

delten Themen mögen der Wahrnehmung der künstlerischen Erfindungs- und Gestaltungsleistung von Werken wie „Herz und Flamme der Revolution – Karl Liebknecht“ (Potsdam, Abb. S. 92)⁵ oder „Victor Jara“, einstmals Sänger der chilenischen Revolution, nicht günstig sein; zusammen mit den Varianten von „Torso eines Gemarterten“, „Pietà perversa“ und „Vogelbaum“, mit „Napalm“, „Landschaftsfigur“ und anderen bleiben sie nicht zu vergessende innovative Elemente der Geschichte der Plastik in der zweiten Hälfte des 20. Jahrhunderts.

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5 PETER H. FEIST: Die weiterwehende Revolution – Das Liebknecht-Denkmal in Potsdam, in: *Kunst und Sozialgeschichte (Festschrift für Jutta Held)*, hrsg. von Martin Papenbrock u. a.; Pfaffenweiler 1995, S. 72–80.

Christoph Schaden: Die Antwerpener Schnitzaltäre im ehemaligen Dekanat Zülpich (*Mediaevalis. Beiträge zur Kunst des Mittelalters*, 1); Köln: SH-Verlag 2000; ISBN 3-89498-085-0; 370 pp. 200 plates (12 in colour), summary in English; € 49,80

From circa 1490 to circa 1540 the city of Antwerp was noted for its highly coloured and gilt retables. These generally consisted of a large wooden case framed with ornate architectural decoration and filled with large and small wooden statuary, and side wings, with which the central part could be closed. These wings were decorated with painted panels on both sides, so that, when closed, the retable retained its highly ornamented appearance. The size of the retables varied, but even a small one is known to have been very expensive. Antwerp retables were marked at the back by a small hand or a tower and can thus easily be distinguished from retables produced in other centres in Brabant.

As Antwerp was conveniently situated along an extensive network of trade-routes, the luxury retables produced in Antwerp found their way to Denmark, Sweden and even Finland in the north, to England in the west, to Germany and Poland in the east, and to France, Portugal and Spain in the south. Today the greatest concentration of these Antwerp retables is to be found in Germany where, according to Schaden, as many as 68 specimens are still extant. The great number of Antwerp retables has given rise to a great many questions as to their manufacture. It has been suggested that they were the result of serial production. Although this idea is no longer accepted today, it does seem probable that patrons could choose between prefabricated retables, models that could be adapted to suit their needs, or that they could order a retable to suit their wishes entirely.

Although much has been written on the Antwerp retables, there are still many questions that remain to be answered. For one, although much appreciated in the 15th and 16th centuries, their popularity waned in the centuries that followed. Many were

destroyed or were taken apart. The remaining retables are therefore often incomplete. In the lucky instances where the 'superfluous' parts were sold off rather than thrown away, these pieces have often been dispersed all over the world. Some have been traced to well-known collections and museums, others are in the hands of private collectors and their present whereabouts are unknown. The retables that remained in place have also suffered, as often they had to undergo severe restorations which have not always worked out for the better. In addition to questions concerning the original appearance of the retables, there are those concerning their function. For which altar within the church, or for which church, was a retable originally made? Who was the patron?

Often such questions can only be answered by in-depth analysis of all available documentary material and by a very detailed study of the retable itself.

It is precisely this type of meticulous approach that Christoph Schaden has undertaken in studying the six remaining retables in the present-day district of Zülpich (Western Germany, to the southwest of Cologne and the southeast of Aachen). The six Antwerp retables in the Zülpich area are to be found in four places: there is one in Bürvenich, two in Euskirchen, one in Heimbach (originally from the Cistercian monastery of Mariawald) and two in Zülpich.

Schaden clearly shows that the patrons of these retables were the urban nobility and the landed gentry. The Bürvenich retable was probably commissioned after a fire that destroyed much of the church of St Stephan in 1448, necessitating a rebuilding that was to last until 1600. Considering the style of the retable, Schaden considers Abbess Sophia of Diepenbroich (ca. 1522–1535) as the most likely patron of the retable. The two Euskirchen retables come from the church of St Martin, where they still are today. The larger of the two is dedicated to St Anne and was placed in the arcade between the chapel of St Anne near the entrance of the church and the south aisle of the church. It is therefore decorated at the front and the back. Although the city magistrates and echevins are connected to the foundation of the retable, the true patron was probably Rynart Lonntz. The second retable was dedicated to St Peter and was a side altar. It was founded in 1486 by members of the Bach and Schiderich families. Both families had mayors in their midst, in Cologne and Euskirchen, which clearly shows that they belonged to the urban nobility. The Heimbach retable originally adorned the altar of St Mary in the Cistercian monastery of Mariawald that stood in front of the choir screen and was probably founded by members of the Berg/Blens family, who were not only very generous towards this particular altar but who, in 1520, also buried Gerard of Berg in front of it. As for the two retables in Zülpich: Schaden has managed to prove that both came from the Benedictine priory of St Peter, where they still remain today, albeit that their wooden cases were burnt in 1944 when the church was bombed. The larger of the two retables stood on the former altar of the Holy Cross and St Matthew, the parish altar of the priory that occupied a central position in front of the choir. It was probably donated by the Zülpich butcher guild and the Zülpich brotherhood of St Matthew. The smaller retable is likely to have come from the altar of SS. James and Thomas.

