaissance in Italy* in 1860. Like Smith, Luber argues that the particular nature of German scholarship in the earlier nineteenth century, with its quasi-religious reverence for the great Italian masters, fueled an accompanying desire to find similarly exalted figures in German art, as well as artistic affinities with Italy, whether actual or spiritual, and thus created the intellectual conditions to make such a theory possible. That this was the case, of course, does not make that theory *ipso facto* unsound, as she tends to imply. It is, after all, the new perspectives of each generation that sometimes engender lasting new insights from familiar evidence.

Luber is quite correct, however, in pointing out the circumstantial and unsatisfactory nature of the evidence for a first trip. Like others before her, she discounts as too ambiguous the two textual references upon which nineteenth-century historians founded their theory, namely the line in DÃ¼rer's letter to his friend Willibald Pirckheimer, written in Venice in 1506, that "what pleased him eleven years before" no longer does so; and the reference by his Nuremberg contemporary, Christoph Scheurl, to DÃ¼rer's reference of his "return" to Italy in 1506. Of those works the artist supposedly carried out in Venice in the 1490s, Luber claims reasonably that the drawings derived from Italianate sources–those after Mantegna or Pollaioulo, for example–might just as easily have been made in Nuremberg. The drawings of lobsters and crabs, often cited as evidence of the artist's travel to the marine city, were, she suggests (where they can be attributed to DÃ¼rer himself with any certitude), drawn from examples brought back by merchants or even copied from bronzes cast from life, currently fashionable in northern Italy, though no examples of German provenance are produced as counter-evidence. She makes a similar proposition for the drawings of Venetian women's costume, pointing out correctly that such Venetian dresses were known to Nuremberg artists as early as 1483, as Reuwich's frontispiece for Bernhard von Breydenbach's travel book, *Die Reise ins Heilige Land* of that year clearly shows. DÃ¼rer's drawings nonetheless have the character of studies from life, something Luber implicitly registers when she suggests (albeit again without documentary record) that Venetian young women attired thus would not have been an unfamiliar sight in cosmopolitan Nuremberg. The hardest of her speculations to accept is that the group of watercolors of Ottoman Turks by DÃ¼rer, copied from works by Gentile Bellini and workshop, were made after originals that had found

their way to Nuremberg, rather than *in situ* in Venice. This group includes the British Museum watercolor of three figures (W.78), which closely approximates a detail from Gentile Bellini's *Procession in Saint Mark's Square* (1496) and which has been used as crucial evidence of the first visit and of early contact between DÃ¼rer and the Bellini workshop. Luber is most interesting in her discussion about the difficulties that exist in convincingly attributing and dating DÃ¼rer's early painted works. She shows how inconclusive the scholarship is around this small but crucial group of works. She questions the attribution to DÃ¼rer of the so-called *Madonna del Patrocinio* (Magnani-Rocca Collection, Parma) and denies it any connection with Italy. She posits similar doubts–more convincingly–about the *Madonna and Child* in the Georg SchÃ¤fer Collection in Schweinfurt, suggesting it might be a product of the DÃ¼rer Renaissance of the late sixteenth century.

The usefulness of Luber's account is that it questions the basis of some very basic and commonly held assumptions about the artist. Ultimately, however, one is left with a balance of probabilities. Is it more reasonable to explain the sudden appearance in DÃ¼rer's work of the mid-1490s of references to and quotations from Venetian art and life to the artist's presence in Italy, or rather to the collective presence of things Venetian in Nuremberg? If one accepts the second possibility, then one must explain the artist's sudden preoccupation with Venetian and North Italian themes at home. The dating of the alpine watercolors is famously problematic, but is it more reasonable to date them to the second trip if it means, as she does, having to posit a *third* interim journey to the Alps in the late summer of 1506, while DÃ¼rer was still in Venice in the period after the completion of the *Rose Garland Altarpiece* (1506) and before his projected trip to Bologna?

Luber's doubts are serious and always reasonable, but her counter-arguments are often rather brief and as unfounded on documentary evidence as the theories she calls into question. In rejecting the *Madonna del Patrocinio* as an early "Venetian" work by the artist (she regards it as possibly by a much later follower of DÃ¼rer), Luber makes no attempt to explain away the concinnity between the pose of the Christ Child and that found in the Uffizi sheet of sketches of varied Italianate subjects and motifs (W. 86), or the connections of both to the drawing (W. 84) in the Louvre of a Christ Child after Lorenzo di Credi, which also bears the date 1495. Neither is the circumstantial evidence of the *Madonna del Patrocinio*'s long provenance in Italy addressed, or the close affinities with the works of Giovanni Bellini and Cima de Conegliano that previous scholars have detected. Ultimately, as Luber herself admits, the actuality of a first journey will probably never be pinned down with absolute certainty. In the context of her broader thesis, the theory serves to give rhetorical force to her subsequent arguments, which emphasize the radical, even cathartic, effects of DÃ¼rer's exposure to Venetian painting in 1505-7.

