HUGO BUCHTHAL

Hugo Herbert Buchthal
1909–1996

WHEN HUGO BUCHTHAL DIED on 10 November 1996 obituary notices appeared in the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* and the *New York Times*, as well as in the London papers.[1] The headline in the *New York Times* put the matter succinctly: 'Hugo Buchthal Is Dead at 87; Studied Medieval Illumination'.

Buchthal was an art historian who for more than fifty years held a dominant position internationally in the fields in which he researched and published, most notably the study of manuscript illumination in lands around the Eastern Mediterranean, Aegean, and Adriatic, during the period extending from late antiquity to around 1400. His was one of those exceptional twentieth-century careers that helped to transform intellectual and scholarly life in Britain and the United States. It was in varying degrees the product of extraordinary circumstances, unforeseen

[1] *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, 14 Nov. 1996 (Konrad Hoffmann); *New York Times*, 13 Nov. 1996; *The Independent*, 19 Nov. 1996 (John Lowden), *The Guardian*, 19 Nov. 1996 (Michael Kauffmann, Sir Ernst Gombrich); note that *The Times*, 22 Nov. 1996, provided merely a précis of the latter two. See also 'Hugo Buchthal (1909–1996) In Memoriam' by Annemarie Weyl Carr in the *Newsletter* of the International Center of Medieval Art, New York, 1997. Ellen Schwartz kindly provided a copy of her paper 'Hugo Buchthal: Manuscripts and Memories' delivered at the session 'Pioneers of Byzantine Studies in America' at the Twenty-Third Byzantine Studies Conference, Madison, Wisconsin (1997). Of great value are the reminiscences of former colleagues and students collected in *In Memoriam Hugo Buchthal 1909–1996 and Amalia Serkin Buchthal 1904–1996*, Institute of Fine Arts, New York University, 22 May 1997 (New York, 1997).

Proceedings of the British Academy, **105**, 309–336. © The British Academy 2000.

events, and exceptionally strong personalities, most of them now distant, and unfamiliar to an increasing number of people. In the present case there is also some difficulty in reconstructing his history in detail, for Buchthal was unforthcoming about his early years and some other aspects of his life, with the notable exception of two publications of reminiscences of the 1930s, that he wrote in his eighties.[2] This memoir seeks to understand, nonetheless—even if only partially and at a provisional level—not only what he wrote or taught, but why, and how it is or was important.

A Childhood in Charlottenburg

Hugo Buchthal was born in Berlin on 11 August 1909. In his early years he felt his birthday to be especially auspicious, for 11 August came to be declared *Verfassungstag*, in celebration of the founding of the Weimar Republic (in 1919), and children throughout Germany were given the day off school. Hugo was the eldest of the three children of a fully assimilated Jewish family. His father, Eugen (1878–1954), came from Westphalia, and worked his way to a senior position in the Berlin head-office of Seeler and Cohn, clothing manufacturers and exporters (the company changed its name to Seeler Hermann after the National Socialist government began to take systematic action against Jews in 1933). Eugen acted at various times as agent for the firm in London, where they maintained an office, and this was to prove crucial to the survival of the family, as well as helpful to Hugo in learning English. Hugo's mother Thea Wolff (d. 1969) was from Greifenberg in Pomerania, the daughter of a grain merchant, one of a large family, and, by all accounts, a person of notably domineering temperament. Her image is recorded in photographs of a bronze bust by Helmut Garbe (who later became a Nazi and was eventually hanged). Hugo was brought up in the comfortable surroundings of a well-to-do family in Berlin. It is notable, however, that the Buchthal parents were not themselves the products of a social or intellectual elite—there were no professors or lawyers or doctors amongst Hugo's forebears. In the frequently snobbish world in which the Buchthals lived he may have felt

[2] 'Persönliche Erinnerungen eines Achtzigjährigen an sein Studium bei Panofsky in Hamburg', *Wiener Jahrbuch für Kunstgeschichte*, 44 (1991), 205–13; 'Persönliche Erinnerungen an die ersten Jahre des Warburg-Instituts in London', *Wiener Jahrbuch für Kunstgeschichte*, 45 (1992), 213–21.

uneasy about these relatively mundane antecedents. Certainly in later years he was reticent about all aspects of his family and background, never mentioning his relatives, so much so that even the presence of his parents in London was unknown to all but his closest friends.

