THE INTERRELATION OF WATTEAU, RUBENS, AND TITIAN

by

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PREFACE

The object of this thesis is to clarify the generally acknowledged but still obscurely understood relationship between the art of Watteau and that of Rubens. Watteau has been called the first master of the French school, Flemish by birth though he was. It may be said that in some respects Rubens represents the culmination of Flemish art.

The development of Flemish primitive painting, as a national style, had been completed during the first quarter of the sixteenth century. For seventy-five years before Rubens went to Italy Flemish masters had gone there to learn and for the most part to come home floundering in an excessive Romanism. Their native tradition was one based essentially on realism—a direct and constant contact with the nature of things. They had been unable to assimilate into this the best elements of Italian art. The crying need was for a man who could succeed in combining with his native Flemish zest for life and natural observation, the Italian qualities of dramatic painting, grandiose decoration, and vision general enough to force the part into subservience to the whole. Rubens proved to be this man. He combined the best elements of the old with the fresh young blood of the new and as the result, Flemish art, as seen in Rubens, is the art which carries the weight of European tradition in the seventeenth century. The Flemish art of Rubens is not strictly national in its character. Thus the figure of Rubens the European tradition is crystallized, summed
up for his age, so to speak. And likewise thru him Flemish art was raised to the pinnacle of domination.

Meanwhile French art was developing. It had not achieved sufficient maturity to produce a master capable of synthesising with his native tradition the best elements of foregoing traditions until it produced Watteau. Watteau's greatness lies in the fact that he could grasp the essence of Rubens' accomplishment and referring to it perform the same function for the art of his own age. Watteau took the art of Rubens with its Flemish and Italian ingredients and adapted it to the primary necessity of his own need, which was to form a style, typically French. The virtue of Watteau's style lies in the universality of its ingredients and the individuality of its taste. It is the attitude perhaps more than the art of Rubens which Watteau grasped.

The extreme complexity of our problem is obvious. This condition has dictated the inclusion of much material which may at first seem extraneous. The art of Rubens must first be separated from Flemish art as exhibited in his home grown contemporaries such as Joerdaens. Though the style of Rubens' art is really international, a contrast between Titian and Rubens will make its Flemish characteristics clear. My first chapter will deal with these two problems.

The second will treat the French official school of the seventeenth century in its relation to Rubens. This relationship is of importance because it reveals certain tastes
common in that century and more important because it offers such a striking contrast to the attitude of Watteau toward Rubens. Further, the French academicians were the direct forebears of Watteau and out of their school developed a group of painters whose work in a limited sense prepared the ground stylistically for the art of Watteau.

Speaking now of our main problem, the differences which separate the art of Watteau and of Rubens seem incommeasurable to the casual observer. Considered as individual men they are entirely dissimilar. Likewise they are separated in time by about a century and this, of course, throws them apart. The importance of their artistic connection is that it represents the transference of the substance of European art from one national school, the Flemish, to another, the French. The differences between the styles of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries also become clear in this connection. Perhaps the reason Watteau could understand the art of Rubens so thoroughly was their racial kinship. A Fleming by birth, a Frenchman in his environment, Watteau was the logical man to accomplish what he did.

I will discuss the evolution of certain figure motifs as they appear and reappear thru the art of Titian, Rubens, and Watteau. If my treatment of these motifs seems inconsistent in emphasis, it should be remembered that I am making no attempt to trace their evolution in the strict historical sense. I refer to these motifs in connection with the
various masters chiefly because it is thru a comparative analysis of their methods of treating such details that their respective styles may be clearly brought out. To study such details as they appear in different styles is often more illuminating than comparisons between complete paintings.
CHAPTER I

RUBENS AND THE ITALIANS

A

In the year 1600 Rubens, the Flemish painter by birth and training, traveled to Italy. There he stayed for eight years.

Rubens received his inheritance of Flemish artistic tradition with a loose and free swagger. His great delight in all things actual is its principal manifestation. The joyous embrace of his flesh, his drapery, his still life objects, in fact everything that he paints, is at once something intensely personal and national. It is the constant of his art. It is Rubens, the Fleming.

But this Rubens was tempered by his long stay in Italy and his exhaustive study of sixteenth century Italian masters. While retaining his fundamental contact with life, he achieved a profound understanding of the great generalities of Italian artistic vision. He grasped their monumental conception of the human figure using it in a way to suit his needs as a man of the seventeenth century. His figures, monumental as they are, do not stand as noble units apart and independent from the flux and flow of the world about them.

He assimilated the substance of Italian decoration by copying great numbers of their works. These things which he learned,
he put in the service of his Flemish gusto and they came from his brush not as Italianisms, but as essential parts of his great personality and his greater-than-Flemish art.

The character of Rubens' art becomes clear when it is contrasted to that of a master whom I shall call a home from Fleming, namely, J. Joordens. Joordens is essentially a painter of the Netherlands, a figure, who even in his own time, was considered more strictly national in character than Rubens. For our purpose the fact that he was a pupil and a co-worker of Rubens may be discounted. We will compare their respective paintings of Suzanne with the Rubens.

In the Rubens, Suzanne, nude, sits in the far left of the canvas. Her back is turned toward the receding Rubens. Startled by the noise, she tries to turn her head to see what is going on but the only success is in adding her expression of alarm to the spectator. One of the figures has been stopped in his track by a door, the limit of which is judged securely under his chin. His expression is very accusing over the low balustrade, meanwhile twisting his head the better to peer at the lady whose red dog barks in from the alcove past, looking at the intruders. With our first glance we are made aware of the situation. The identity of the individual actors as such means little or nothing to us. Analysing the decorative scheme

1. Rubens version is in 'Unich. Old Flemish'. That of Joordens is in Brussels.
we find that the figures are arranged in a series of two diagonals, which run from the upper left to lower right and are parallel. One includes the figure of Suzanne and the dog, the second includes the two Elders. The small trees in the background repeat the direction of the diagonals and this common denominator of the design holds the entire canvas in one grip. The objective of this is a clear presentation of the narrative. The treatment of the forms is broad and general. There is no detailed analysis of form to engross our attention before we have grasped the situation as a whole.

Nor do the figures strike us as being excessively particularised. The two Elders do not interest us as individuals. We have no idea of differentiating which may be Peter and which may be Paul. We are satisfied visually to know that they are two inquisitive and lascivious old men. The woman might be any woman surprised while naked. Likewise the lap-dog. In no sense can he be taken as a particular dog. He is simply a lap-dog doing exactly what any faithful lap-dog would be doing in the same circumstances. Figures, landscape, and still life, are all included in a coloristic entirety, which, broadly handled, has dictated the exclusion of literal realism to a great extent.

This is not to say that we get a reaction of unreality from this painting. It is obvious that the generalities of Rubens are based upon a close study of nature.
In considering Joos of Braband, I am attempting no discrimination in the favor of Rubens. Joos' Susanne mit den Kindern was done a few years later than that of Rubens. The composition is static, immobile. Looking at it we are not made aware of a dramatic situation but of a number of things arranged in a learned and mildly pleasing fashion. These objects have been treated in such a manner as to make us want to look at each one thoroughly and entirely before we go on to the next. We must dissect this painting and look at each of its very real objects as an isolated thing. The heads interest us as possible portraits. Or at least I have found myself comparing the heads of the Elders with an eye to every possible difference existent. The handling is close, forms are studied out to details. The action of the living beings is frozen to a stop so that the exclusive identity of each may be established. The particular character of the dog has, in this case, been made much of. One is reminded constantly of the model. This is flourish realism in its natural attitude.

The aim of Joos of Braband's art is the recording of his observations. He constructs a pictorial unit but it is a unit of closely and even specifically analysed parts. The making of an observation is but the beginning for Rubens. For him the specific must be generalized. The easy flow and naturalness of Rubens' painting is sufficient testimony to the creative nature of his Italian lessons in art. The sense of
reality we derive from him shows him still essentially a Fleming.