This theme is followed in the next two chapters, which offer technical analyses of the *Feast of the Rose Garlands* altarpiece and develop the argument that the extraordinary facility with which DÃ¼rer rendered spatial and atmospheric perspective through subtle tonal modulations of color was acquired by the artist's close scrutiny and emulation of Giovanni Bellini's recently completed *San Zaccharia Altarpiece* (1505). Luber ably demonstrates changes in DÃ¼rer's working method by examining the relationship between preparatory drawings, under-drawing and the painted surface. She attributes DÃ¼rer's singular use of the Venetian practice of drawing on *carta azzurra* to a new *painterly* concern with tonal values and sees such drawings as central to a new method of composing, indeed, of conceptualizing form. She follows the single motif of Maximilian's praying hands, from preparatory drawing to underdrawing to the finished painted detail, and demonstrates how the tonal values of the drawing on *carta azzura* were transposed into precisely equivalent color values in the finished painting, mediated via a rudimentary outline under-drawing on the surface of the panel. Other works, such as the watercolor study of the Pope's *Pluviale* (Vienna, Albertina, W. 401) are shown to have served as an interim stage of a similar process between preparatory drawing and painting: a translation of tonal modulations from linear terms to those of color. Luber shows how this method, painstakingly retrieved through infrared reflectographic examination, marks an apparent break with the artist's "pre-Venetian" habit of working up the paint surface from a detailed under-drawing. It constitutes for Luber nothing less than "a conceptual shift in representation" (p. 85) from a strictly graphic to a painterly conception of form–the result, she argues, of DÃ¼rer's exposure to parallel Venetian practices and to Italian art theory during his stay. She traces the same shift from a graphic to a painterly sensibility between the townscape in the background of the *Rose Garland Altarpiece* and that in the so-called *Pupilla Augusta* drawing (c.1498?; Windsor, W.153). She notes the reappearance of the same townscape many years later in the *St. Anthony* engrav-

ing (1519), and sees therein the triumph of the painterly conception of space now translated back into the graphic medium.

Luber frames her argument against the claim that previous scholarship, largely following Erwin Panofsky's concentration upon the mathematical and perspectival aspects of DÃ¼rer's work, has ignored the artist's interests in the tonal and coloristic, which she sees expressed in his paintings. But making this claim means discounting a body of scholarly writing going back at least to Theodor Hetzer's perceptive analyses of DÃ¼rer's and Titian's approaches to tonal composition, written in the late 1920s and 1930s, as well as those of recent scholars, such as Paul Hills, who has discussed the reciprocal problem of tone in relation to print and paintings in his recent study of Venetian color.[2] Luber, in seeing DÃ¼rer working with two distinct sets of conventions, one "graphic" and "linear," the other "painterly" and "coloristic," goes to an opposite pole and would appear to admit no connections in his early work between the concerns and preoccupations of his paintings and those of his prints. In fact, DÃ¼rer was acutely sensitive to matters of tone in his prints already by the mid-1490s, both in terms of local accenting and definition of form as with overall compositional balance, tonal distribution and atmospheric effect. It is a quality the Venetian artists themselves greatly admired in his prints and avidly sought to imitate. One observes this in their adoption of DÃ¼rer's own tonally conceived landscapes–one might cite for instance Giulio Campagnola's engraved *Landscape* (c.1500-03), which is taken literally from the *Sea Monster* engraving; or the *Visitation* by the so-called Master of the Wiesbaden Visitation (c. 1515; Museum Wiesbaden), in which the same landscape and cluster of buildings is translated into paint. Such works show DÃ¼rer's proximity in spirit and ideals to the emerging Giorgionesque conception of atmospheric landscape. They form an analogue to DÃ¼rer's own attempts in both print and paint to organize space in terms of tone and atmosphere.

