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Sir Oliver Millar, *Van Dyck in England*. London, National Portrait Gallery, 1982. 120 pp., 49 figs., 87 plates, £3.95

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across the canvas, seen from the side and turning her head towards the spectator, is seen in such van Dycks as the Althorp *Countess of Morton*, the Frick *Countess of Clanbrassil*, and the Knole *Countess of Dorset*. This design appears in Wright's *Mrs. George Vernon*. Also, his *Three Unidentified Women* (cat. 24) is surely influenced by the design of van Dyck's *Charles I in Three Positions*, now in the Royal Collection, but in Wright's time in Rome, and apparently copied by him.

Yet one has reservations about the attribution of the *Three Unidentified Women*, magnificent picture though it is. It, and cat. 23, although clearly 'Wrightian,' seem dour in mood, dark in tone and stiff in posture, compared to authentic late Wrights. Could they be by the painter's nephew, Michael Wright the Younger? (It would have been instructive to have had at least one of the latter's works in the exhibition, and also one by Edmund Ashfield, the elder Wright's only other known pupil. Ashfield was at least given an illustration, figure 12.)

One of the most enchanting Wright portraits is the Weston Park *Countess of Dysart*, with her beautiful pale pink and white dress, and her handsome almost Pre-Raphaelite good looks. Although much fine iconographical analysis is given for other pictures in the catalogue, there is none for this one. The stress on pearls in her dress, in her ears and round her neck strongly suggests the idea of 'The Pearls of Virtue' (see E. de Jongh, *Simiolus*, VIII [1975-76], 69 ff.), while the olive branch she holds is perhaps for Wisdom. In the background, a statue of Occasio-Fortuna, recognizable from her sail and long forelock, stands on one foot on a sphere. But beneath the sphere is a plinth suggesting that Occasio-Fortuna has been 'stabilized.'

Altogether, the symbolism in Wright's *Countess of Dysart* points to the Renaissance notion derived from antiquity that a reconciliation of Fortune – and its caprice – with Virtue is possible, as long as the former follows in the tracks of the latter. For example, Erasmus included this notion, as a quotation from Cicero's letters, in his *Adagia*: 'Duce virtue comite Fortuna' (With Virtue as my guide, Fortune is my companion) (cf. R. Wittkower, *Allegory and the Migration of Symbols*, p. 101). When spelt out like this, the ideal seems dry. But Wright had the grace and style to turn these abstract conceptions into flesh-and-blood figures on his canvases.

The Wright exhibition catalogue remains as a permanent record of an important event for British Studies. As a result, Wright is now known and appreciated more widely. (As far as I know, the only exemple of Wright's work in Canada is a very fine three-quarter length *Lady Aston* [Fig. 1], which I had been able to find before the exhibition and acquire for the Agnes Etherington Art Centre, Queen's University.) One hopes the cataloguers will go on to do a full *catalogue raisonné* of John Michael Wright. They have clearly demonstrated how richly he deserves it.

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SIR OLIVER MILLAR *Van Dyck in England*. London, National Portrait Gallery, 1982. 120 pp., 49 figs., 87 plates, £3.95.

Sir Oliver Millar, Surveyor of The Queen's Pictures, is the doyen of English authorities on van Dyck. For over thirty years, beginning at least with the catalogue entries for the monumental exhibition *Flemish Art, 1300-1700*, held at the Royal Academy, 1953-54, a stream of publications on van Dyck has poured from his pen. The volume under review, a catalogue of an exhibition of over sixty paintings and twenty drawings held at the National Portrait Gallery in London, is the latest work on the Flemish Baroque painter who continues to fascinate this art historian.

Here, as the title would suggest, Sir Oliver's concern is mostly with van Dyck's English period, i.e. from his arrival in London in 1632, until his death there, on the eve of the Civil Wars, in December 1641. What one might call van Dyck's First English Period (November 1620-March 1621) is included in the exhibition, as are a number of portraits of Englishmen and their wives which were painted by van Dyck abroad, in Italy or Flanders. Most of the works in the catalogue are portraits. (Even Sir Oliver's eagle eye has so far failed to spot any of the religious pictures which, according to Bellori, van Dyck painted for Charles I and other English patrons.)

To offset this, there are a number of landscape drawings, and also the splendid *Continence of Scipio* (Christ Church, Oxford) painted 1620-21, and once in the collection of the Duke of Buckingham. There is a long introduction which places van Dyck's English work within the context of his entire career, in words and illustrations. All the catalogue entries are illustrated (twelve in colour) and there are 49 additional figures of comparative works by van Dyck and others.