3

Among the Italian painters, Titian was the life-long favorite of Rubens. The outward circumstances of their lives were much alike. As men they show the same taste for the physical values of life. Each maintained himself in art and in life as a veritable prince. The position Titian held in Venice corresponded exactly to that held by Rubens in Antwerp. Both enjoyed international fame and patronage. In the art of both we feel a fully rounded healthy and sensuous participation in life.

It is probable that Rubens first came in real contact with the art of Titian in Venice in the year 1630. Until his death in 1640, this contact was constant. There were Titian paintings in Mantua, where for eight years Rubens filled the post of court painter to Vincenzo Gonzaga. As part of his duties for the Duke he made copies of these. That he was able to make copies for his private collection is shown by a list of this collection which was drawn up before its sale to the Duke of Buckingham in 1626. No less than nineteen original Titians are mentioned and of the thirty-two copies by the hand of Rubens, twenty one are after Titians portraits. Rubens had seen the Titians in Madrid when he had gone there for the Duke in 1605. When he returned there
twenty three years later, he was finding the dearth of Titians in his own collection so unbearable that he copied every Titian available. With these copies he stocked the new gallery he had built at home.

We will compare Rubens' copy after Titian's Fall of Man with the original. This copy was probably done in 1639, about sixty years after the completion of the original. Both pictures are now in the Prado.

Rubens has retained the general composition of Titian's painting. Adam is seen in profile seated on a grassy bank under the tree of knowledge, which shoots up thru the center of the picture. To the right Eve is stepping forward and reaching up to take the forbidden apple from the hand of the cherub, who is acting the part of the serpent. In the background we see the landscape of a shallow valley and distant mountains. Distant clouds fill the sky. In both paintings the figures of Adam and Eve are monumental in size and their action is confined to a limited front plane.

Let us first contrast the manner in which the space is handled in the two paintings, for copy though Rubens is, we can in this as well as in many other respects, detect a difference. Despite the atmospheric treatment of Titian he has conceived this theme in the essential spirit of the plane. The foreground is seen, for the most part, as a dark silhouette against the light clouds, which, by their action in obscuring the distant hills, render the background flat. The outlines of the tree trunks may be distinctly traced against
the background. When we start to examine details we find our general observation verified. For instance the figure of Adam, in which we find every part designed to maintain the integrity of the plane. His head is seen in strict profile. As he leans back he throws his weight upon his left arm. This arm has been carefully designed in such a fashion that it does not jut in or out. Likewise the left arm, which he stretches toward Eve in a restraining gesture, appears parallel to the picture surface. The most important point, however, is the peculiar way in which Titian combines for us a profile view of Adam's head and what amounts to practically a full front view of his torso. This distortion reminds us of similar ones in primitive relief engravings such as the Egyptians created. In Michelangelo's Adam in the Creation of Eve of the Sistine Chapel we see a similar treatment. Titian has by this means avoided the presentation of a three quarter or foreshortened view of a round body turning in space. We could pick out similar instances of his rigid observance of the laws of planiform presentation, but these are sufficient.

Turning to Rubens we immediately get a sensation of bodies piercing space. The action of the figures is still confined to a frontal plane, but the clouds have been lifted from the valley and our eye is allowed to drift thru the landscape back into space. The silhouettes of the figures and objects in the foreground can no longer be easily followed against the light background. Lines have formed a habit of
fading out and becoming obscure. This difference in space conception may be most plainly seen in the figure of Adam.

Our first sensation in looking at Rubens' canvas is that this figure has been cramped for lack of surface. This is not true for Rubens allotted to Adam exactly the same proportion of the entire canvas area as did Titian and he has used a canvas of exactly the same proportions of height to width. The explanation for our feeling lies in the different modes of designing this figure. As we have seen, Titian spreads the body and limbs of Adam generously along the surface of one plane. We get a reaction of free unhampered movement. Rubens insists on piling up the body and limbs of Adam in a close group, thus getting a more complex relationship in space. Adam sits in an upright position now. In fact, he leans slightly forward in contrast to the backward movement of Titian's figure. The right shoulder and arm of Rubens' Adam shoots out toward us. His head is turned slightly inward. The strict profile of Titian has disappeared. The torso of Rubens is not seen from the front, but it is a frankly emphasised foreshortened view of a round body turning into space.

We can go on to point out the way in which Rubens has emphasised the spatial qualities in other portions. He throws the left arm of Eve out from her body by emphasising the contrast between the shadow it casts across the shoulder and the light which strikes the shoulder. In Titian this effect is minimised and the plane is thus maintained.
This contrast of concepts of space is my chief point here.

We can compare the broad and free handling of the nude in the Titian with the handling of Rubens, who treats the muscular structure of the bodies more fully and because of his interest in these relatively petty forms his figures lack the breadth of Titians. The Adam of Rubens is related in a close sense to the object; we get from it a stronger sense of realness than we get from Titians more generalized statement. Finally a comparison may be made between the bodily gesture of Titian's Adam and that of Rubens'.

We sense in the Titian a grandeur of conception that is lacking in Rubens. This Adam of Titian has certainly the dignity and the primitive ruggedness of the first man. Perturbed tho he is by Eve's action, he does not lose his self control. He watches her intently, meanwhile putting his hand upon her shoulder in an attempt to restrain her rasciness. There is concern in him, but not panic. With a stern dignity he attempts to stop her.

There is an element of over excitement in the gesture of Rubens' figure. Adam leans forward, his expression not stern but excited. He looks at Eve as if she had suddenly gone insane. His mouth has opened to give out a cry of warning. This is a man frightened, a man who does not feel confidence that he is in control, a man who is in danger of being overwhelmed and who, in this danger, becomes excited, cries out in helplessness. The Adam of Rubens has lost his self control in the realization of his helplessness. Titian's
treatment implies a belief in the supremacy of man over his universe. This belief had been shaken in the age of Rubens. Man and nature are bound together in a constant flux of changing relationships. Man is no longer conceived of as dominating his world with an unshakeable primeval dignity.

The foregoing analysis, brief and general, though it is, will serve to illustrate the chief differences between the art of Titian and that of Rubens. Let us turn now to the evolution of certain Titian figure motifs into the art of Rubens. These are of interest to us because they illustrate in a very specific fashion what happens to a Titian motif when it is taken over by Rubens. Secondly these motifs are interesting because in two instances Matteo takes over one of these motifs from the art of Rubens and in using it in his own art again changes its form. At this point we will concern ourselves only with Rubens' adaptations from Titian.

The original motifs may be seen in Titian's Bacchanał of 1518, which is in the Prado. The first group we must note is that of the two dancers seen in the far right of the canvas. The second is the group of two women who are reclining upon the ground in the middle foreground. It is certain that Rubens saw this canvas when he was in Madrid.

So far as I have been able to determine there is no copy, either drawing or painting, by Rubens of either of these two motifs. Consequently there is an empty gap left between the original forms and their re-appearance in the late art of Rubens.
No study of the transitional stages is possible, and it is far from certain that any such transitional stages ever existed. We will analyze the altered forms of these motifs as they appear in Rubens' Garden of Love and Peasant Dance, both of the Prado, and in his Flemish Witches in the Louvre.

We will consider the group of two women first. In the Titian, this group is set apart by a certain lack of physical action. The rest of the figures are in quite pronounced physical movement, even the reclining Venus in the foreground sleeps with a positive gesture. Closely related plastically thru the proximity of their bodies and spiritually bound together by their glance, these two figures exist as if in another world. The woman lifts her bowl for wine as if in absent-minded response to an old habit. The two seem oblivious to the merrymakers. An essential spirit of intimacy that needs no physical gesture to express it seems to pervade this group.

We find the counterpart of this group in Rubens' Garden of Love. This time it is made up of a man and a woman, but that is of no consequence. I refer to the second couple from the left. They are seated on the ground; their bodies held close together in a triangular grouping. The arrangement of the bodies of these figures has nothing which reminds us of the Titian group. It is utterly different, yet these two are again set apart from the general bustle of movement and small talk of the rest of the canvas. The man leans his head toward the woman, she gazes out at us with a vacant unseeing
lance as she listens to him. They exist oblivious to everything around them. The hand of the woman has come to rest upon the man's knee. I say it has come to rest there because the gesture implies no conscious direction of it on her part. It is a gesture in essentially the same spirit as that with which Titian's woman holds her bowl to be filled. My now my meaning is clear. It is the essential spirit of intimacy which Rubens here has transferred to a group which is otherwise entirely of his own invention.