In the following chapter, the author argues that DÃ¼rer's palette in the *Rose Garland Altarpiece* closely followed Giovanni Bellini's *San Zaccharia Altarpiece*, completed one year previously, and that the borrowings extend not merely to the same color combinations but even to a similar distribution of colors over the altarpiece. This act of artistic homage, Luber suggests, was made in a spirit of "eristic imitation" (p.117). (The inscriptions on the *Rose Garland Altarpiece* and in the Thyssen *Christ in the Temple* (1506), which record the completion of each in five months and five days respectively, are also seen as symptoms of this competitive spirit.) These are valuable insights, yet judging DÃ¼rer's altarpiece through the single critical lens of how it meets or deviates from a supposed ideal of Bellini's atmospheric use of color leads the author to the peculiar critical position of regarding DÃ¼rer's achievement as "ultimately limited," as a "qualified success" (pp. 124, 125). According to this position, it is the monochrome *carta azzurra* drawings that most fully demonstrate DÃ¼rer's ability to observe and to mimic Bellini's use of light to maximum dramatic and volumetric effect, but that these effects are "vitiated" in the painting by an unseemly crowding of the foreground (p. 124). This surprising, negative stance vis-Ã -vis one of DÃ¼rer's supreme monuments is made in order to counter Panofsky's opinion that the *Rose Garland Altarpiece* was the culmination of DÃ¼rer's synthesis of Venetian techniques. It lays the groundwork for Luber's thesis that the work represented only a first step in a longer process of experimentation that would continue throughout his artistic career. But it does not take sufficient account of DÃ¼rer's fundamental detachment from the work of his contemporaries, a resolute independence of outlook that allowed him to adapt certain qualities or to follow certain implications that he found in the work of others but always to his own quite distinct artistic purpose. Despite the similarities of hues and tonalities, the careful scrutiny and delineation of precisely rendered detail that characterizes the *Rose Garland Altarpiece* seems quite at odds with the soft, *sfumatesque* fusion of space, atmosphere and form that characterizes the great Venetian's late masterpiece.

DÃ¼rer continued to experiment with elements of Venetian technique after his return to Nuremberg. Luber's technical examinations of the *Martyrdom of the 10,000* (1508), and the *Adoration of the Trinity and the All Saints* (1511) fascinatingly reveal the use of two distinct techniques, which she identifies respectively as traditionally northern and Venetian. She finds the fullest synthesis of these two techniques realized in the *Virgin with the Pear* (1512). Here, the Virgin's face, conforming to DÃ¼rer's normative "northern" technique, is painted with several transparent layers of thin glaze above a carefully detailed under-drawing; the Christ Child, by contrast, is worked up in paint directly on the panel with only a few guiding outlines of under-drawing, thus conforming to the technique employed in the *Rose Garland Altarpiece*. Luber links this anomaly in the post-Venetian works with a metaphor found in patristic exegetical writings, which compares the Era of Law with an underpainting, and its fulfillment by the Era of Grace with the

completed painting worked up in colors. She suggests that DÃ¼rer intentionally applied the two different techniques to different figures in order to indicate their distinct symbolic roles. In reserving for the divine or particularly holy personages a technique of grey underpaint, DÃ¼rer was ostensibly imitating the "leaden Madonnas" of a Byzantine-Venetian icon type (Luber cites the works of Vincenzo Foppa as a possible prototype), chosen for its venerable association with ancient holy icons/pictures. The idea that DÃ¼rer used technique to express symbolic meaning by creating "perceptible yet not readily identifiable" visual differences (p.147) is wonderfully imaginative; while admitting that the analogies between the painting and the textual metaphor of "underpainting and finished colors" are not exact (p. 148), the author builds a very beguiling argument that DÃ¼rer was nonetheless responding to the general sense of the exegetical tradition.

The use and re-use of preparatory drawings is the theme of Luber's last chapter, "Repetition and Manipulation of Meaning," which concentrates on the two painted and the woodcut portraits of Maximilian I and establishes that they correspond in dimensions fairly exactly with a drawing from the life, which DÃ¼rer dated and inscribed as having been executed on June 28, 1518, "high up in the palace in his [the Emperor's] tiny cabinet" (Vienna, Albertina, W.567). Luber's acute observations on the formal differences between the two painted portraits lead her to suggest distinctions in respective functions, one speaking to a formal, public persona of the Emperor, the other to a more personal, private side of the man. Her categorization of "public" and "private" is problematic, especially in the case where we know that one of DÃ¼rer's portraits of Maximilian was offered to and refused by Margaret of Burgundy and subsequently bought by a Genoese merchant. Luber posits that the inscription written in a "populist" vernacular points to a more "public" image, while that in Latin, the language of humanism, on the other portrait, suggests a more private function. In this regard, it is worth pointing out that the inscription on the woodcut–the most widely disseminated and thus arguably the most truly "popular" of the portrait images–is in Latin. It is difficult to know what "popular" public contexts are envisaged. Against Luber's speculation that DÃ¼rer's re-use of the portrait drawing was "obsessive" and that his meeting with Maximilian held for him an "almost transcendent aura" (p.167), which gave DÃ¼rer's single life drawing a private significance akin to the tradition of sacred portraiture of St. Luke painting the Virgin Mary from life, one might suggest that DÃ¼rer simply re-used the drawing precisely because it was a true and faithful likeness. Although one might thus disagree on individual points of interpretation, the overall achievement of Luber's engaging book is to bring one to a closer, practical understanding of DÃ¼rer's relationship with Venetian art and art theory. More than this, she has provided the tools with which to consider fundamental questions about the relationship between *praxis* and thought, between technique and idea, questions that bring us to the very heart of the creative process.

