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From the title of the book, Rubens is the star of the show—the one who was able to realize the order's ambitions over time for one of their new saints. How this actually plays out is a different matter. It takes until chapter 4 for the artist truly to arrive on the stage. While Noyes endeavors to signpost what lies ahead in relation to what was previously covered, the intense examination of the three preparatory chapters, especially the running and productive threads of prints and imprinting which necessarily brings in multiple actors (clergy, curia, patrons, artists, publishers, objects, spaces, etc.), dominate the reader's purview. Noyes is countering previous approaches by not deploying Rubens too early, but this stalling has its own consequences.

The book marshals an impressive range of sources and theories, which will be of interest to specialists of the Oratorians and Counter-Reformation visual culture. Noyes treads her way carefully through the substantial scholarship in all its permutations, and as a result is extremely generous in her acknowledgements and citations. Her repositions and challenges to received wisdom are valuable, and there is no doubt that this case study of propaganda and censorship is worth a close eye.

Joanne W. Anderson, *Warburg Institute, University of London*  
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*Rubens: The Power of Transformation.* Gerlinde Gruber, Sabine Haag, Stefan Weppelmann, and Jochen Sander, eds.  
Munich: Hirmer Verlag, 2017. 310 pp. \$55.

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Rubens—artist, humanist, classicist, antiquarian—was the Renaissance Man of the Baroque. Steeped in the classical tradition, his erudition challenges modern notions of spontaneity and originality. Like Dante and Milton, Rubens drew from a wellspring of imagery—biblical, theological, and mythological. This richly illustrated exhibition catalogue from Vienna and Frankfurt—a cornucopia of images and essays ranging from the general to the esoteric—demonstrates to amateurs and scholars alike the importance of probing Rubens's sources to appreciate his transformative powers.

Rubens's arrival in Rome, in 1600, coincided with the dawn of the Baroque. His drawings there of ancient sculptures suggest live models, not marbles. In his treatise *De Imitatione Statuarum*, he wrote that one must “above all else, avoid the effect of stone.” Throughout his career Rubens exemplified his underlying credo in artistic metamorphosis.

The essays herein offer introductions to the mystery and method of Rubens's transformative vision. Jaffé's welcome discussion of Rubens's “reference models” is occasionally undermined by journalistic language. Rather than “exploiting short cuts” (51)

Rubens paid homage to the past by inventive metamorphosis. Far from “plundering sculpture” (57) he probed his sources as much for meaning as for form. One shortcoming of this volume is its failure to give sufficient weight to Rubens’s concern with iconography in his formal quotations—as established by Julius Held’s magisterial studies and Wolfgang Stechow’s *Rubens and the Classical Tradition*, inexplicably absent in the bibliography. Pace Jaffé, Rubens doesn’t “hijack” (58) an armless Bacchus for his *Ganymede* but adapts Laocoön’s son for the heaven-bound youth.

Van Hout’s theory of “brainstorming” in Rubens’s studio strikes a discordant note. Rather than accept Sperling’s eyewitness account, he speculates that Rubens delegated key roles in designs that would bear his name, a practice he equates with “today’s leading architectural offices, fashion houses, or rock bands” (71). I remain among those convinced that Rubens was “the only begetter” of his compositions, despite Van Hout’s attempt to make evidence fit theory by reattributing to Jordaens Rubens’s oil sketch in Munich (76).

In her model essay on a religious theme and variations, Healy notes that the *Holy Family under the Apple Tree* presents “an unusual subject” for the exterior of Rubens’s *Ildefonso Triptych* and finds “no obvious connection to the interior image” (87). The key, I submit, lies in the prominent apples (fruit) being proffered to the Child and Mary, coordinating the iconography of the shutters and central panel as meditations on the “Hail Mary” prayed by Isabella—on her rosary—and Ildefonso (Scribner, *Rubens* [1989], 104): “Blessed art thou among women” (altarpiece opened) and “Blessed is the fruit of thy womb Jesus” (altarpiece closed).

Bisacca’s illuminating essay on the *Stormy Landscape with Philemon and Baucis* is followed by a technical analysis of its assemblage and restoration. Rubens’s compositional expansion is here inseparable from iconography. The side additions correspond to the introduction of Philemon and Baucis with Jupiter and Mercury, on the right, and, at left, a rainbow. Juxtaposed with deluge and death, the gods stand with the pious couple “a bow-shot” from the hilltop. Jupiter’s *Apollo Belvedere* pose is telling, since Apollo *alexikakos* (“warder-off of evil”) defines Jupiter’s gesture as he points—with the *Belvedere*’s arm that originally held a bow—to a rainbow at the far side, a symbol of God’s promise to Noah. Behind Philemon and Baucis, two intertwined trees symbolize their ultimate metamorphosis (Scribner, 92).

I cannot agree with Gruber that Rubens’s early *Judgment of Paris* in London was painted before his arrival in Italy (160). Reflections of Tintoretto’s Venetian light around the *putti* and of the *Torso Bevedere* and Michelangelo’s *ignudi* in the muscular Paris, plus the turn of head from Caravaggio’s *Calling of St. Matthew* (recorded in a Rubens drawing), together argue in favor of a Roman date of 1600–01 (Scribner, 50). Nor can I follow Weppelmann’s “choreography” (205) of Rubens’s pictorial spaces as combining ambivalence and lack of clarity. Rubens was the master of clarity. His surfaces always make sense; depths are revealed to those who probe.

Late in life, Rubens designed for Philip IV over sixty wall-to-wall paintings of Ovid's *Metamorphoses*. The theme was tailor-made for an artist who, as this lavish catalogue illustrates, perfected the art of metamorphosis.

Charles Scribner, *New York, NY*  
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*Lettered Artists and the Language of Empire: Painters and the Profession in Early Colonial Quito.* Susan Verdi Webster.

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Every survey of colonial Latin American art includes mention of Andrés Sánchez Gallque's triple portrait, *Francisco de Arobe and His Sons, Pedro and Domingo*, from 1599, the Quiteño painting celebrated as the first signed portrait in South America. In her new book, *Lettered Artists and the Languages of Empire*, Susan Verdi Webster discusses this portrait not only in the context of a newly rich understanding of the artist, his life, and his training but also in the context of the culture of sixteenth-century Quito, its painters, and their contributions to the colonial city's communication of identity.

Webster's study of painters in colonial Quito is an extremely important contribution to viceregal scholarship. The book's focus on the first century of artistic production in the viceroyalty of Peru is unusual in the literature and offers the author an opportunity to untangle some of the oft-assumed myths of early European dominance and the erasure of Andean culture, customs, and artisans. Her meticulous study complicates the narrative and importantly demonstrates the integration of artists, materials, and languages that flourished from the very beginning of Quito's colonial existence.

The strength of Webster's work lies in two components of her text: the extensive archival documents, most of which had not been previously published, and her astute analysis of history and objects, which allows her to offer a portrayal of early colonial urban culture in Quito that is more accurate than past characterizations. Webster first narrates the necessary context for learning about colonial Quiteño artists, with a thorough study of how painters were trained and educated, the materials they used, and how these systems related to both Andean and European ideas and traditions. There follow detailed discussions of documented artists, some well known, some not known at all. For example, Webster gathers all scholarship on Italian artist Angelino Medoro, who was in Quito for a brief time. Medoro has been mentioned by many scholars, but never discussed in such a succinct way, supported by varied sources. Webster gives similar attention to artists such as Francisco Gocial, the first Andean painter documented in Quito. Her research reveals that many artists, even in the early years, were Andean, and worked at the same level, with the same titles, as their European