In Rubens' Flemish Wake we find the same motif used again but in this case it has been vulgarized completely into vernacular Flemish. The nature of the theme has dictated the use of this group and also that its original spirit be lost in the all pervading reality of the actions of the drunken licentious peasants.

We turn now to the second group, the man and the woman who move in a slow rhythmical dance in the right of Titian's painting. Their left hands are clasped together, as they move in a circle their bodies incline toward each other. Titian has carefully restrained from giving this group in violent action. In this case, as with his figure of Adam mentioned above, the exigencies of a general uniform mode of presentation makes violent action impossible. The spatial relation of these two figures has not been stressed. They appear as occupying the same level in depth.

This motif appears in Rubens' Flemish Wake. It is
obvious why Rubens should have liked this motif for it offers the greatest possibilities for a richly plastic effect of intertwining bodies in action. Its reappearance in his art is marked by infinite changes. The physical action of the dancers is now emphasised. The presentation is no longer planiform but spatial in nature. In the Flemish Dances, the entire dance of the drunken peasants is constructed from variations played upon this theme. The original form has become infinitely varied and distorted by the passions of the peasants. The group is given here in the terms of Flemish vernacular, a lusty realism of action and incident.

We find this motif again in the Peasant's Dance of 1636-40. Again on this occasion the whirling movement of the circle of dancers has been enriched by variations of this particular motif. Again the action is violently physical. In the right of this painting, where the smaller number of figures used might result in an emptiness of space, Rubens uses the intertwining motif to build up plastic richness. This portion would seem almost empty were it not for the third and fourth figures from the right. They form a group of two which is almost identical in action with the original Titian group. The action has been exaggerated and vulgarised it is true. The elaborate plastic effect of this couple gives reality to the space between the foreground and the house in the rear. Having already given sufficient space to the character of Rubens' general treatment in Italian art, there
is no need to speak of this in connection with Titian. We have seen that physical violence Rubens adds to the motifs which he derived from Titian and we have observed the opulent sensuousness of his art. Titian seems almost other worldly when compared with a painter like Rubens whose flesh and blood gusto is, as I have said before, at once of individual and national character. The consequences of such emotions upon the motifs which Rubens derived from Titian has been clearly seen. These motifs will be discussed again in relation to the art of Watteau.
CHAPTER II

THE FRENCH OFFICIAL PAINTERS AND RUBENS

A

There is little need to indulge in an intimate analysis of the aims and organization of the French Academy at this point. These are the common property of all who care to have them. However, for the purposes of convenience, I will include such as are necessary to our purpose. The Academy represents but a systematised summary of certain artistic trends in the seventeenth century. In its organization it followed the example of the French government. It took French official art completely out of contact with nature, for the students of the Academy were taught to see nature only through the ideas and forms of Antiquity and the Italian High Renaissance. What a contrast this offers to the attitude of Rubens.

The gospel of art to these men was drawing. Let us see how they distorted the color theories of Poussin, whom they admired but, as may be seen, were incapable of understanding. Poussin believed that clarity of color could only be gained by a firm restriction of its exuberance. This the Academicians interpreted as meaning that color was of secondary importance. Le Brun, the leader of the school, is quoted
as saying, "The color grinders would be as great artists as
the painters if the latter could not distinguish themselves
by their drawing."¹

The Academy delighted in classifications. Charts
were made out upon which were classified, according to a de-
finite and inalterable set of rules, all the important painters
of contemporary and previous times. The rules were drawn up,
of course, by the Academicians and they had another set by
which all paintings were judged. Certain things were less
worthy of being painted than were others. I give the Acad-
emies classification of subject matter arranged according to
their ideas of relative importance:

1. History Painting
   a. Allegorical
   b. Mythological
   c. Compassion Scenes and Biblical Narratives

2. Portraits
3. Landscapes
4. Battlepieces
5. Flower Still Life
6. Genre themes ²

I give these examples only to illustrate how remote from any
real contact with nature the ideas of the Academicians were.
No form of individualism was allowed or noticed, unless it

¹ Pevsner-Grautoff, P. G. Barockmalerei in den romanischen
Ländern, Lieferung, 268, (Berlin) 310.
² Pevsner-Grautoff, Barockmalerei, 309.
was a matter of greater or less manual proficiency in painting.

B

The art of Rubens' included within its scope, works dealing with almost every type of subject with its corresponding use. From his studio in Antwerp came portraits and great altarpieces as well as small sketches done in oil which were the models for his wall decorations. Sometimes these decorations were finished at home and rolled up to be shipped to their permanent homes. Others were executed upon the spot where they were to be set up. The work which Rubens did with his own hands was not always the same for each commission. The landscapes of his last years are entirely his. Sometimes he executed only the sketches for the large decorations, leaving the execution entirely to his pupils. It was such a series of decorations, namely, the Maria de Medici stories of the Luxembourg, which gave the French official painters their ideas of Rubens.

The first series, that dealing with the life of Maria de Medici, was finished and set into place by 1626. Rubens also worked upon a second set for a second gallery of the Palace. These were to deal with the life of Henry IV, the husband of Maria, but they were never finished. Let us examine roughly these stories of Maria which are to serve as models for many a Frenchman.
They are canvases of great dimensions and are filled with oratorical and mythological bombast. The more subtle the allegory the better it suited the taste of the seventeenth century. Further this taste proved to the advantage of Rubens for the strain in the relations between Maria and her son, Louis XIII, made the interpretation of certain incidents of her life rather a delicate task. If the required delicacy was too exacting, the meaning of the incident could be drowned out by allegory, subtle beyond all human powers of comprehension. In all these paintings of Rubens the natural actors are surrounded by bevies of Gods and cupids. Symbols of this and symbols of that are strewn about. The landing of Maria de Medici at Marseilles is attended by all the beautiful Gods and Goddesses of the sea. Such was the taste of the time. It is from these great decorations, which are probably of all the works of Rubens farther from contact with nature in the real sense than any others, that the French official painters took their ideas of him. The allegory was thoroughly in accordance with their ideas. They had long and heated discussions attempting to make clear the allegorical meaning of this or that figure of Poussin. Repulsive as the color of Rubens must have been to Lebrun and his fellows, there can be no doubt that they thoroughly enjoyed these great decorative arrangements, and, as Rubens had a thorough knowledge of Antiquity, his allegories must have pleased them.
Lebrun, in his decorations for the entrance of Louis XIV and his queen into Paris, simply emulated a similar project by Rubens which had been occasioned by a visit of the Archduke Ferdinand to Antwerp in 1630.

Gross as these great decorations of Rubens are at times, he does maintain, even in them, his robust contact with life and nature. Of this the French academicians, of course, had no conception. They denied the substance of Rubens art and clung to that part which was produced by the qualities and tastes he shared in common with the other educated people of his century. What we define as the substance of Rubens' art they could not understand. What we choose to ignore as belonging to his age rather than essentially to himself, they, as was natural, took to their hearts.

A comparison of examples will make this clear. In the Uffizi Gallery of Florence hangs a huge canvas depicting the Entrance of Henry IV at Paris after the Battle of Ivry. It is part of Rubens' unfinished series for the Luxembourg. Henry is standing erect in a Roman triumphal chariot, high above the heads of the revelers. In his hand he holds a laurel wreath, ancient symbol of victory, while a Christian angel balancing herself with one foot placed in the chariot, places a crown upon his head. The chariot is being drawn toward a triumphal arch by prancing horses. Horsemen proceed the victor, he is surrounded by ruff checked trumpeters, angels crowd the sky and the rabble, come to see the great, crowd the earth.
All is noise and splendor. It is a great display of decoration and any king might well have been flattered to see himself thus pictured in the guise of an ancient Emperor. Rubens has taken great pains to display his thorough knowledge of antiquity.