DÃ¼rer's presence in Venice is discussed from a different, Italian, perspective in Lisa Pon's original and stimulating book. Its principal subject is the prints of Marcantonio Raimondi, particularly those made within the orbit of Raphael. More broadly, the unusual collaborative nature of Marcantonio's relationship with Raphael is used to examine the status of printing and of prints vis-Ã -vis painting and sculpture in an age, which, pace Vasari, came increasingly to regard art as an act of heroic individualism. Like Luber, Lisa Pon also questions some long-standing assumptions, in this case the validity of the categories under which we classify different kinds of art, in particular, the term "the reproductive print," under which Marcantonio's works have been traditionally cast. By examining the context in which they were produced, Pon argues that Marcantonio's works after Raphael's designs, far from being mere mechanical copies, are in a real sense "original," independent works of art, made collaboratively between Raphael (acting as a kind of design mogul) and Marcantonio (an acknowledged master of the newest technology). Raphael, Pon suggests, became involved in the new medium, not merely for commercial benefit or advertisement, but because he was alive to the creative possibilities of a new medium.

In the second chapter Pon sheds fascinating new light on Marcantonio's early career in Venice, concentrating on the engraved copies of DÃ¼rer's *Life of the Virgin* woodcut series (c. 1500-1505), which, by Vasari's famous account, involved him in a dispute with the German master (albeit undocumented and therefore possibly apocryphal). Pon approaches the engravings not primarily as works of art but as the products of commercial publishing. She prefaces her argument with a broad examination of the problems of copying and of pirated editions faced by printer-publishers like Aldus Manutius and discusses the effectiveness and limitations of the official safeguards to which they could resort, namely, the governmental, royal, imperial, even papal, privilege. She shows their only partial effectiveness, as they were enforceable only within the local jurisdiction of specific territorial bound-

aries. Vasari's account of DÃ¼rer's charge against Marcantonio has frequently been held up as the first case in copyright law to regard the copying of one artist's images and monogram by another as an infringement of intellectual property. The case, Pon suggests, appeared very differently to a Venetian printer. By careful examination of inscriptions found upon them, Pon discovers that the "copies" were printed under the auspices of NiccolÃ² and Domenico dal Jesus in association with the Gesuati, a lay order deeply invested in the didactic power of books. She posits convincingly that it was the subject matter of the prints, intended for didactic and devotional purposes, that caused DÃ¼rer's images to be used, rather than their artistic or aesthetic qualities *per se*. The conventions of Venetian publishing were such that the adoption of images for such purposes was routine, unproblematic and perfectly legal, for they were not protected by Venetian governmental privilege. The great northern artist's conception of his inventions as the reflection of his unique artistic identity thus collided with a system of producing printed texts and images that placed no particular value on the originating artist.

The notion of originality is pursued further in chapter 3 via an examination of artists' signatures. Among painters and sculptors, the practice of signing was fast becoming a means of signifying the uniqueness of the artist's hand, in a manner that reflects Vasari's celebration of the artist as individual creator. Prints, however, continued to be marked with a variety of signatures and monograms that indicated the full range of those involved in their production–from the designer, to executive artist, to printer/publisher. The subjective and unsystematic attitude towards signatures is also demonstrated, most vividly by the case of Ugo da Carpi, who at one point used the signature *resurrexit Ugo da Carpi* to express his triumph and revenge over a rival. Pon demonstrates the paradox that an engraved signature, lacking the indelible "presence" of the artist's actual physical touch, could at times even signify authorial absence and be applied to the plate by another hand. Her larger point is to demonstrate how the development of the signature as a standardized form to signify unique authorship was by no means a straightforwardly linear or ineluctable process and that in the field of printing, the Renaissance was a period in which the conventions were only slowly worked out. Thus the manner of indicating the designer of a print by the term *invenit* and the executor as *sculpsit* did not become standard until well into the seventeenth century.