In 1922 Eugen Buchthal (doubtless driven by Thea, who had strong views on matters of art and taste) commissioned the architects Hans and Wassili Luckhardt, together with Franz Hoffmann, to build a house occupying a large site on the corner of Lindenallee 22 and Halmstrasse 13–14, in the elegant Berlin suburb of Charlottenburg.[3] This remarkable structure was a thorough-going demonstration of the principles of Expressionism as applied to architecture, and as such a decided rarity of historic significance. It is hard to imagine how the Buchthals could have made a bolder public statement that they had 'arrived'. The house consisted of two more or less symmetrical arms with façades on the two streets, and a very large music room located centrally at the junction of the arms. The family rooms were to the left, and the reception rooms to the right. The wings enclosed a substantial terrace, overlooking the garden, which was laid out by the fashionable landscape architect Eryk Pepinski. The dominant theme was the Luckhardts' interest in the mystical symbolism of the 'crystal chain' (*die gläserne Kette*), which, with its resulting emphasis on acute triangles and diamond shapes, was conspicuous in the windows and throughout the design of the garden. The house was basically a single-storey structure, but its flat roof was surmounted by three gazebo-like rooms linked by pergolas. Photographs taken from its garden show its outlines as reminiscent of a villa glimpsed in some Pompeian landscape painting. The exterior was varied and colourful, with the façades decorated with heavy mouldings around the tall windows, contrasting with pale pilasters. The focal point of the exterior, on the street corner, consisted of a large window formed of two parallelograms within a setting of slightly angled planes, surmounted by a bold pediment. The entrance to the house was placed unobtrusively around the corner from this façade. The fourteen-year-old Hugo's room, marked *Sohn* (son) on the plans, was immediately to the left.

Whatever its architectural merit the Luckhardt house did not satisfy Eugen and Thea Buchthal, and in 1929 it was extensively remodelled by

[3] Elisabeth Maria Hajos and Leopold Zahn, *Berliner Architektur der Nachkriegszeit* (Berlin, 1928), 113; Architekten- und Ingenieur-Verein zu Berlin (ed.), *Berlin und seine Bauten*, part IV C (Berlin, 1975), 176–7.

Ernst Freud (the son of Sigmund Freud, and the father of Lucian Freud—whose works Buchthal greatly admired), who had had a flourishing practice building villas in the Berlin area since 1921. The remodelled Buchthal house became an outspoken statement of modernist *Neue Sachlichkeit* ('New Functionalism'). In his later years Hugo would remark on the unsettling effect of living in the Luckhardt house, which he claimed eschewed even the vertical, although photographs of the exterior hardly bear this out. Without question, however, Freud's work emphasised an uncompromising linearity and simplicity, and was nothing if not perpendicular. The house was transformed almost beyond recognition. The exterior was clad in a perfectly smooth and completely featureless façade. All the windows were refashioned as simple rectangles of similar proportions, without sills, mouldings, or any other form of 'decoration'. A starkly rectangular space enclosing a door was opened axially in the principal façade, and rooms were built above. The house became known unflatteringly in the neighbourhood as 'the cigar box' (*die Zigarrenkiste*), probably in reference to its colour as well as its shape. Photographs show that within a few years its outlines had begun to be softened by a dense covering of Virginia creeper, which eventually masked it almost entirely. The house as remodelled by Freud has survived little changed, and is now a registered national monument, since 1949 the home of the singer Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau. When Hugo and his wife visited it in the 1980s, Fischer-Dieskau recalls, Buchthal found the rooms all much smaller than he had remembered them, even though he had been an adult when he had last lived there.