Although this canvas is done in grisaille and only touched up with color, the spirit of the treatment is fully coloristic. The flow of the light over and among the figures unites them into coherent masses. Everywhere we feel the atmosphere of the scene. The light includes and engulfs everything. Nothing is shown of the city but its gate, the rest is obscured by the distance.

This immense and pompous display might well be called a factory piece from Rubens' workshop. It no doubt pleased his contemporaries but our modern taste enjoys the smaller, less pretentious, and more personal paintings of Rubens. The magnificence of his comparison between Henry and the ancients passes over our heads. It means little or nothing to us in any real sense. To the French academicians these huge and bombastic history pictures represented art. The qualities of Rubens as a painter appealing to the eye were completely ignored. In these great decorations there is much that has a purely intellectual appeal. This they were fitted to observe.

We must note, in Lebrun's "Entrance of Alexander into Babylon" an emphasis of the purely decorative qualities to be
found in Rubens. In size this canvas is a match for the
Rubens. It will be well to remember that Lebrun was above
everything else a decorator. To consider an isolated canvas
of his is in a way a sin. It should be observed within the
context of its setting. The virtue of Lebrun's work lies in
the co-ordination he effected in the complete scheme of decor-
ation. To return, however, to his Alexander, we note that the
composition has obviously been taken from Rubens. Again the
great Emperor stands bolt upright in a triumphal chariot. In
one hand he grasps a spear, symbol of his quality as a warrior;
he turns his head to gaze down imperiously at the spectator.
The chariot is about to pass under a great triumphal arch of
which we see only a part. The statue of Victory stands on her
pedestal in greeting to the Emperor. In the background, stretch-
ing parallel to the procession, we see the city. All the walls
and buildings are clearly visible to their smallest detail.
Great elephants are drawing the chariot to the gate. Horse-
men follow; in the foreground a soldier on horseback directs
two slaves who are carrying the spoils of war, in this case a
huge vase. The trumpeters are ahead already announcing the
arrival as they pass under the arch. In the lower left we see
a group of women who have gathered by the roadside to watch
the procession. The idea of this group is taken direct from
Rubens. In this great display may be found the same sort of
political flattery as in Rubens. By Alexander, Lebrun, no
doubt, was referring to Louis XIV. But in his case the alleg-
cory must be very indirect. To put Louis himself in the chariot
would have been far too obvious. If the Rubens appears remote from any reality of situation then certainly Lebrun's canvas is doubly so. There is not an element of natural observation of contemporary life in it. The burden of archeological references has grown oppressive.

The qualities of painting in this canvas have certainly not been derived from Rubens. Everything is linear, clear cut and precise. The details of the buildings in the background are as clearly executed as are the reliefs on the chariot of Alexander. We feel that we should know a story about each figure; that just seeing it is not enough. There is no whirling atmosphere to carry this procession along. The scheme of light and darks is almost identical to that of Rubens but its function is entirely intellectual. It obscures the less important personages and throws the important ones into prominence.

The differences may become more clear if we consider and contrast two details. Rubens has placed a woman at the head of the horses which drew the chariot of Henry. She strides along with an easy free movement, her back toward the spectator. The line of her body, struck out by the light, emphasizes the forward movement of the procession. This figure has been designed for the express purpose of stimulating the sensation of forward movement. Further it is she who turns the procession toward the gate and for us into space. The organization of the canvas in terms of movement and space is unthinkable without her. She has no significance other than
plastic. The woman who sits upon the elephant in Lebrun's canvas may be taken as corresponding in position and literal function. She, too, is struck out by the light and is obviously an important figure. She is almost more important visually than Alexander himself. She serves plastically to introduce a light into a general mass of darks, but the real reason for her prominence is that she holds aloft some sort of a vessel suspended by means of a chain. Evidently Lebrun wished to call particular attention to the allegorical significance of this vessel for our attention is distracted to a figure which has no real plastic importance but simply holds the said vessel. Lebrun has systematized, out of all contact with life, elements which we find in the art of Rubens.

We have so far considered the Academy as a unit under the leadership of Lebrun. There was a perfect unity within the art empire of the Academy till the last part of the seventeenth century. At this time two factions arose and they called themselves the Poussinists and the Rubenists; the former advocated the supremacy of drawing, the latter tried to put in a word for color. Roger de Piles, one of the Rubenists, expressed the opinion that painting should appeal to the eye as well as to the intellect. This was, in the light of Lebrun, heresy; but within the Academy the group of Rubenists gained strength. It is this group, under the leadership of Mignard, the lifelong rival of Lebrun, which Chateaubriand must have considered modern. However, their heresy did not take a very dangerous
form. The quarrels of the Roussinists and their opponents were in spirit no more violent than had been the disputes over the interpretations of Roussin's allegorical figures. The real revolt against the dictum of the Academy does not rest on their shoulders. They failed to grasp the essence of Rubens' art as fully as had Lebrun.

This group was made up, for the most part, of portrait painters. It included such men as Hignard, who had been forced to paint portraits to live, for the dictatorship of his rival, Lebrun, had kept all other commissions out of his hands. Jorry, L'argilliere, Rigaud, and Santeau were members of the so-called Rubenists.

The restrictions upon portrait painters during the reign of the Academy were as strict as those imposed upon the painters of history pictures. With the remoteness from nature characteristic of the Academy, men and women were not represented as individuals but as members of the Empire. The ladies usually were pictured in the guise of some ancient goddess and the backgrounds were filled with symbols to which allegorical meanings were attached. The men, in accordance with the custom of the age, appeared disguised in their enormous wigs. The accessories were attired as were the symbols of the women. The Rubenists represent a turning away from these ideas. They were content to pose their models and paint them as individuals not as symbols. In the portraits of L'argilliere and Hignard the people appear more in the vein of human beings, less in the guise of objects of the state. In the task of all this group
a clearing way of excessive allegorical bombast may be seen
and accompanying it a loosening of the tight linear style of
the academicians proper. There are features of Cypel's Esther
and Abraham that remind us, if ever so dimly, of rubens. In
all of the work of Pierre Hugard these tendencies are appar-
ent. In his group portrait of the Dauphin and his Family the
surfaces are treated in soft nuances. The children are, to
be sure, a bit self conscious and pretentious in their actions
but they are not painted as young gods. The dauphin himself
is given in a natural and intimate moment. He is stroking the
head of his So. Yet, despite all that may be said about the
reaction of these men from the rules of the academy, they still
remain within its bounds with their art. The severity of the
inference of its standards can not get a break enough to allow
the real revolt. The firmly rooted in the tradition of the
 academy these men could not grasp the real meaning of rubens,
despite their studies of academicians.

In retrospect we must conclude that the French
official painters were in sympathy with the portion of interest
at which is most Italian. The decorative manner of his large
wall decorations dealing with historical subjects pleased them.
Louis XIV's remark of "Take the rags off" when he was being
shown some Flemish paintings, would have been theirs upon seeing
his Flemish Male and Peasant's Dance. In the academicians
looked for the east part of the decoration of public buildings with large canvases, it was natural that they would find a certain amount of sympathy with similar projects by the hand of Rubens. They enjoyed the same taste for allegory and pretentiousness. However, all that was French in Rubens they rejected and left to be understood by Watteau. It must be remembered that upon the charts of the Academy, Raphael, Poussin and the artists of antiquity ranked first.
CHAPTER III

WATTEAU AND RUBENS

A

The history of Watteau and his art has received a due proportion of interest and treatment since the Goncourt stimulated a renewal of interest in it. We will give it no more attention than is necessary to our present problem.

In considering Watteau in his relation to Rubens it must be remembered that these two men are chronologically separated by, roughly, a century. Rubens is a man of the early 17th century; Watteau, though he preceded it chronologically by a few years, essentially of the 16th century period of the French Regency, a period of social reaction against the tyranny of the Empire of Louis XIV. We have already studied one manifestation of this reaction in the quarrel of the Roubenists and the Rubenists within the Academy. There were, of course, others. One involves the growing power of the bourgeois class of Paris. The second we will mention involves the changing atmosphere of the court itself. These reactions were in progress during the last decades of Louis XIV's life while Versailles outwardly still kept its political and social threat hold on France.

