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Roualt: A 'History': George Roualt's Miserere

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not always the only ones accepted by scholars. This is particularly true of his conception of a peculiar Judaeo-Christian theology.

Less adventurous perhaps than Daniélou in his interpretations, and dealing with a period for which we have much more extensive sources and greater knowledge, Marrou is no less successful. His explanations of the complicated Trinitarian and Christological controversies of the fourth and fifth centuries are as lucid and enlightening as they are accurate. The descriptions of the developing Christian liturgy and the pictures of Christian life and spirituality are no less vivid and solidly based in modern historical research.

The usefulness of the entire volume is much enhanced in its English edition by the numerous maps and judiciously chosen illustrations, each of the latter accompanied by helpful explanations of their significance for the understanding of the early Church. They are eloquent testimony to the insight into the life of the early centuries given us by archeological research.

It is a pity in such an excellent work of scholarship and one so splendidly presented, to have to refer to the large number of misprints and some clumsy translations, particularly in the frequent use of French forms for proper names of Latin or Greek origin. Nonetheless, these faults of editing and translation cannot seriously detract from the value of this fine book. It can only be hoped—with confidence, considering the competence of the other authors—that the same high standard of scholarship and readability will be maintained in the succeeding volumes of this series.

JOHN N. SCHUMACHER

ROUALT: A 'HISTORY'

GEORGES ROUALT'S MISERERE. By Frank and Dorothy Getlein, Milwaukee: The Bruce Publishing Company. 1964 ix, 149 pp.

To the stranger or the neophyte, much of Georges Roualt's art may seem incomprehensible, even repelling. And certainly to those whose likes run to the delicate and gently luminous impressionism of a Monet, a Degas, or to the clarity of a Casatt, it is possible to run away from a Roualt because it is "harsh," "bizarre," or just too bold and too dark. (Precisely my initial reactions.) Yet it is hard to remain indifferent. And to an amateur, such as I am, an intelligent explanation (if it is at all truly possible to "explain" an artist to a layman) of Roualt's work could lead to the development of sympathy if not outright liking for it.

Frank and Dorothy Getlein provide both an intelligent and sympathetic "history" of Roualt. In a spare but complete biographic essay, both pave the way for an acquaintanceship with his art. Then using all 58 prints of the *Miserere et Guerre* series, they lead the reader further on into friendship.

The prints are the result of several *intaglio* methods (the "cutting" into copper plates to produce a type of print): etching, aquatinting, engraving, and marking the surface by a roulette or a rocker. They were first printed in 1948 but were actually created between 1913 and 1927—a time of war followed by years of uneasy peace and cynicism. Their subject has been referred to as the Passion of Christ, "a Passion that goes on until the end of time for, although borne by God, it is made by man."

In this series Roualt has pictured mankind in varied shapes and moods, tortured and suffering, yet sharing in the glory of Redemption because it has shared in the passion of the God-man.

The authors enrich their reader as he goes through the reproductions, providing a meaningful commentary for each tableau.

Consider Plate 49: "The more noble the heart, the less stiff the neck."

A print of one of the faces of war: that of the Prussian war lord. Here "the stiff neck holds the face and the eyes permanently away from human reality, permanently turned to a heaven of one's own choosing."

An entirely different mood is seen in Plate 56: "In these dark times of vanity and unbelief, Our Lady of Land's End keeps watch."—A picture of Our Lady of Land's End and her son.

"Upon the firmly rooted body of the Virgin rests the eternal circle of Mother and Child. The movement begins in her head covering and in her eyes downcast in love; proceeds through her shoulder, her arm and hand, where it's taken up by the body of the Child. It sweeps up again as His head bends toward hers, but the circle is closed in His hands holding our world held out to her."

In simple prose they weave into a remarkable synthesis the spiritual and artistic ideas of Roualt. Incisively they get into the core of the matter at hand. With economy of style, they bring to the fore the heart of Roualt. It would seem that in the face of such an onslaught few readers have any choice but to follow through and seek his mind.