From the Lindenallee villa Buchthal's mother pursued her cultural interests with vigour. The splendid *Musikzimmer* was the setting for private concerts by promising young soloists or chamber groups, some of whom, if visiting from afar, would stay as guests in the house. With the expert advice of Israel (J. B.) Neumann, and from 1923 his associate Karl Nierendorf, a collection of mostly contemporary art was built up. Hugo's younger siblings (Annegerda, later Anne; and Wolfgang, later Wilfred) recall works by, among others, Max Beckmann, Otto Dix, Vasily Kandinsky, Oskar Kokoschka, Emil Nolde, and Max Pechstein. Photographs of the house show a portrait by Otto Mueller, a Lovis Corinth landscape, and two small sculptures by Wilhelm Lehmbruck. There was a portrait of Hugo, aged about ten, by Willy Jäckel, and of Annegerda by Georg Walter Rössner. It can be no surprise that in these surroundings the adolescent Buchthal grew up with a passionate interest in music and art. Indeed it might be considered an ideal setting for the formation of an

art historian. Yet it is characteristic of a certain counter-suggestiveness that the art and music about which Buchthal cared most were quite opposite to what he encountered at home. That having been said it is a matter of regret that he should have resolutely refused to talk about these aspects of the Lindenallee villa, given the paucity of the historical record of what was clearly an important family salon.

Buchthal's childhood and adolescence seem to have been unremarkable, except for the circumstances in which he lived. He attended the Herder-Reform-Realgymnasium in Charlottenburg, was studious, but tended to be dismissive about his teachers, according to his sister. She remembers that on returning from school he would go every day immediately to the piano to play Wagner, *fortissimo*. He was taught the flute by Professor Brill, and became an accomplished player, the proud owner of a custom-made instrument, and he continued to play with friends in amateur chamber groups for many years. It was characteristic of his independence of mind that he should have insisted on receiving Jewish instruction and learning Hebrew as a boy, seemingly against his parents inclinations, but he then refused to have his Bar Mitzvah. Certainly the Buchthals saw themselves as Germans, not Jews. The parents were keen mountaineers, and young Hugo made the ascent of the Ortler (3900 m) in the Alto Adige at the age of twelve, which greatly impressed his siblings. The whole family enjoyed skiing, and Annegerda became a champion figure skater. Portrait photographs of the time show Hugo as a strikingly handsome, blond, blue-eyed youth, a romantic figure.

A Training in Art History

After leaving the Herderschule in 1927, Buchthal seemed destined for a career in his father's business, and he began to study political economy. He worked for Seeler and Cohn and pursued his studies for two years or so, including spells in Leipzig and then in London, where he attended lectures at the LSE. He also attended concerts and the opera. He learned to type (and would continue to type all his lectures and publications into his eighties). But he had no interest in the world of commerce. In due course he was able to persuade his father to fund a complete change of direction, a generous move for which he always expressed himself grateful.

When he committed himself to a life of scholarship in 1929–30 Buchthal was interested in philosophy as well as art history, but it cannot have been long before the focus of his attentions clarified. The fact that

he was awarded his doctorate in a technically demanding field in 1933, less than four years after commencing his university studies, suggests that he had a very clear idea of what he wished to achieve, even allowing for the fact that the story of the completion of his thesis is an extraordinary one. The academic *cursus* in the foreword to his doctorate is terse in what it records of his training. He went first to Paris and followed the lectures and courses in medieval and Byzantine art of Henri Focillon, those in medieval philosophy of Etienne Gilson, and returning later (as we learn from his reminscences) he attended lectures on Christian iconography by Gabriel Millet, and researched material in Millet's photo archive at the École des Hautes Études. From Paris he went to Heidelberg to work with the philosophers Ernst Hoffmann and Heinrich Rickert (who had taught Panofsky at Freiburg), and the art historian Hubert Schrade. He later credited Schrade with guiding his first steps in the study of medieval book illumination. Next came Berlin, and the art historians Karoly von Tolnai (Charles de Tolnay—whose strong Hungarian accent made his lectures almost incomprehensible), and Werner Weisbach. Finally he reached Hamburg, where he mentions as teachers the philosopher Edgar Wind, the medieval historians Richard Salomon and Hans Liebeschütz, and the art historians Eugen von Mercklin, Erwin Panofsky, and Fritz Saxl.