During the last years of the 17th century the city of Paris gradually emancipated itself from the court that the
growing power and wealth of its bourgeois class. With its new money this class obtained new leisure and with the leisure a desire for things, such as art, which are usually associated with the tastes of the leisurely class. Thus a new group of patrons came into being and with them a new standard of taste. The result was an unprecedented popularity of Flemish art in Paris around the beginning of the 18th century. These middle class people, recently raised to the lower ranks of the nobility, liked a realistic art. In response to the new market Flemish painters came to Paris in great numbers. The growth of the new style based in realism was in part a result of the growth of this new class of patrons. A tone was added to the new century which was lacking in the old. The art of Chardin is high tribute to the new democratic taste.

But the reaction against the old regime and its ideas may be seen at the court as well as in the growth of the middle class of Paris. Versailles had grown weary of the stern centralization under the old king. The courtiers were feeling the need to act again in an individual fashion rather than in organized concert. Long before the actual death of Louis, this spirit was rampant and no sooner had the Regency come into power than a light and diversion seeking activity replaced the heavy seriousness of social life under the Empire. People were weary of being serious and weary of the bigotry of the old king. They wanted to be frivolous and, indeed, they were.
There is little need to detail the contrast between the petite delicacy of the new spirit and the grandiose passion and power of the age of Rubens. The spirit of the Empire which had grown old and weary with Louis had been young and filled with gloria in rubens' time. It was fresh with life as was the period that supplanted the Empire. In reaction, the 18th century regency went often into excess. Its boasted return to nature is too often milletanish in spirit, but in its greatest men and its greatest artist, Watteau, the frivolous aspects are not to be found. Watteau turns to a serious study of things but he renders them with the light but not careless touch of the age over which he towers.

In considering Titian and Rubens as men we found that in most ways their attitudes and modes of life could be paralleled. Not so in the case of Watteau and Rubens. We are prone to visualize Rubens with a stein of beer on one hand, a buxom Flemish vench on the other. His tremendous physical vitality is so impressive that at first glance we can see little else. In speaking of Watteau we must contrast with Rubens a man of slight and delicate physique, a consumptive, who was forced to carefully conserve his energy in order to work at all. Against the healthy reality of Rubens' physical and mental existence we must place the consumptive's mental and physical longing for the unattainable. By these qualities their arts are respectively conditioned as we shall see.

Watteau was driven from lodging to lodging by an
insatiable desire for change. The equipment of his art went with him and it was necessarily little. There was no great workshop to move or students to be attended. Rubens was happiest when he was in his home in Antwerp or at Steen working steadily each day. He had set up an establishment during the early years of his first marriage and it became his permanent home. Contrast the life of a Flemish prince, a man cosmopolitan and grandiose in his features, with the life of an unknown and penniless painter in Paris, a man who had to live in the most abominable circumstances, whose early privations brought on an illness which eventually killed him. In all possible ways Watteau and Rubens will be found different, yet thru their paintings runs a common and continuous stream of passion for spontaneous study of nature and a fully coloristic conception of the world about them.

Let us carry our contrast of these two men further, into their modes of working.

Not a small part of the genius of Rubens was his ability to organize a workshop and keep its output under his close supervision. The scope and the variety of his commissions forced him to do this and his art suffered less under this system than would the art of some other men, for instance Rembrandt. Of course, the most highly valued of Rubens' paintings are those done entirely by his own hand. They brought him the highest prices at the time they went from his studio, but the fact stands that he could use the help of students
upon his own works. We might well regard the facts relative to this matter in the case of Watteau as evidence of a further development of modern individualism. The workshop system of Hubens and his consequent tremendous output was totally unfit for the art of Watteau. The peculiarities of the man, which tend to make him an individualist to a higher degree than Hubens, made it essential that he do every stroke of each painting which we have by him. This is not to say that Watteau's style could not be emulated. His pupil, Pater, gets everything of Watteau but his spirit.

If we turn for a moment to Hubens we must remember that he shared in common with Hubens a great gift for organization. Just as he referred to the great decorative paintings of Hubens, which were produced mostly by students, so he used the same system of pupils in carrying out his own decorative commissions.

The usual size of Watteau's canvases is much smaller than that which Hubens liked. Hubens was at his best when working on an area of roughly seven by twelve feet. He was given plenty of room to work freely with his big brushes and his free washes of paint. This larger canvas size fits in with our conception of the man and his age. To Watteau the smaller area proved to be no handicap but an advantage. Within it he could achieve as impressive a composition as Hubens. He was not forced into details because his forms were smaller, but he was given an opportunity to work out minute and delicate transitions of color. Watteau's forms can certain-
ly not be called petty but there is an explicitness in their handling which is entirely lacking in the great sweeps of Rubens' brush. These general remarks upon Watteau's preferred canvas size and the treatment, natural to him, which dictated its choice are compatible with our conception of the spirit of the period of the Regency and of Watteau as a man. Certain very general differences between their styles are indicated by these facts.

A comparison between the brush technique of Rubens and Watteau shows us that the latter has taken a decisive step in the direction of a fully impressionistic mode of seeing. A large brush, as Rubens used it, is a good tool with which to get general and vital masses of color. It does not allow much subtlety and no minute changes of color. A shadow of Rubens will be green with red for a reflected light. Rubens visualized his color in great masses. Watteau, on the other hand, used a small pointed brush. A bit of his drapery is made up of small flecks of color which change constantly. In other words, he uses a broken color technique such as may be seen in Renoir, who also uses a small pointed brush on a great many of his heads. The broken color technique allows for infinite changes of color and its use usually results in a more complete fusion of forms with atmosphere. Watteau paints atmosphere to a far greater extent than does Rubens, whose more localized color constantly impresses us with the physical nature of his objects.

We have not yet spoken of the use Watteau and Rubens
made of their sketches in completing their paintings. Here again we have a complete contrast of method. Given a commission, Rubens method was to first make a general compositional sketch, usually in oil if the students were to carry out the final painting. If they were not, he probably made his first layout as a drawing. These sketches were usually improvised without the use of models. The general sketch finished, he would make study drawings of the various figures, details of drapery and facial and bodily gestures. These, of course, from models. It is from the first sketch and the studies from nature that the final painting was completed. He considered himself essentially a painter and the drawings were but steps in the processes of the painting.

In the three hundred oil drawings of Watteau there is but one complete preliminary sketch for a painting. This is for his Feast of Love, now in Dresden. It is the exception in his art. Watteau's usual method was to first make drawings from nature, landscape and models; as he considered himself a greater draughtsman than painter, he considered these in the light of complete works of art. Once finished, these drawings were bound into books and when he wished to do a painting he went thru these books and selected the figures suitable to his purpose. These he combined in new groups or used just as they were, but it is a rare case when he makes a study of a model for a specific painting. Consequently, Watteau's most vital contact with nature is thru his drawings.
His studies of nature are all in this method. Despite his extensive use of landscape in his paintings, he never painted a single landscape direct from nature. The contrast here with Rubens is striking for he worked constantly in color from nature.

As we will be studying the copies of Watteau from Rubens it will prove helpful to take a brief glance at their respective modes of copying from other masters; young Rubens, when he was in Italy, did many sketches from the great Italian murals. His drawings after the Sybils and Prophets of Michelangelo are still extant. But whenever it was possible, as in the case of easel paintings, Rubens preferred to do his copying on a larger scale and in oil. His copies of Titian were carried out in this fashion.

Again indicative of Watteau's disposition as a draughtsman is the fact that he only drew from the works of other men. He never copied in the medium of paint. In copying a Titian pen landscape, he used his favorite medium of red chalk, for his atmospheric treatment could be more easily rendered in this medium. Likewise, in copying from Rubens, he used his drawing medium no matter what the original. Contact with his forebears as well as with nature was established and maintained thru the medium of his draughtsmanship.