There is plenty of new material and fresh insights in this volume. For example, it comes as a surprise, even to a specialist, that *Henry Danvers, Earl of Danby* (cat. 20) (Leningrad, The Hermitage) is van Dyck's only known full-length of a Garter knight in robes. (One is so used to thinking of the many Garter full-lengths by Lely, Kneller and their successors.) But as Sir Oliver notes, there were very few precedents for van Dyck. They include Cornelius Johnson's *Earl of Mulgrave* (cat., fig. 40) of ca. 1620. Johnson's portrait is certainly more advanced in its feeling for volume and space than earlier Garter full-lengths such as the *4th Earl of Pembroke* (Audley End) and the *1st Duke of Buckingham* (National Portrait Gallery), both attributed to William Larkin. Yet the latter anticipate to a surprising degree the sprightliness of van Dyck's *Danby*, a quality noticeably lacking in Johnson's design.

Of the *Danby* Sir Oliver writes: 'With its rich atmosphere and dramatic tensions, and in the complete harmony between head and figure, it is one of van Dyck's greatest English portraits; the superbly posed figure is full of movement, principally in the pull of the left arm and hand against the direction of the gesture of the right hand, the extended right arm and the thrust of the right leg. The soft and shimmering quality in such passages as the whites and soft golds in the costume and the sword makes an interesting contrast with the hardness of such passages in, for instance, many of the portraits from Lord Wharton's gallery; and they are set off by the soft scarlet and blue of the Garter robes.'

The above passage is just one of many examples which could be cited of the pertinent analysis which Sir Oliver gives of the formal qualities of van Dyck's portraiture. Indeed one hesitates to use a harsh word like 'analysis' for Sir Oliver's prose: it seems too natural and graceful. Yet it does lead one to look with new eyes, not only at the portrait concerned, but at every other picture. Another example is found on page 52, in the long paragraph concerning *Charles I on Horseback with M. de St. Antoine* (cat. 11). If only more art historians would write this way.

It has become fashionable in some circles to decry visual analysis of this kind as 'mere connoisseurship,' and to offer in its place some form of typological or iconographical analysis, or the study of patronage. This does a profound disservice to each of these aspects of art history. It is especially dangerous in the North American context where travel is often difficult and expensive, and there is, consequently, a greater initial tendency to rely on books and photographs. Yet if we ever lose visual analysis as the basis of art history we shall be finished. We shall become like those mediaeval lecturers on anatomy who, instead of dissecting the cadaver and making their own observations, simply took their ideas from some ancient text like Galen.

Another revelation in Sir Oliver's volume is *Mrs. Endymion Porter* (cat. 36). It is a little-known work which appeared at the 1968 Agnew's exhibition as an unknown woman, and in *Larsen* (1980) as a rejected work, perhaps by Dobson. Yet it is clearly a very important van Dyck original. 'The composition,' as Sir Oliver says, 'is one of the most dramatic among van Dyck's female portraits, with a bold swinging movement which, with the informal, presumably Arcadian, attire, would have greatly impressed Lely.' The sitter had long been thought to be a member of the Devereux family. But Sir Oliver has been able to identify her correctly, on the basis of the Northumberland inventory, a comment by a near coeval, and also by a copy with a contemporary inscription which passed through Sotheby's in 1968.

Further comments on individual entries are best made in the form of notes:

Cat. 6, *Nicholas Lanier* (Vienna, Kunsthistorisches Museum). Sir Oliver now dates this to 1628, instead of ca. 1630-32, as he did in *The Age of Charles I*. I wonder if it might be still earlier, since it seems very Italian in its nervous manner. The 'curiously nondescript passage in the lower left corner of the composition' appears to me to be a truncated column, symbolizing Fortezza, a meaning which is reinforced by the left hand on the sword hilt. Van Dyck also used the truncated column in his Leningrad *Self-Portrait*.