It was at Hamburg, under the eyes of Panofsky and Saxl—surely two of the most powerful scholars of the century—that the most important part of Buchthal's intellectual formation took place. Later he would often recall Saxl's insistence on the study of material evidence, and the inspiration of extended discussion with Panofsky.[4] This was a brief golden era for art history at Hamburg, and Buchthal was one of a number of highly able students, attracted by the extraordinary symbiosis of Panofsky and Saxl. Of course the stakes were high: knowledge of Greek, Latin, and Italian was obligatory for participation in their seminars. Buchthal had the benefit of excellent French and English in addition.

In his thesis for Panofsky, Buchthal worked on the Paris Psalter (Bibliothèque nationale de France, MS grec 139), developing what had been, in a previous year, a seminar topic under the broad heading of 'clas-

[4] As in 'Erinnerungen ... Panofsky'. See also 'Iconology and Byzantine Studies', Hugo Buchthal interviewed by Richard Candida Smith, Art History Oral Documentation Project, compiled under the auspices of the Getty Center for the History of Art and the Humanities (*c.*1994), Aug. 1993, 126 minutes [13–14]. I am most grateful to Elizabeth Sears for forwarding a partial transcript of this interview.

sical survivals in medieval art'.[5] The Paris Psalter is probably the most famous illuminated Byzantine manuscript, and it was the focus of a fierce controversy in the 1930s. The most remarkable feature of its images is their strongly classicising appearance, complete with numerous personifications. Charles Rufus Morey at Princeton held the Paris Psalter to be a product of the seventh century, still in direct contact with antique traditions, and produced in the cultural orbit of Alexandria.[6] Kurt Weitzmann in Berlin argued for production in Constantinople in the tenth century (hence it was a 'medieval' rather than a 'classical' work). He also denied the existence of antique models, and proposed that the artists were working in a Renaissance spirit, constructing a classicising work from elements, such as personifications, assembled piecemeal from a variety of sources.[7] In his thesis Buchthal argued for a third view: the Paris Psalter was certainly a tenth-century work (contra Morey), but it was based on pictorial traditions and compositions that went back to late antiquity. Its artists were not, in Weitzmann's sense, creative, but rather working with pictorial models that were subsequently lost, but whose existence could be demonstrated from evidence surviving elsewhere in early and middle Byzantine art. Broadly speaking Buchthal's arguments have stood the test of time.

The foreword of his thesis reveals that he had examined manuscripts in the Bibliothèque Nationale (Paris), the Vatican, the Ambrosiana (Milan), the Marciana (Venice), the Laurenziana (Florence), the Staatsbibliothek (Berlin), and the Seraglio and 'lesser known libraries and collections of Constantinople'. (The Istanbul trip was made possible by Saxl, and it was there that Buchthal first met the architectural historian Richard Krautheimer.) This thorough foundation in systematic, object-based, empirical research, was at the heart of everything that Buchthal would do throughout his career. To a considerable extent it is what has ensured the continuing usefulness of his work, for he was an indefatigable traveller in search of manuscripts, and a precise and accurate recorder of information.

[5] Erwin Panofsky and Fritz Saxl, 'Classical Mythology in Mediaeval Art', *Metropolitan Museum Studies*, 4 (1933), 228–80. The article was based on a lecture by Panofsky, first delivered at Princeton, but see the remark on p. 228 n. 1: 'It resulted, however, from the common endeavor of the two authors, who in their research were assisted by the Hamburg students of art history.'

[6] C. R. Morey, 'Notes on East Christian Miniatures', *Art Bulletin*, 11 (1929), 5–103, esp. pp. 21–45.

[7] Kurt Weitzmann, 'Der Pariser Psalter Ms. Grec. 139 und die mittelbyzantinische Renaissance', *Jahrbuch für Kunstwissenschaft*, 6 (1929), 178–94.

Furthermore he had an extraordinary memory for images. Yet he was no mere cataloguer. He constructed wide-ranging arguments in his thesis deriving from a combination of stylistic and iconographic analyses, even if he did not go as far as Panofsky's fully developed iconological approach in seeking out the broadest possible intellectual context. As it happens there was far too much terra incognita in the field of Byzantine studies at that time to have permitted such an enquiry.