We have, up to this point, considered in quite gen-
eral terms certain factors that tend to trace Matteau and Rubens apart. We have now the problem of discussing such drawings of Matteau from Rubens as are available and also discussing the further use Matteau made of them. But before entering upon this matter, it is necessary to speak briefly about the early artistic training of Matteau and how it conditioned him for his study of Rubens and also to outline what opportunities he had to study Rubens, which canvases of Rubens he was exposed to, and the significance of the work he did from them as contrasted to that done by the French Academicians.

It is essential to turn to Matteau's native city of Valenciennes in looking for the earliest sources of his art. Valenciennes had been ceded to the French not long before the birth of Matteau. In the social structure of this city there were both French and Flemish elements and it is certain that the first paintings seen by Matteau were Flemish. Realism was the first thing he knew artistically. He knew that his first paintings were genre scenes in the Flemish vein.

His training up to and during the time of his first real contact with Rubens was in the field of decorative painting. It is commonly supposed that he left Valenciennes for Paris in company with a stage decorator and that he did his first work in Paris under this man. His next master was Gillot, painter of Italian comedy scenes, who gave Matteau
his first taste for this subject. But more important for our consideration is his stay with Audran, decorative painter and keeper of the Luxembourg and its gardens and grounds. With Audran Chateau was entirely engaged upon decorative work. He became Audran's first helper and an indispensable to him that he had to make a journey home his pretext for leaving and spending all his time upon his own work. Here in the Luxembourg, he was constantly in contact with Rubens' Veloci paintings and he was given his first real opportunity to draw from nature in the gardens of the palace. There are extant a few of Chateau's decorative sketches of this period. His native taste for realism, his opportunity to study nature at this time, and his extensive training in decorative painting all combined in conditioning him to absorb the very essence of the Rubens' paintings which he lived with constantly.

Chateau's stay with Audran in the Luxembourg made possible his first real contact with Rubens as we have seen. The vitality of the color of the great decorations, the spontaneous observation of nature which was their foundation, must have delighted him. He could look at them and draw from them to his fill. We will consider a few of his drawings from these paintings later.

There were other paintings by Rubens in Paris at that time and they were more personal products of his single hand. The Flemish Duke hung in the royal collection. The Louvre has a sheet of three studies made by Chateau from this canvas.
Further opportunity to study Rubens, as well as other masters, was given Watteau in the house of Crozat where he lived as a protege of the family for a few years. The Crozat family had a particular fondness for collecting drawings and their collection numbered around three thousand. In the year 1659 the drawings of Rubens had been put up for sale by his family in accordance with the provisions of his will. A Crozat purchased a great many of them and placed them in the house in Paris. Of particular importance to us is the fact that this collection included the studies Rubens had made for his Garden of Love, now in the Prado. This is again a personal canvas of Rubens, one that he refused to sell during his lifetime. Watteau made a continual study of this collection during the last decade of his life and of all the masters Rubens remained his favorite. From the preceding facts it is clear that during his most productive years, Watteau had almost unlimited opportunity to study Rubens' art closely and thoroughly. He not only saw the great decorative paintings which the French Academicians referred to, but also Rubens' fleshly nude, a canvas done for his own pleasure, and more important, countless drawings by the hand of the master.

We recall, from an earlier chapter, the nature of Lebrun's reference to Rubens' Judic cycle. It was the size and the decorative splendor of these paintings that impressed this typical Academician. In emulating Rubens he took only the general compositional scheme of utilizing neglected Rubens' color and 'making of the forms in space and atmosphere.'
Lebrun certainly did no drawing after Rubens for to the academician the drawing of Rubens was faulty and careless. The general composition, the allegorical and decorative details of Rubens alone concerned the French academicians.

Watteau came to the pictures of the Luxembourg with a sketch pad. So far as his drawings are concerned the general decorative display might well be absent for he paid no attention to it. He copied details of single figures from Rubens and in doing this he learned not from Rubens' improvisations, but from his careful studies of nature. He carefully and literally transcribed from Rubens the figure of a dog biting at a flea. In we shall see this motif again later in his own work. Or in another case we find that he has carefully copied the design of a nude cupid and it too is used again. These details of Rubens are the most realistic parts of his Medici pictures. They spring entirely from his observation of nature and it is to this sense that Watteau added. Imagine a Lebrun copying a Rubens and particularly his which itself in a conversation with the observation of the queen and then proceeds to bite flies. The elements of art and observation in the Medici cycle to which Watteau refers were none existent to the academicians. The could not sympathize with Rubens the colonist and the keen observer of things about him. Likewise Rubens, as the academicians saw him, held no real interest for a man like Watteau.

It is sufficient to say that the Academy of Lebrun
would have declined to even look at antique Italian works, not to mention the low place they would have given it in their rankings of subject matter. Such subjects were worthy of no attention by painters of the first rank. Watteau, on the contrary, found this canvas a veritable gold mine of observations. Evidence enough of this is that he copied and used motifs from it. The fact that Hylkes' drawings set the standard for the academy in this salon is enough to exclude the possibility of the members doing any work from those of Rubens. It is clear from the foregoing, what elements of Rubens' art Watteau was interested in. We have come to the proper place to discuss such drawings as Watteau made from Rubens as are available to the writer. His later use of these drawings will be discussed whenever possible.

In the British Museum there is a drawing by Watteau after a detail of Rubens' painting, The Government of Julia de Medici now in the Louvre. Watteau copied a group of three figures supposedly representing Bacchus, Diana and Venus. Comparing copy and original, we find that all of the individual gestures have been carefully and literally copied. In the Rubens, the three figures are included in one group. Watteau has copied the upper group of Bacchus and Diana as one, but he has made, though it is on the same sheet, a separate copy of the figure of Venus. He copies details of details. It is obvious from the way he neglects to use the grouping that he was interested in the motif as bits of observation.
For instance it is easily understood that interested him
in the Diana and Bacchus. Bacchus leans close to Diana, hold-
ing her left hand and gazing at her meanwhile. Diana's back
is toward him, her right hand and arm rest across her thighs.
She languidly turns her head toward Bacchus. It is the in-
timacy of this group which struck Watteau. The general com-
positional display of the original, from which he selected
them, did not interest him at all.

Likewise the Venus interested him not as a part of
a decorative group but as a study of a nude. He faithfully
reproduces it as such. A further observation may be made as
to Watteau's care in getting the same atmospheric effect as
may be seen in the original. This is apparent even in a re-
production of the drawing and it would be more noticeable in
the original, containing as it does soft tones of red chalk
with a few black accents.

Stieler, commenting on this drawing, traces Watteau's
later use of it to an unarranged degree. 1 Perhaps the figure
of the guitar player in Watteau's Italian Serenade of the
Rothschild Collection in London is derived from this drawing.
It is possible, but to trace influences of this drawing to the
Fête Venitienne at Edinburg, the Fête d'Amour at Dresden and
L Amour Paisable at Potsdam does not seem possible. None of
the figures in these paintings resemble those of the drawing.

1. Burlington Mag., XII, 164.
and it should be remembered that Watteau transfers drawings to paintings in an extremely literal fashion.

In the Louvre is an offset print made from a drawing of Watteau. The drawing is of a nude cupid which Watteau copied from Rubens' painting The Birth of Maria de Medici. The original cupid is climbing out of the stream in the lower right corner of Rubens' painting. As no reproduction of the drawing is available we will discuss Watteau's use of this figure in the Berlin version of Embarkation For the Isle of Cythera. It may be seen in the lower right corner of this painting included in a group with the first pair of lovers. Watteau's copy has, in this case, little to interest us. A literal copy of the Rubens' cupid has been made and such limbs as are hidden in the stream have been added. In using the sketch Watteau reversed it. Again in this case we find him taking a detail from Rubens and using it as he used the original sketches which he himself made from nature.

The last copy from the Medici pictures which we will discuss here is perhaps the most interesting. Rubens' Coronation of Maria de Medici is a great moment. Before the dais, upon the steps of which the queen is kneeling, is an open space left free of figures so that the event of the coronation will be unobscured. Feeling it necessary

2. See list at end.
to articulate this space, Rubens painted two dogs in the foreground. They serve as repoussoir figures and help orient the steps of the dias properly in space. One of these dogs is standing quietly, the second is on the floor twisting about to bite a flea on his rear haunch. These two figures are typical evidences of acute observation in these paintings of Rubens. As we have seen, it is to such details that Chateau refers in his copies.

