

B KULTURWISSENSCHAFTEN

BE SCHÖNE KÜNSTE

BEB Malerei

Deutschland

Mark Brandenburg

16. - 18. Jahrhundert

Verkündigung <Motiv>

- 24-1** *Verkündigung - die reformatorischen Bildwerke Brandenburgs und deren druckgraphische Vorlagen* / Rudolf Bönisch. - 1. Aufl. - Görlitz ; Zittau : Oettel, 2023. - 258 S. : Ill. ; 21 cm. - (Lübbenauer ikonographische Studien ; 1). - ISBN 978-3-944560-99-1 : EUR 39.00
[#8936]

A fundamental problem facing any craftsman or artist intent on carving, sculpting, or painting something is knowing how to turn an idea into reality, something which can most easily be accomplished by working from a model and making adjustments as needed. Following Gutenberg's invention of printing with movable type there was an exponential increase in the number of printed images that people could draw on for their own work, and this was a boon to those tasked with producing religious works for churches large and small. What was common practice until at least the middle of the eighteenth century fell out of style thereafter, and people gradually lost an understanding of the specific sources of religious imagery.

The present study by Rudolf Bönisch refocuses our attention and documents in great detail the way in which artists depicting the Annunciation, one of the pivotal moments in salvation history, drew heavily on printed images as they created their works from the mid-fifteen to the mid-eighteenth century. Scholars have long known that engravings and woodcuts by leading artists such as Martin Schongauer, Albrecht Dürer, and Lukas Cranach the Elder served as models for the decoration on sixteenth-century retables, but when it comes to minor artists, it is much more difficult to accurately determine sources. This is especially true since many of the artworks are located in small, out-of-the-way village churches.

Bönisch has limited his investigation to Protestant churches in the old Margraviate of Brandenburg (Mark Brandenburg), and in focusing solely on images of the Annunciation over a period of roughly two hundred years and he has identified thirty-seven, on such disparate things as altarpieces, pulpits, baptismal fonts, and epitaphs. The majority of the printed images that

served as models were by Dutch and Flemish artists such as Hendrick Goltzius, Jan Collaert, and Cornelis Cort, although the works of German, French, and Italian printmakers were also important. Some of these engravings were used very soon after they had been published, while others were consulted only decades later. In some cases, entire prints were copied, whereas in others only individual elements served as inspiration.

The major portion of Bönisch's work (pages 15 - 128) is an in-depth description of depictions of the Annunciation in twenty-six Brandenburg churches.¹ To illustrate how the artists created their works, Bönisch reproduces not only the work of art but also the engraving that inspired it. These high-quality images – many in colour – are extremely helpful for recognizing the many details that demonstrate clearly how closely the models were followed. Had Bönisch not shown such dedication in tracking down the artworks and their sources, we would continue to be oblivious to the way in which minor artists depended on printed visual materials to create their works.

Bönisch's study focusing on the Margraviate of Brandenburg is to some extent a case study of how one should study popular religious imagery. Bönisch points out that prints also inspired works of the Annunciation in Schleswig-Holstein, Saxony, and Lusatia, but one could go well beyond this one theme and look also at such important religious moments as the Crucifixion or the Last Supper. For those with an interest to do so, Bönisch's work lays the groundwork and serves as a useful example of how future studies could be conducted.

John Roger Paas

QUELLE

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¹ Table of contents: <https://d-nb.info/1306581605/04>