The story of the completion and examination of Buchthal's thesis is remarkable and revealing, and he was happy to recount it. Panofsky was on a visiting appointment at New York University when in the first months of 1933 Hitler became Chancellor, the Enabling Bill was passed, and the systematic expulsion of Jews from state offices (such as university professorships) began. Relatively inconspicuous because of his absence, Panofsky, an assimilated Jew like Buchthal, at first escaped attention in the relatively un-doctrinaire University of Hamburg. But when he returned in the summer of 1933 it was only to settle his affairs and remove his possessions, for the temporary post in New York had been converted into a long-term appointment. As the students debated what would become of them Saxl stepped in with the instruction that they must complete their dissertations and be examined for their doctorates by the end of the semester, which was then only two weeks away. Later Buchthal was to reckon that he still needed two years of further work, but he and Adolf Katzenellenbogen (who went on to a distinguished career in the United States) worked night and day to have their theses ready. (H. W. Janson, W. S. Heckscher, and Walter Horn, who would also all triumph in America in due course, were less advanced with their studies.) Somehow the thesis was written, and the surviving copy of the typescript, on the shelves of the Warburg Institute Library, shows no signs of haste. Of the various aspects of the traditional German doctoral process, only one proved to be traumatic. Panofsky refused to enter the University in order to conduct his part of the public examination, which was held instead in his apartment. Panofsky questioned Buchthal for most of the allotted hour mainly on Flemish painting, and he was duly awarded his doctorate. Speaking in his eighties, in the unguarded context of an interview, Buchthal revealed that he was only awarded his doctorate *magna cum laude*, rather than *summa cum laude*. This, he suspected, was because of a single unfair question about 'a second-rate picture by a second-rate artist'.[8] Even if this

[8] 'Iconology and Byzantine Studies', 27–31.

detail normally went unmentioned, it had clearly remained vivid. It provides some insight into the personalities of both Panofsky and Buchthal in their roles as master and pupil. And in later years doctoral candidates were fortunate if Buchthal did not at some point visit upon them some of the intense anxiety that it seems he must have felt in failing to live up to what he perceived as his revered *Doktorvater*'s highest expectations.

With the Kulturwissenschaftliche Bibliothek Warburg to London, 1933–45

In 1933 Fritz Saxl was director of the Kulturwissenschaftliche Bibliothek Warburg (KBW) in Hamburg, a private library founded by Aby Warburg, scion of the banking family and cultural historian. The library was (and is) one of the most remarkable achievements in the humanities of the twentieth century. Focused on the survival of the classical tradition, very broadly understood, it has been built up systematically by a series of learned librarians to enable research across what are still the boundaries between academic disciplines. It was here that Panofsky, and students like Buchthal, pursued their studies, met, and talked.

Saxl perceived with great clarity the threat that the Nazis posed not just to individual Jews, but to the entire structure of German academic life, and he negotiated successfully to bring the KBW out of Hamburg to London. (The story has been told elsewhere.)[9] On 12 December 1933 the library left Hamburg, bound for London, in two small steamers, the *Hermia* and the *Jessica*. Support for the first three years of what became the Warburg Institute was granted by Samuel Courtauld (who had been instrumental in founding the Courtauld Institute in 1932—Lord Lee of Fareham played a crucial role in both instances) and the Warburg family, and the library was housed initially at Thames House (Millbank), and, after a period of disruption in 1937, at the Imperial Institute (South Kensington), in space vacated by the removal of the University of London Library to the new Senate House building. In due course Courtauld granted financial support to the Warburg for a further seven years until its position was finally secured when it was incorporated in the University of London in 1944.

[9] See in the first place Eric M. Warburg in the Annual Report of the Warburg Institute, 1952–3, 13–16.