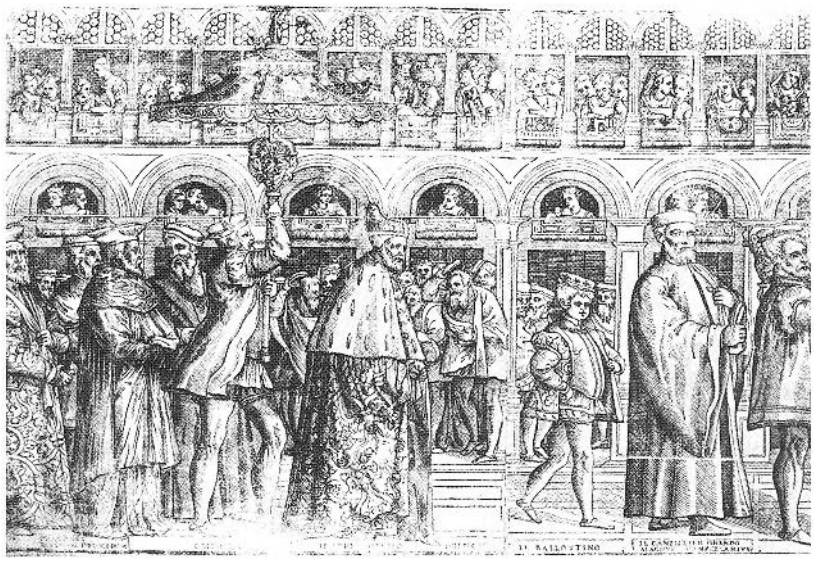

FIGURE 2. *The Procession of the Doge in Venice* (detail), woodcut published by Matheo Pagano, ca. 1555-60.

Cat. 7, *Charles I and Queen Henrietta Maria with their two eldest children* (Royal Collection). It was presumably this picture that the Rev. Thomas Sprat was referring to, in his Charles the Martyr-Day Sermon to the House of Commons in 1678, when he said of the late king: '... should we take His Picture, as He Himself delighted to be drawn, with his Crown and Scepter laid aside, and his Wife and Children, or Servants by Him.'

Cat. 16, *William Fielding, 1st Earl of Denbigh* (once in the Hamilton Collection; now London, National Gallery). The sitter was from Leicestershire. John Nichols, in his *History and Antiquities of the County of Leicester*, vol. IV, pt. 1 (1810), 290-91, cites Boswell as referring to this picture as 'the finest portrait in this kingdom' (i.e. Scotland). I have not been able to verify the Boswell reference. Nichols also cites the Rev. William Gilpin, who visited Hamilton House in 1776, as saying that the *Denbigh* was 'a masterpiece ... he looks up with a countenance so full of nature and character, that you are amazed the power of colours can express life so strongly.' This enthusiastic comment does indeed appear in Gilpin's famous *Observations ... in the year 1776* (1789), vol. 2, 58; he also notes at Hamilton House: 'In a closet hangs a small female profile by van Dyck, which is equal to any picture I have seen, by that pleasing master.' Almost certainly the profile extolled by Gilpin is *Queen Henrietta Maria* (cat. 54), now at Memphis, part of the abortive scheme to procure a bust of the Queen from Bernini.

Cat. 23, *Thomas Wentworth, 1st Earl of Strafford* (Petworth). In the background is a man standing behind a riderless horse, which is pawing the ground. This seems to foreshadow part of the design of the Louvre *Le Roi à la chasse* (cat., fig. 28).

Cat. 31, *Anne Crofts, Countess of Cleveland* (Private Collection) is a superb work, only recently discovered by Sir Oliver.

Cat. 35, *Anne Killigrew, Mrs. Kirke*. Since the exhibition this splendid full-length work has been acquired, from Parham, by the Huntington Art Gallery.

Cat. 43, *Charles I and the Knights of the Garter in Procession* (Belvoir Castle). Sir Oliver writes: 'The only important precedent for the design was the etching by Marcus Gheeraerts the elder (1576) of the procession of the Knights of the Garter.' I wonder

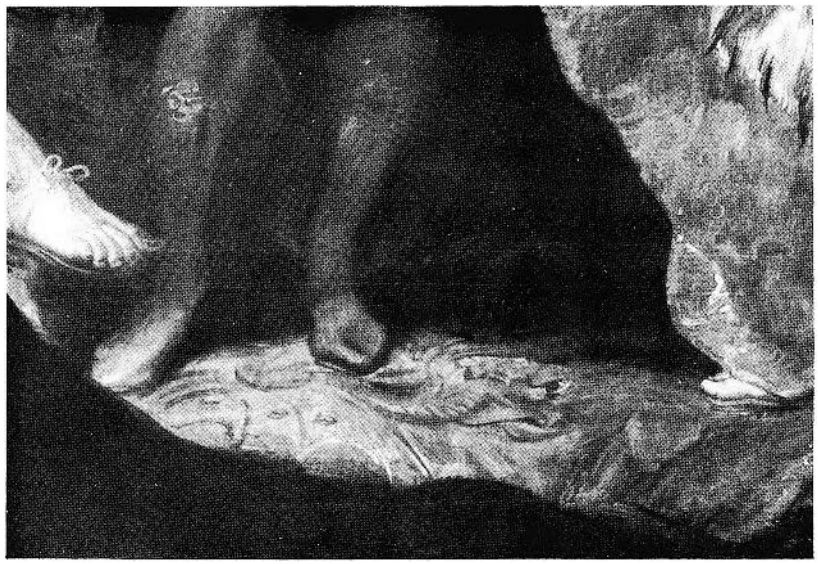

FIGURE 3. Van Dyck, *The Continence of Scipio* (detail). Oxford, Christ Church Museum.

if van Dyck may not also have had another design in mind, viz. *The Procession of the Doge in Venice*, published in eight woodcut blocks after an anonymous designer by Matheo Pagano, Venice, ca. 1555-60 (cf. D. Rosand and M. Muraro, *Titian and the Venetian Woodcut*, 1976-77). The Venetian woodcut (Fig. 2), unlike the Gheeraerts etching, includes female spectators in loggie above the arches, as one sees also in the van Dyck.