Schaden's book is divided into two sections. The first deals with the documentary evidence and discusses the locations of the retables within the church, the restorations and the altar dedications. Schaden takes the reader through the various restorations and rebuildings of retables and churches, and it must be admitted, this makes fascinating reading. The purpose of these investigations is to find out for which altar within the church the retable was originally intended and what was its original form. The answer to questions such as these is important as the location of the retable indicates for what sort of viewer the retable was originally intended. It is often said that works like the Antwerp retables were picture bibles for the common believers (Herman J. de Smedt: *De Antwerpse retables en hun iconografie: een overzicht van onderwerpen en veranderingen*, in: Hans Nieuwdorp (ed.), *Antwerpse retables 15de-16de eeuw. Exh. cat., II. Essays*; Antwerpen 1993; p. 23–46), but this idea obviously does not hold true as many retables were clearly not directed at the ordinary viewer, as Schaden has convincingly argued for the Bürvenich retable. The church of St Stephan in Bürvenich, was originally the church of a Cistercian nunnery as well as a parish church. The parishioners had a place reserved for them on the ground floor; the nuns were seated above on a gallery. To segregate the two functions further, the church was split in two by a solid wall reaching up to the height of the nun's gallery. East of the wall, in the choir, was the altar that was adorned by the retable. In other words, the parishioners were not the intended viewers of the retable.

The second part of the book deals with the iconography of the retables. Each of the constituent parts of all six retables is discussed in detail, following which Schaden attempts to reconstruct each retable, to attribute it to a given Antwerp atelier and to date it. Although description is necessary, it does make rather cumbersome reading.

The larger of the two retables in Zülpich shows up many parallels with Dürer prints made between 1503 and 1510, and this provides a very clear *terminus post quem* for the dating of the retable. The same holds true for the Bürvenich retable panels that show up very close parallels with Dürer prints made in the period between 1509 and 1512. Interesting is the panel from Bürvenich showing Christ being taken prisoner. It has an almost identical counterpart in Linnich. In spite of this, Schaden refutes that the Bürvenich panel could be a copy of the Linnich panel, although he thinks it probable that both panels come from the same workshop. For one, he says, the two panels are not by the same hand. And secondly, one of the heads of the Christ's attackers is a clear derivation of a Dürer print showing Christ's capture. In Schaden's view, the panels share a common model. I wonder ...

A curious scene in the Bürvenich altar is the panel showing Abraham and Melchisedek. In between the two main protagonists of the scene stands a smiling figure wearing an ermine mantle and a strange pointed hat. While his gaze is directed at Melchisedek his hand is shown pointing at Abraham. This figure is most unusual and requires an explanation. I am not entirely happy with the idea proposed by Schaden, and by Ehmke (R. Ehmke: *Die Flügelgemälde des Bürvenicher Passionsaltars*, in: *Jahrbuch der Rheinischen Denkmalpflege* 23, 1960, pp. 309–322) before him, that this figure has been added to solve the problem of an otherwise uneven composition. Other

interesting iconographic problems are passed over in the same cursory manner. For instance, the inclusion of St Clare, who is shown standing next to St Bernard of Clairvaux on the retable made for the Cistercian monastery of Marienwald, is just considered to be curious and inexplicable.

However, these are minor points. Schaden does show that the 15th-century statue of the Pieta was placed in the shrine from the beginning, which has sometimes been doubted, and his careful analysis of the iconography also bears out that in this case a standard case design was adapted for the purpose. Behind the Pieta-statue there is a foliate ornament that is standard in Antwerp retables for the beginning of the Tree of Jesse. Here then is an instance of a patron choosing an existing model of an Antwerp retable, and having it adapted to suit local needs.

All in all, Christoph Schaden's book is well-researched and shows that important data concerning the retables are still to be retrieved. Research like this enables scholars to place the dating, reconstruction and attribution of Antwerp retables on a more secure footing than has been done in the past.

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Der Hirsvogelsaal in Nürnberg. Geschichte und Wiederherstellung (*Arbeitshefte des Bayerischen Landesamtes für Denkmalpflege*, Band 113); München: Lipp 2004; 239 S., zahlr. Abb.; ISBN 3-87490-732-5; € 44,-

Bis zu seiner Zerstörung im Zweiten Weltkrieg erfreute sich der Nürnberger Hirsvogelsaal größter Popularität und Wertschätzung als „eines der frühesten und hervorragendsten Werke der Renaissance auf deutschem Boden“¹. Nachdem die baulichen Überreste in den fünfziger Jahren abgetragen und Teile der rechtzeitig ausgelagerten Ausstattung in verkleinerter Form im Stadtmuseum Fembohaus rekonstruiert worden waren, verschwand der Saal zunehmend aus dem Bewußtsein der Fachwelt.

Erst mit der geplanten Wiedererrichtung in einem maßstabsgetreuen Neubau kehrte das Interesse zurück. Anlässlich der Einweihung im Sommer 2000 fand eine Fachtagung statt, deren Vorträge nun als reich illustrierter Sammelband vorliegen.

Der Nürnberger Patrizier Lienhard III. Hirsvogel ließ im Jahre 1534 an sein spätgotisches Wohnhaus einen zweigeschossigen Anbau anfügen, in dessen Obergeschoß sich der später nach ihm benannte Hirsvogelsaal befand. Schon der Außenbau wich mit seiner italienischen Formensprache deutlich von der spätgotischen Architektur der Entstehungszeit in Nürnberg ab. Mangels schriftlicher Quellen bleibt der Architekt des Baues bis heute unbekannt. Dagegen ist die Zuschreibung der erhaltenen

1 KONRAD LANGE: Peter Flötner als Bildschnitzer, in: *Jahrbuch der Königlich Preussischen Kunstsammlungen* 17, 1896, S. 162–180, 221–235, hier S. 163.