Buchthal travelled to London at the beginning of 1934 to join the Warburg. He shared a flat near Victoria Station with Albi Rosenthal, son of the Viennese art- and book-dealer Erwin Rosenthal, who was found work in the Warburg as assistant to the architectural historian Rudolf Wittkower (from Berlin), who was himself in charge of the Photographic Collection. In her memoirs Esther Simpson, secretary of the Academic Assistance Council (AAC—funded by British academics to support refugee scholars, and from 1936 reconstituted as the Society for the Protection of Science and Learning), records that she played trios with Buchthal and Rosenthal at this time.[10]

The Warburg Institute, under Saxl's leadership, became a magnet for scholars of the humanities fleeing the Nazi regime. The core academic staff consisted of Saxl and Gertrud Bing (formerly Warburg's assistant), Wittkower, who by an accident of birth had a British passport, and the librarian Hans Meier. Edgar Wind was a kind of *éminence grise*, who left for the United States in 1939. The younger members were Buchthal himself, Otto Kurz, and from early 1936 Ernst Gombrich. There was Otto Fein the bookbinder (and in due course photographer), and Anne Marie Meyer, secretary and later registrar. They worked under Saxl's benign and tireless guidance, and Buchthal later remembered the period before, during, and immediately after the war as characterised by the protective and supportive qualities of a large family.[11] This was, I think, no mere manner of speaking. In a real sense the Warburg became Buchthal's family. But Saxl spread his influence and energy very widely, far beyond this 'family'. Scholars visiting the Warburg were paid to lecture at the Courtauld Institute, thanks to funds from the AAC. In these years such luminaries included Richard Krautheimer, Walter Friedlaender, Friedrich Antal, Erwin Panofsky, Otto Demus, Ernst Kitzinger, and many more.[12] Saxl personally organised support and introductions for many of these scholars, allowing them to become established in Britain or the United States.

[10] R. M. Cooper (ed.), *Refugee Scholars: Conversations with Tess Simpson* (Leeds, 1992), 116.

[11] 'Erinnerungen . . . Warburg-Instituts', 214.

[12] A useful tabulation of names and dates is provided by Barbara Hately-Broad, 'Refugee Art Historians: An Investigation into the Immigration and Employment of German-Speaking Art Historians in Britain 1939–1945', MA thesis, Oxford Brookes University (1996), 64–7. A copy is available in the Warburg Library. More comprehensive is Anne Béchard-Léauté, 'The Contribution of Émigré Art Historians to the British Art World after 1933', Ph.D. thesis, Cambridge University (1999), *passim*, and tables on pp. 240–6.

In London Buchthal was occupied on Warburg tasks, such as preparing brief review articles for the *Bibliography of the Survival of the Classics*, the second volume of which, covering 1932–33 (published in 1938), contains more than forty entries by him. But initially his main intellectual activity was to rework all aspects of his thesis as a book, *The Miniatures of the Paris Psalter: A Study in Middle Byzantine Painting*. This was published in 1938 as Volume 2 of the series Studies of the Warburg Institute (and reprinted in 1968). If the thesis was produced with unavoidable haste, the book was a very different matter. It is a beautifully printed large-format volume, with superb illustrations, many made from specially taken photographs. Publication was made possible by an anonymous donation, and correspondence in the Warburg Institute files reveals that the total cost of printing and binding the edition of 300 copies in Belgium was £110 (then roughly six months' salary of a junior librarian). Unfortunately a third of the print run was destroyed by a bomb in 1944.

In scholarly circles *The Paris Psalter* created an immediate impact, and established Buchthal's reputation internationally. At Princeton students passed the book from hand to hand, for by this date Weitzmann had joined Morey there even though their differences of opinion were irresolvable, and the Paris Psalter controversy was constantly debated.[13] They read Buchthal's conclusion, that the minatures are 'neither pure creations of Alexandrian antiquity, nor middle Byzantine compositions amplified by heterogeneous elements taken at random from ancient monuments. The substance of the iconography can in most cases be traced back to the early Christian period.'[14] This was considered to have settled the matter.