This gradual, dialectical process of development forms the backdrop against which Pon considers the range of marks employed by Marcantonio: among them, MAR-ANT, MA, MAF, and most problematically, the blank tablet, which appears in a number of his prints in the place of a signature. Her suggestion that it was the device of il Baviera (the associate of Raphael's studio who oversaw the publishing of the prints) is an ingenious one, but does not take into account the fact that the blank tablet appears in Marcantonio's copies after DÃ¼rer's woodcut *Passion* series, which predates Marcantonio's association with Raphael's studio. Pon's observation of how the blank tablets in these prints replace very exactly the skewed perspective of the original DÃ¼rer monograms might also suggest that they were made in this instance in a spirit of ironic commentary vis-Ã -vis his models, almost as if the blank tablets have been superimposed over the scratched-out monogram. Might they even be considered a kind of circumstantial evidence of the Venetian Senate's pronouncement against him as recounted by Vasari: that he might copy DÃ¼rer's images but not the artist's monogram?

Chapter 4, entitled "Raphael's Graphic Intelligence," deals with the first years of collaboration between Marcantonio and Raphael from early 1510 onwards and seeks an answer to Raphael's interest in the processes and possibilities of the print medium in the artist's own habits of drawing and methods of composition. Pon suggests that his interest was artistic, rather than commercial or promotional, as has conventionally been the view. She finds analogies between Raphael's use of silver-point, of working up preparatory drawings with a blind stylus (both essentially intaglio processes) and counter-proofing with the engraver's use of the burin and printing press, and suggests this concinnity of graphic means naturally led him to take an interest in, and to experiment with, prints, using Marcantonio as willing accomplice. It is an ingenious insight, albeit hard to substantiate fully. Along the way, Pon contributes some striking insights, including the observation that Raphael's Windsor counter-proof drawing, "Receive ye the holy Ghost" was made using a press rather than by hand, an indication of Raphael's engagement with a printer and access to a press (possibly Marcantonio's) around the year 1515. She goes on to speculate that the press was in close proximity to, perhaps even housed in, Raphael's workshop, thereby strengthening the idea that for Raphael, the collaboration with Marcantonio was a serious artistic enterprise.

Raphael's drawing techniques, the discussion leads to a consideration of the manner, recorded by Lodovico Dolce, by which Raphael went about establishing a com-

positional idea, a kind of "cut and paste" method by which he would draw on the widest range of formal ideas and possibilities–some worked up from life studies, some drawn from memory, some adapted from other projects–and lay them out before him in order to select the best formal solution. Pon traces the complex evolution of Raphael and Marcantonio's greatest collaboration, *The Massacre of the Innocents* engraving in the light of this method. She considers the attribution and dating of the two versions–"with" and "without the fir tree" (c.1511-12 and 1513-15, respectively)–and by means of an ingenious method of digital overlay, attempts to reconstruct the order and logic of the surviving preparatory and other drawings associated with the finished print. While her results, as she admits, remain inconclusive, her method vividly (indeed rather luridly) brings to light Raphael's creative process of selecting and dropping motifs in the evolution of the finished design and gives force to her wider argument that the finished engraving was a fully independent work of art, made collaboratively between designer and executive engraver.

Pon's final chapter examines Vasari's account of Marcantonio in the *Lives* (1568 edition) and demonstrates through the various inconsistencies she finds there how uncomfortably the role of print maker and the genre of prints fitted alongside Vasari's heroic conception of the artist. Broadly, Pon explains the contradictions as arising from a tension inherent in Vasari's desire on the one hand to honor Marcantonio as the valued collaborator of his hero, Raphael, who helped develop the engraved print into a medium of both local and international artistic significance, and the impossibility he faced in fitting the collaborative print medium into his conception of art as the activity of the single artist-creator.

The structure of this quirkily discursive study, in which the individual chapters, each addressing apparently quite disparate themes, are divided into numerous further subsections, makes the experience of reading it rather like looking through a kaleidoscope–of seeing a series of separate fragments gradually assume focus around a single subject. By the end, the author has succeeded both in shedding significant new light upon the activities of her chief protagonist, Marcantonio, while also addressing the broader problem of the status of prints in the dominant artistic culture of Cinquecento Italy. It constitutes a very useful addition to the growing literature on print culture of the Renaissance.