This Rubens' dog with a flea resembles in identical form, but reversed in direction, in Les Charmes de la Vie of Chateau in the Wallace Collection of London. In this painting a family group has gathered under their portico to listen to a guitar player, who is standing in the middle foreground tuning his instrument. At the right a servant is putting bottles of wine to cool in a basin. He looks out over a lawn, which occupies the middle distance, to a group of small figures seated overlooking a lake and a village in the background. The picture is composed in three horizontal strips with the light uniting them together. The dog has been included as a member of the family group and he adds a homely touch no doubt. But more important than literary reasons for his being there are plastic reasons.

In the first place this dog serves as a connecting link between the foreground group of figures and the group in the background. He serves to make the deep expanse of space between these two groups articulate. The eye travels from the
light in the main group to the light striking the dog, and from him to the background areas. But Watteau has made a more subtle use of Rubens' design. By reversing the dog in this painting the streak of white hair from the middle of his head becomes articulate. It forms one of a series of parallel diagonal lines which serve to link the figures of the foreground group together. It is linked, third direction, with the arms of the negro servant and with a diagonal of light formed along the servant's left leg and the reflection on the basin. Likewise, it is linked with the guitar held by the man in the center and to the diagonal light of the woman's skirt farthest to the left. Further, the gesture of the dog's shoulder repeats the direction of the gesture of the back and left shoulder of the guitar player. The figure could not have been more completely incorporated into the canvas if it had been designed for it in the first place. To make such use of a copied motif is indeed creative, and this one instance is sufficient to prove the validity of Watteau's method of compiling paintings from spontaneous studies (one from nature).

Watteau did other drawings from the Medici Cycle which we cannot discuss here.3

We have mentioned copies by Watteau from Rubens' Flemish Wake of the Louvre. In this painting Rubens gives us a wild dance of drunken peasants. In the Musee de Arts-Decoratifs there is a drawing by Watteau made from the dancing and

3. See list at end.
embracing couple seen in the circle of dancers. This couple is located in the rear of the circle, directly above the dog which is pulling the basket in the foreground.

This design reappears in Watteau's *La surprise* in the Buckingham Palace, London, combined with the figure of a guitarist. The embracing couple occupy the left end of a bench; the guitarist sits to the right and gazes quizzically at what is going on. A landscape is given in the background. In the case of this motif, Watteau has made necessary, and to us, interesting changes. The figure of the man in Rubens' picture is designed in such an elaborate and peculiar pose that Watteau was able to make him appear as seated by simply pushing a bench under him. The action of the two figures is identical. It is amusing to see a figure supposedly dancing seated on a bench with no change made in the design. The costume of the man has been changed from that of a Flemish peasant to that of a young blood of the Regency. The upper part of the woman's body has been transcribed literally with the exception of the turn of her head. We will discuss this point later. The position of the arms and legs of the woman were changed by Watteau for in his picture she does not support her own weight as she does in Rubens' painting. She lies half slipping, half supported by the arm and leg of her ardent admirer. It is amazing that Watteau was able to build such a different painting with the same group and a literal copy of another master's work, but again he coordinates all the elements perfectly. The diagonal of the
woman's arms is parallel to that formed by the shoulders and left arm of the player. By this means the two groups are bound together.

In the Rubens group the embrace of this pair is violent. He emphasizes the slouch of the man's shoulders as he bends forward to kiss his partner. In the Matteau this line is obscured in shade. The physical action of Matteau's couple is subtly differentiated from that of the original group. They are remote, unreal. The physical violence of Rubens has been diluted away. The woman of Matteau turns her head away, indifferent and she sees about to slip from her lover's embrace. He succeeds only in kissing her cheek. The opposite condition is certainly true in the Rubens. It is such a slight change from the original, combined with his delicate treatment, which makes the entire spirit of Matteau's group different.

C

To conclude our discussion of Matteau and Rubens we will compare the examples, namely, Matteau's 'Ascension for Cythera' in the Louvre and Rubens' 'Garden of Love' in the Prado. The themes treated in these paintings are essentially alike for here each artist has given his idea of a place set aside and more or less consecrated to the ideals and purposes of love. It matters little in this consideration that Rubens depicts his figures as already within the garden, while Matteau represents the imagination for the Ilyssium of love.
In essence the content of the picture is identical.

We must consider, for a moment, the probable sources from which each painter derived the idea of using such a subject. In looking at Rubens' canvases we cannot help but feel that the original stimulus of the idea sprang from an actual situation. Perhaps the gathering of a gay company in the garden of Steen, the country home of Rubens, first suggested the subject to his mind. Such a company, with his beloved and sensuous young wife as its center, could quite easily have turned the impressionable mind of Rubens to thoughts of vagaries of love.

It is probable that Matten arrived the idea for his painting not from any such event as Rubens but from a stage scene. There is no necessity to prove that his case, to a degree, is similar to that of Doncourt's play L'oeuf de Paques performed in Paris in 1709 and it is possible that Matten saw it at that time. At any rate the action of the evacuation of the omelet lovers on an ideal land of love is identical in these with the last scene of Doncourt's play. Thus from the first his idea must have an element of the unreal. It could be similar to burden with distinction with great eagerness yet to keep it in mind may prove helpful in the following analysis.

Let us first consider the composition of these paintings. The canvases here differ in size but are of almost the same proportion so the problem of composition is equalized in this respect. With the exception of the architecture used
by Rubens the elements to be composed are also in perfect agreement. That is each painter uses landscape and figures and within the figure group little putti. The use made of these identical elements, however, strikes us at once as being entirely different. From the Rubens we get a sensation of countless figures. The entire canvas seems to be filled with human beings, some in action, some sitting quiet, and still others engaged in conversation. The composition might be said to be excessively corporeal. The figures are large in proportion to the canvas area and there are a great many of them in the small space between the great stone porch and the near limits of the canvas. Rubens has organized these figures into compact groups and masses within a loose triangle laid along the ground with its apex pointing back into space. The upright groups to left and right establish the front limits of this triangle; the seated figures in the rear establish the apex. In the air above this group we see putti busy entertaining and stimulating the guests. Three quarters of the background area is taken up by the huge forms of the architecture and consequently we see the landscape only in the far left. The greater part of the composition is given in terms of heavy massive figure and architectural forms. Spaces in which no other figures could appear are filled with the cavorting putti or with statuary. Rubens' method of achieving a massive plasticity may be clearly seen in the center group of women. The forms of these figures are piled one upon the other in close and rapid succession, an area large
enough to contain but two standing figures, in this case is occupied by a group of five seated males and two putti. The effect is that of a ground of fabrics and flesh.

In contrast now let us turn to the light and delicate composition of Attems. Here in the place of Rubens' monumental figures and massive architectural forms we have the greatest amount of canvas area occupied by a misty landscape. In the foreground is a shell with the forest edge seen at the right. Below the shell we see water and beyond that the misty silhouettes of other land forms. The shell is enveloped in a fantastical atmosphere. This is one of Attems' few imaginative landscapes. It takes us a moment to realize the existence of the figures. In proportion to the canvas they are but half the size of those of Rubens. Contrast with the latter's massing of a large number of large figures into a comparatively limited space, the easy grace and lightness with which Attems ranges his couples in a single line which extends from the statue of Venus in the foreground to the ship. Each couple moves freely within its generous allotment of space. The intention here is obviously not the movement of physical bodies caught in compact groups. On one hand the vigour, power, and splendour of the Rubens age, on the other the delicacy and lightness of the Regency. It would be a sin to brand the latter as over sensitive and attenuated.