There are some statements in the Introduction with which the present writer must express disagreement. On page 17 Sir Oliver says of van Dyck: 'He did not share Rubens's intellectual interests or understanding of architecture and sculpture. As De Piles said, "his mind was not of so large an extent as that of Rubens's." He had nothing of Rubens's enthusiasm for archaeology or classical history and classical literature; there is nothing in van Dyck's *œuvre*, for example, to compare with Rubens's title-pages.' Later, on page 28, Sir Oliver adds to this image of van Dyck as an 'unintellectual' artist: 'He was never seemingly interested in complicated iconographical statements.'

To refute such charges properly would require much more space than is offered in a review. But a few points may be made (many more are suggested in my paper 'Hidden Persuaders: Religious Symbolism in van Dyck's Portraiture,' given at the 'Young van Dyck Symposium' at Ottawa in 1980 and published in *Essays on van Dyck*, RACAR, X, 1, 1983). *Venetia Stanley, Lady Digby as Prudence* (cat. 9) (Private Collection) is surely a 'complicated iconographical statement.' Indeed it is even more complex than the present catalogue entry would suggest, as is demonstrated in an article not cited, E. de Jongh's 'Pearls of Virtue and Pearls of Vice,' *Simiolus*, VIII, 2 (1975-76), 94-97. It should be emphasized that *Venetia Stanley...* was made for one of the artist's closest friends, and hence *con amore*. Furthermore, it is very like a Rubens title-page design such as that for Jacob de Bie's *Numismata Imperatorum Romanorum...* (Plantin, 1617). Another important article which seems not to be cited in Sir Oliver's volume is R. Lee, 'Van Dyck, Tasso, and the Antique,' *Acts of the 20th International Congress of the History of Art* (1963), III, 12-26. The absence of this article is odd on two counts: Lee says useful things about van Dyck and the antique; also, he categorically rejects the identification of catalogue entry n° 42, the very beautiful picture from Blenheim which shows an unknown girl in armour attended by Cupid, as being Tasso's Erminia, or as having anything to do with the *Gerusalemme Liberata*. Instead he proposes that the picture represents Venus, in the armour of Mars, with Cupid. A final point concerns the Christ Church *Continence of Scipio* (cat. 3). Something has already been written about its iconography, by Pamela Gordon in her 'Young van Dyck Symposium' article on the picture (RACAR, X, 1, 53-55) and by the present writer in his review of the 'Young van Dyck' exhibition, *Burlington Magazine*, CXXIII (1981), 120-23. But to my knowledge, no one has yet commented on the elephant which appears on the carpet (Fig. 3). Most of the actors in the picture gesture towards the elephant, but he has, doubtless, remained unnoticed because of his steep foreshortening. I hope to deal more extensively with the elephant, and the rest of the symbolism in the Christ Church picture at a later date. It is clear that his purpose here is as a symbol of Temperanza (see Ripa), the virtue which Scipio's action exemplified. The elephant certainly adds greatly to an already 'complicated iconographical statement'; and he is also the best 'hidden' of the 'persuaders' in van Dyck's oeuvre.

Yet it would be wrong and unjust to end a review of this volume on a negative note. It is altogether a very attractive and substantial addition to the growing literature on van Dyck and on painting in seventeenth-century England. The Introduction is written with the same grace and fluency as the catalogue entries. Sir Oliver's knowledge of his subject is vast. Only a fraction of it appears in this volume. One wishes he were able to put everything else aside and give us a 'full-length' study of van Dyck – like the *Earl of Danby* as it were, in the full panoply of the robes of the Garter!

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FRANCIS AMES-LEWIS *Drawing in Early Renaissance Italy*. New Haven and London, Yale University Press, 1981. XII + 196 pp., 190 illus. (8 in colour), $50.00.

Since Bernard Berenson's pioneering systematic study of the drawings of Florentine painters, interest in Renaissance drawings has grown steadily. Major studies have appeared on drawings from specific regions, notably the fundamental