Pon's book is a striking model of how a multiplicity of "contexts" can collectively draw out a new understanding of its subject. This is also the intention of *DÃ¼rer and His Culture*, a collection of essays that grew out of an international symposium held in 1994 at the University of Melbourne, Australia, which accompanied a major exhibition of the National Gallery of Victoria in Melbourne's holdings of DÃ¼rer's prints. First published in 1998, Cambridge University Press has re-issued it in a useful paperback edition, which will undoubtedly make it more accessible as a valuable classroom tool. The premise behind the book, as editors Dagmar Eichberger and Charles Zika state in their introduction, is that an understanding of DÃ¼rer's works is to be found by setting them against and within "contemporary cultural practices and discourses" rather than regarding them in a more traditional manner as part of the artist's evolutionary development (p. 1). The volume contains nine articles that place the artist and his works into a very rich and disparate series of socio-cultural contexts, divided more or less satisfactorily under four broad headings: "artist and environment;" "image and audience;" "communal culture and representation;" and "DÃ¼rer and the canon." These are followed by a select bibliography of works on DÃ¼rer published between 1971 and 1997 and an index.

In the section "artist and environment," Dagmar Eichberger examines DÃ¼rer's drawings and watercolors after nature within the context of early collecting and seeks to situate them within the *Kunst*-and *Wunderkammer* of the age. She examines the artist's own activities as a collector, stressing his contacts with merchants, diplomats, courtiers, humanists and other collectors. Such an approach emphasizes the status of DÃ¼rer's works as potential commodities, as part of a larger economy of novel artifacts and images, the products of the age of exploration, for which there was a ready market. While DÃ¼rer is recorded exchanging his own works for exotic collectibles, it is strange, in this respect, that he seems to have had little interest in recording the exotica he himself collected. Eichberger's perspective also explicitly casts doubts upon the earlier symbolic, neo-Platonic readings of DÃ¼rer's animal studies.

Larry Silver investigates the influence of Germanic patriotism upon the arts in the years around and after 1500. He provides an acute summary of the development of patriotic sentiment in humanist circles and the high hopes for a flowering of Germanic culture and learning under the imperial sponsorship of Maximilian I. He traces the development of humanist thought, from the passionate hopes for a new cultural and political ascendancy of figures such as Heinrich Bebel and Conrad Celtis, to the growing pessimism and disillusionment of Sebastian

Brant and Ulrich von Hutten as the Reformation and political forces within and without the empire confounded the ideal of a universal, German-led *imperium*. Silver investigates the influence of these ideas upon various kinds of contemporary visual art. He provides an interesting analysis of DÃ¼rer's and Hans Burgkmair the Younger's dense visual summaries of the humanist-imperial ideal in allegorical woodcuts that accompanied the printed work of Celtis and others; and he traces the same patriotic impulse behind images of *Landsknechte*, as well as in the development of a distinct brand of German landscape, a theme Silver has authoritatively explored elsewhere.

In chapter 4, Wim HÃ¼sken analyzes the attribution to DÃ¼rer and/or his circle and the iconography of the woodcut known as the Michelfeldt Tapestry (c.1524). HÃ¼sken summarizes previous interpretations by Fraenger, Schulze, Scribner and others, who have seen the print variously as the expression of moral stricture, of social criticism or class struggle. He then offers his own interpretation, comparing its theme, the lack of religious piety in the world ruled by Deceit and its dourly didactic tone and style of address with the writings of Sebastian Brant, Hans Sachs and Erasmus of Rotterdam. HÃ¼sken convincingly identifies the figure of Deceit as exactly that, no more or less than what the inscription proclaims him. Where other commentators have identified him as a judge and thus the focus of explicit contemporary social criticism, HÃ¼sken claims he is no more than the embodiment of an allegorical abstraction.