To continue we must contrast the depiction of space as seen in our examples. Rubens uses his two customary methods
of organizing his space, both based on the fundamental principle of the diagonal cutting into depth. The first is the designing of his objects into depth and the use of the arrangement of the light and dark pattern. The standing group in the left is typical of this arrangement of physical objects. The putti seems instead in a rich pose, pushing the figure of the town into space and closer to the city of the air. The entire group moves inward toward the center group, and the effect of movement in space is intensified by means of fore-and-aft tilting. A similar method of design may be seen in all parts of the canvas. It is the pattern of light and dark which unifies these motifs and strikes the principle across into space. To follow a diagonal of light from the couple that sits to the right across the center group and march far out from there back into the landscape. The inward action of the two groups to the right and the diagonal of light form the contrasting diagonal movements into depth. It should be noticed that the axis of each object in this picture is arranged on the same diagonal principle.

Inatten's painting space has been constructed chiefly in terms of atmospheric landscape. The space of infinity appears finite when contrasted to this vision of infinity. One can almost imagine the space of Atten's picture as being perfectly realized without the figures. To say the least the spatial character of Atten's group arrangement forms smaller units which do not carry the main emphasis but serve
to complete the expression of space as it is seen in the landscape. We have spoken of the arrangement of figures in a single line and if we now observe the course of this line it leads us into depth. It provides a connection between the foreground and background. It continues but does not make the character of his space. Mattenu's patterning of light agrees in general direction with that of Rabens but it lacks the robustness and power of the latter's. It is again more delicate in contrast to the robustness of Rabens. We start from the light which strikes the figure first and travel by means of the small areas of light tones along the procession of figures. From the light reflections in the water we go to the sky and return to the foreground from there. We have in Mattenu no emphasis upon the space building character of physical gestures in foreshortening. This is not to say that Mattenu's groups are designed in a uniform manner. They are fully orientated in space but because of their relatively small size the space building character of their design becomes a matter of secondary importance. The large size of Rabens' figures make their plastic arrangement more intrusive in a sense of building space.

Mattenu's treatment is as delicate and minute as that of Rabens is lusty and broad. As we have already spoken of this earlier in the chapter there is little need to make a detailed study of so obvious a matter. Its results may be seen in the more atmospheric quality of Mattenu's work.
Leaving matters of style let us consider these.

the paintings in different conceptions of the theme, an Utopia of love. We have already had a hint of Rubens' conception of this theme when speaking of the probable source of his idea, that is in an actual situation. Rubens has conceived his idea essentially in terms of the physical. Just elements of abstractness his canvas loses quite are wholly in his method of handling the subject not in his conception of it. This may be mainly seen in his Venus, the fountain figure who reigns over his group of lovers. What is this figure but a mound of flesh, a Flemish woman painted in the coarseness and voluptuous quality of her purely physical disposition? A conglomeration of breasts and buttocks, a conception of an ancient goddess in the purest and unaltered term of Flemish flesh. The coarseness of her features are anything but mitigate the disposition and effect of her bulky body. There is perhaps a symbolic reference to fecundity in the gesture of her sprouting breasts but if this is so, is it not covered in the most concrete of physical terms? I have perhaps selected a detail which is the extreme yet it is in this figure that the attitude of Rubens toward his theme may be clearly seen. The spectator immediately receives a sensation of direct intimate proximity to the physical when confronted by HIS GARDEN OF LOVE. One could almost call this painting a presentation, in general and broad terms, of the physical as such.

Having to button a line of unreality is felt
at once. Based as essentially upon a study of nature as the
human it does not impress us as not being real. It is cold,
abstract in the sense that we are forced to realize that this
is a creation of a mind and hand, with whose experience we have
not quite so much in common as with Rubens. To call the latter
course and perhaps even vulgar and modern delicate and refined
does not at all strike to the root of the difference. How
has Watteau visualized his Venus? Again as in Rubens, the deity
is presented in the guise of a statue, but on this occasion, the
marble is not sculpted into flesh and blood. She is not made to
resemble the action of a human being. A single expression must
be given. About the tall column of which she is a part, flowers
are traced. The immobility of this Venus to move or act seems
a symbol of the spirit of Watteau's figures. They will exist
in a plastic like area. We expect them to do nothing and they
do nothing. No gesture has force or meaning behind it. A
marble Venus she is content to remain a statue and as a con-
sequence cool and cold. A dream not a reality. A figure that
reveals the immobility of her maker as less than made any tint or
rubens.

Inadequate as so brief an analysis as the foregoing
and necessarily be, it will serve to further our differentiation
between the art of Watteau and that of Rubens. We will now
consider the second instance of the taking over from Rubens by
Watteau of a motif which was original with Rubens. As you will
remember the intimate group rested upon the ground in Rubens'
Garden of Love has been related to a group in Titian's Bacchanal of 1516. Our present problem is to study the relationship between the seated group farthest to the right in Titian's Jupiter and the group mentioned in Rubens' Garden of Love mentioned above. Although Rubens' figures are not connected with the figures in this because the Crozet collection contains only one picture for it.

We have observed how completely Rubens changed the notion of Titian's group while retaining its spirit. It is not to observe a similar process in the case of Titian. In Rubens both figures are seated in the group. They are seated in a close group with a great deal of overlapping which gives the effect of space. The painting is in Rubens usual thick style. The group is quite devoid of violent physical movement.

In Titian's picture the woman sits with holding a man in the right hand. She has another man behind her and to the side is seated to her left the man, the man behind her one that is at her side, is sitting. The man of this man and sitting is erect; the arms to both sides, but Jupiter's arm is one of the interest of picture stiff. The figures are placed in a full front with a little view. He twists the arms of the bodies into an elegant and harmonized. The group exists together because of the strong to union with the background in terms of color. We see a kind of lighter shining movement of light, and dark over the surface in contrast
to Rubens great masses of colors. Yet different as these
groups are in terms of style, they are both dominated by the
same mood.

Having not studied as far as it possible from the
available materials, the relationship between the art of
Matteau and that of Rubens; I should like to briefly survey-
ize and by this summary emphasize the bond which connects
these two men. We have seen them separated by every possible
personal difference and the differences which result from the
ages in which they lived. Yet, despite all this, it is from
the art of Rubens to the art of Matteau that the gift, the
substance of Rubens tradition is transmitted.

Matteau was the first great artist after Rubens
who could understand the coloristic approach of the latter.
He was the first great painter to grasp the importance of
Rubens' studies from nature. The copies he made from Rubens
are sufficient proof for this. Undoubtedly by mannerisms he
wasn't born to the very core of Rubens art and out of the great
principles he learned there he constructed a new style for
his age. It was not till another wave of classicism, such as
that of the eighteenth century, and obliterated the last in-
fluence of Matteau's great vision that we see French painters,
this time Cericault and Bellocroix, returning to the art of
the great Fleming to learn again the lessons of his color and
his keen observation of the world about him.
RECORD OF WATTEAU'S DRAWINGS
AFTER THE CANON OF RUBENS

Copies from Flemish Kress: (Now in the Louvre)


Copies from Medici Cycle:


5. Figure of dog from "Formation of Ariadne de Medici." Louvre. Used in Champs de la Vie (London—Allie Collection).


8. Copies from Mars and Venus... in Dulwich Gallery, London.

*Mention taken from H. T. Fisher (The Drawings of Antoine Watteau), London, 1881, with certain further tracings by the present writer.*
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LIST OF PICTURES

1. Rubens---Suzanne and the Elders
2. Jacob Joordaens---Suzanne and the Elders, Brussels
3. Titian---Fall of Man, Madrid, Prado
4. Rubens---Copy after No. 3, Madrid, Prado
5. Titian---Bacchanal, Madrid, Prado
6. Rubens---Flemish Wake, Paris, Louvre
7. Rubens---Carden of Love, Madrid, Prado
8. Rubens---Peasant Dance, Madrid, Prado
9. Rubens---Birth of Marie de Medica, Paris, Louvre
10. Watteau---Embarkation for Cythera (Detail) Berlin
11. Watteau---La Surprise, London, Buckingham Palace
12. Watteau---Embarkation for Cythera, Paris, Louvre
13. Rubens, Entrance of Henry IV at Paris after the battle of Ivry, Florence, Uffizi
15. Rubens---Government of Maria de Medici (Detail) Paris, Louvre
17. Rubens---Coronation of Maria de Medici, Paris, Louvre
18. Watteau---Les Charmes de la Vie, London, Wallace Collection
Approved

[Signature]

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