In 1934, if not before, Buchthal expressed to Saxl an interest in the study of Islamic illumination, and Saxl was able to arrange with Sir Denison Ross, Director of London University's School of Oriental Studies (SOS), (and an important figure on the committee that had succeeded in bringing the Warburg to London), to admit 'one of our young research students for the purpose of studying Arabic, after completion of his education as an art historian' (the wording is that of the Warburg's Annual Report). Beginning in the autumn of 1934 Buchthal spent two years attending classes at SOS along with his Warburg activities. It was Saxl again who organised for Buchthal a fellowship that then enabled him to

[13] Craig Hugh Smyth in *In Memoriam Hugo Buchthal*, 2.
[14] *Miniatures of the Paris Psalter*, 47.

spend the entire academic year 1936/7 at the American University in Beirut, where he continued his Arabic studies intensively, and took the opportunity to travel widely, visiting sites of art historical interest, as he describes with relish in his reminiscences.[15] It was here too, in the German consulate in Beirut, that he was married to Nicoletta Rosenthal, his former flatmate Albi's sister. This was a part of his life of which he never later spoke, for whatever the romance that had drawn them together it did not last long, and after a year or so the marriage was over. The divorce, however, was not at all easy to obtain for bureaucratic reasons. When visiting Jerusalem from Beirut, Buchthal met L. A. Mayer, Professor of Arabic and Islamic art at the Hebrew University. Mayer was so impressed by Buchthal's linguistic accomplishments and his first-hand knowledge of the art-historical material that he offered him a fellowship at the University. This Buchthal happily accepted, but the political situation in Europe had become so threatening that he decided to return to London in 1938 before the fellowship had run its course.

Buchthal's immersion in Eastern Mediterranean material bore fruit in a series of articles that began to appear in 1939, and in the book, compiled jointly with Otto Kurz, *A Handlist of Illuminated Oriental Christian Manuscripts*, Studies of the Warburg Institute 12, which appeared in 1942, and is still useful today as a starting point in a field divided by formidable linguistic barriers. Buchthal's approach to Islamic miniatures in the articles is closely related to that developed for the Paris Psalter. It is characterised by a detailed knowledge of the original material, and all the relevant bibliography, together with the use of extensive photographic resources. To these is harnessed a plan to trace pictorial models, and to observe iconographic traditions, notably in relation to texts stemming from classical antiquity. 'Early Islamic Miniatures from Baghdad' with its focus on manuscripts of Dioskurides and the *Hippiatrica* is a good example.[16] But not content in this instance merely to trace and reconstruct the images dispersed from a manuscript in the Topkapi Saray (the Seraglio), he uses the Cairo *Hippiatrica*, with its documented Baghdad origin, to posit a Baghdad school of painting, assembled with the help of detailed stylistic analysis. This interest in defining regional or local schools of manuscript illumination had been developed as an analytical method by Wilhelm Vöge,[17] one of Panofsky's supervisors, and it is one

[15] 'Erinnerungen . . . Warburg-Instituts', 218–20.
[16] Originally published in *Journal of the Walters Art Gallery*, 5 (1942), 18–39.
[17] Notably in Wilhelm Vöge, *Eine deutsche Malerschule um die Wende des ersten Jahrtausends* (Trier, 1891).

to which Buchthal would frequently return. He accompanied the article with more than forty images, thus also enabling others to pursue the material further.

In 1938 Hugo was introduced to Amalia (Maltschi) Serkin in the London flat of Ernst and Ilse Gombrich, and they were married in 1939. Maltschi had attended the Eugenie Schwarzwald Schule in Vienna, where Kokoschka was for a while the art teacher, and thereafter she made a career as an illustrator and technical artist in Berlin and in Switzerland, before moving to London. In the 1940s she produced a series of twelve children's books, with fairy stories (some retold by Ilse Gombrich) illustrated by photographs of dolls and models she had made. For Cinderella (1942), a photograph of the Coronation Coach in the London Museum was also used.[18] At eighty she could still produce complex origami animals with extraordinary dexterity and control. Throughout her life Maltschi remained very close to her brother Rudi (the pianist Rudolf Serkin), who was just a year older. Rudolf Serkin was married to the daughter of the violinist Adolf Busch, with whom he frequently performed in London in the late 1930s (and enjoyed a close and almost lifelong relationship), a period when Adolf's brother Fritz Busch was music director at John Christie's Glyndebourne Opera. Through these connections Hugo gained an entrée to a world of musical maestros for which he had the highest respect. In due course Hugo and Maltschi also followed the career of Rudi's son, Peter Serkin, with great interest. It is perhaps not surprising, given his concern for the mental processes of the making of images, that Buchthal took a particular pleasure in attending rehearsals, whether of chamber works or the great set pieces of the concert and operatic repertoire.