In the second section, "Image and Audience," an article by the late Bob Scribner (to whom the book is dedicated) links the compositional structures and strategies of high religious art by such figures as DÃ¼rer and GrÃ¼newald with the ritual image culture of late medieval popular culture. Scribner begins by exploring the affective nature of religious perception, which (according to the three-fold theory of seeing inherited from St. Augustine) permitted the viewer to progress by means of pious contemplation of a holy image from bodily perception to a mystical, inner sight, allowing a form of intimate communion with the holy personage depicted. Through a series of characteristically vivid examples (the physical beating of a crucifix, blamed for crop failure, rains of blood), Scribner shows the powerful psychological hold that images could exert upon the peasant class. Images could contain an "indwelling personality"; others, such as the popular devotional prints of the *Ecce Homo*, could exert a level of psychological involvement that allowed the viewer to enter into an affective relationship with the divine. Scribner discusses the various compositional strategies artists discovered to enable this "sacramental"/ affective gaze, including linear perspective, frames within frames, anamorphosis and the direct gaze engaging that of the viewer. Most interestingly, he shows that the development of Albertian naturalism, normally associated with these techniques, did not necessarily lead to the "rationalization of sight," as has been generally argued by art historians, but rather were developed in the service of fundamentally medieval habits of seeing. Yet paradoxically, as Scribner argues, for the reformers, the very sensuousness and seductive nature of naturalism and its strategies, its ability to arouse and beguile the senses, ultimately aroused mistrust and undermined belief in the affective power of images and their ability to transmit spiritual truths.

Charles Zika's study of DÃ¼rer's engraving of an old woman riding backwards on a goat places it within a visual tradition of women riding (on beasts, in the sky, on different implements; Waldensian women flying on broomsticks; Phyllis riding Aristotle, the Whore of Babylon and so on). This inversionary tradition associated powerful or unruly and particularly sexually transgressive women with a subversion of the natural order. Considering DÃ¼rer's image thus, Zika is able to suggest a number of cultural associations that contemporaries of different educational and socio-cultural background might have read into it. On one level, the medieval tradition of the "backward ride" would conjure up connotations of lust, sexual reversal and sexual disorder; while to one possessing some classical education, an old woman riding a goat might evoke a series of further associations: with Capricorn, with the planet Saturn, with the associated myth of sexual violence and castration and thence to one of the most common fears of the powers associated with the contemporary "witch." Zika's sophisticated reading therefore avoids a single, absolute or closed "meaning," but rather shows how–in an age when visual representations of the witch were still relatively fluid– DÃ¼rer's engraving succeeded in bringing together a number of associations into a single powerful image that was itself influential in stabilizing the visual representation of the witch.

Lyndal Roper's essay on love tokens, the rituals of courtship and the meanings of "love" in sixteenth-century Germany is used as a means to explore a broader historical problem that is a characteristic of her writing in general: how to write a kind of social history of early modern Germany that can discover an authentic "reality" of individual subjective experience lived between the lines of prescribed or established custom. In this essay,

she uses the theme of love rituals as a stalking horse to explore the nature of sexual identity–how it is acquired through, and the extent it is determined by, socialization into a particular, historically specific cultural world. Her account of the courtship rituals of serenades and their obverse, the insult songs, amongst the artisan classes of Augsburg and Ulm, vividly reveals how the business of "love" could be a public, group activity, where bands of males would accompany the hopeful lover in serenading a prospective bride. The wider social implications of such collective wooing is brought out in those cases of rejection of the lover's suit, which was at times perceived as a slight not merely to the individual suitor but to the group as a whole (if a weaver, then the weaver's profession was insulted, and so on). This collective dimension of courtship is comprehensible in a society where marriage accorded the male entry into the guild and mastership, and the opportunity to exercise public office within the town.

Roper portrays courtship in terms of an impersonal, boisterous and potentially aggressive group ritual, which could often leave the woman in a vulnerable and compromised state at the hands of bands of males bound by ties of profession and more general notions of male honor. What interests Roper are the ambivalences and inner tensions, the anxieties and rivalries that could coexist within the group framework. She explores too a "bodily symbolism" that she discerns within the rituals. The window, for instance, at which the woman stood and which served as the means of illicit access, Roper regards as, at some unconscious level, a metaphor of the hymen, broken either by the lover's access through it, or defiled by the apparently customary stone throwing, when the male lover was rejected. This use of Freudian symbolism adds a gloss of understanding that is literary rather than historical, unsubstantiated as it is by contemporary sources or awareness of such meanings. Most interesting is Roper's account of the attraction to women of love tokens and their accompanying love magic as one of few weapons open to women in this battle of the sexes. "Love" is portrayed as a force somehow external to the individual and something potentially malefic and harmful. Roper's fascinating insights into this foreign, early modern world of custom and emotion portray the business of love and courtship as a peculiarly grim and joyless affair. As she writes, "[f]or each sex, the prospect of pairing with the other was fearsome" (p. 162). One wonders whether her reliance upon the records of council hearings investigating grievances has not slanted her conclusions too heavily in this depressing direction. In a comprehensive history of love and marriage in early modern Germany, it would be interesting to see how central a part the serenade ritual would play. In this respect, it would be useful to know, even in the context of a specialized study, how universal the serenade was for wooing couples and at what point in the process of courting it took place: did the serenade initiate courtship by signaling interest, or was it carried out well into the wooing process, condoned by a couple's prior acknowledgement of mutual interest and thus a means of displaying collective approval of the match? Was the insult song for the most part the last spiteful fling of injured pride at an unsuccessful suit? These questions of timing are crucial to measure the spirit in which the serenade was performed and to gauge the overall significance of the ritual. What comparative number of unions, one wonders, were arranged and negotiated privately between individuals and their families, without the need for the public displays of latent aggression?

In the last essay of this section, Christiane Andersson deals with the censorship of printed images in Nuremberg during the early years of the Reformation. She deftly shows how the ruling authorities attempted to control the flow of ideas and to place constraints on notions of free speech, stimulated by the new freedoms offered by the printing press. Andersson also shows how official bans by reform-minded councils upon pro-Reformation materials were stimulated more by the authorities' need to appease the Catholic Emperor than by a particular anxiety over the materials themselves, a fact born out by the leniency with which offenders were usually treated. Andersson uses the publishing fate of the Lutheran preacher, Andreas Osiander's *A Wondrous Prophecy* (1527) to show the ineffectiveness of city censorship to control the spread of polemical and satirical literature. The work, which adapted the twelfth-century prophetical writings of Joachim da Fiore to form a commentary on the current state of the papacy and Luther's role as agent of reform, was banned in Nuremberg, but quickly found numerous outlets in towns outside the city's jurisdiction.

The book's concluding section, "DÃ¼rer and the Canon" contains two interesting essays. One by Paul MÃ¼nch covers the dramatic changes in perceptions of DÃ¼rer over the centuries, and includes some of the more bizarre ways the artist has been used and abused by succeeding political and cultural movements and their chief ideologues, from the Romantics to the National Socialists. The other essay by Irene Zdanowicz (curator of the exhibition that gave occasion to the symposium from

which this collection of essays grew) examines the formation of the formidable print collection now housed in the National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, which contains a comprehensive set of DÃ¼rer prints, notable for the exceptional quality of their impressions.

The authors of this volume use "cultural context" in relation to works of art in two distinct ways, which one might characterize as inductive and discursive. That is to say, essays such as those by Silver and Zika proceed from the physical image and use elements from the ambient culture to explain (very fruitfully) iconographical or structural elements within them. Others (such as Eichberger, Scribner or Roper) use "context" in less direct ways by invoking the relevance of a particular set of cultural attitudes or circumstances through which one may profitably understand certain images. Of this more general, but no less valuable approach, Scribner's essay succeeds well because it is directly concerned with the act of viewing and its relevance to several categories of image is immediate and unambiguous. Eichberger's essay establishes a resonance between DÃ¼rer's nature studies and the culture of collecting that is more generally suggestive rather than specifically illuminating of any one image. Roper's essay is a satisfying piece of historical writing in its own right, but candidly leaves to others the job of connecting her material to DÃ¼rer's art. Together, these essays underscore Roper's insistence that art historians and historians can and should learn from each other (p. 162). They also show how fluid the concepts of "cultural context" can be, and the skill and subtlety required in employing them in order to illuminate works of art with satisfaction. Overall this is a varied, sophisticated and consistently engaging volume, which adds much to our understanding of DÃ¼rer the artist, the man and cultural icon.

Notes

[1]. Alistair Smith, " 'Germania et Italia': Albrecht DÃ¼rer and Venetian Art," *Royal Society of Arts Journal* 28 (1979): pp. 273-290.

[2]. Theodor Hetzer, *Das Deutsche Element in der Italienischen Malerei des sechzehnten Jahrhunderts (Berlin: Deutscher Kunstverlag, 1929); Hetzer,* Tizian. Geschichte seiner Farbe *(Frankfurt am Main: Klostermann, 1935); Paul Hills,* Venetian Color: Marble, Mosaic, Painting and Glass 1250-1550_ (New Haven, Yale University Press, 1999), pp. 201-206.

Citation: Andrew Morrall. Review of Eichberger, Dagmar; Zika, Charles, eds., *DÖÂ¼rer and His Culture* and Luber, Katherine Crawford, *Albrecht DÖÂ¼rer and the Venetian Renaissance* and Pon, Lisa, *Raphael, DÖÂ¼rer and Marcantonio Raimondi: Copying and the Italian Renaissance Print.* H-German, H-Net Reviews. July, 2006.

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