With the advent of war the Warburg Library was crated up, and taken to three separate locations for safekeeping. Only the reference books from the Reading Room were kept on hand as a core collection. In 1940 Dr Stella Kramrisch, a Viennese who had finished her doctorate on Indian art at the Courtauld in 1939, 'readily fell in with [my] suggestion', as Saxl expressed it in the Warburg's Annual Report, to mount a photographic exhibition demonstrating how Hindu and Buddhist religious ideas were expressed in art, with occasional pictorial comparisons with

[18] There were two series, 'Collins Colour Camera Books' (eight titles), each with sixteen colour plates, and 'Bedtime Stories' (four titles, also published by Collins), in paperback each with four plates.

medieval Western architecture and sculpture. The exhibition was one of a series which Saxl considered an important part of the Warburg's mission for public education. It remained open for six weeks during a period of intense bombardment. Although forgotten now, in contrast to Saxl and Wittkower's exhibition *British Art and the Mediterranean*, subsequently published as a book in 1948 (and reprinted in 1969), Indian Art was a popular success at the time. After London it toured (in 1941) to seven provincial destinations, and at Sunderland, for example, attracted more than 14,000 visitors in 24 days. (As a follow-up, E. M. Forster was persuaded to lecture on 'Indian Novelists Writing in English' at the Warburg in March 1941.) Saxl, with characteristic energy and enthusiasm, also saw the exhibition as an opportunity for the Warburg to enrich its Photographic Collection, and in due course Kramrisch material, along with prints from the British Museum, India Office Library, and Royal Asiatic Society were accessioned. Despite his vigorous protestations, Buchthal was put to work on the photos of Gandharan material by Saxl. It is easy to see why Buchthal objected. After three or more years of intense work and exploration, adding Islamic and Near Eastern material to his field of scholarly competence, Buddhist art in what would later become Pakistan was in every sense a long way further for him to travel (and in any case he could not travel there literally, which—had it been possible—might have made the project more attractive). Saxl could not be gainsaid, however, and so Buchthal immersed himself in the Gandhara question, specifically focusing on the relationship between the clearly classicising sculpture and possible Hellenistic or Roman sources. His industry in the photo archive is borne out by his identifications on the backs of many prints. More significantly it bore notable fruit in five articles published between 1942 and 1945. In several ways the most intriguing of these (to an outsider, at least) is the last, 'The Western Aspects of Gandhara Sculpture', which was originally delivered as a lecture to the British Academy.[19] This is a work so elegantly constructed, and so powerfully argued, setting its material so deftly in a broad context, that we must regret that in later years Buchthal never gave a major lecture series in Britain, or wrote for an audience other than of specialists.

[19] *Proceedings of the British Academy*, 31, (1945), 151–76. The most recent study, W. Zwalf, *A Catalogue of the Gandhara Sculpture in the British Museum*, 2 vols. (1996), 67 talks cautiously of the 'unresolved relationship with Graeco-Roman art' and the 'uncertain chronology'.

A list of publications that extends unbroken through the war years gives an impression of continuity that utterly belies the massive disruption, and occasional horror caused by events. With the threat of German invasion in the summer of 1940 Buchthal was briefly interned on the Isle of Man as an enemy alien along with other German and Italian nationals. Of the Warburg staff (excepting Wittkower) only Saxl had a British passport at this time, thanks to the personal intervention of Kenneth Clark (then Director of the National Gallery). Saxl worked tirelessly for the release of internees. Some were less fortunate than Buchthal. The Warburg's Annual Report for 1940–1 records laconically: 'Dr Demus continues his work on mosaics of Monreale in a Canadian internment camp . . . Dr Kitzinger could not do any research in the Australian camp, which lies in a desert stretch of land, but he learned to read Russian. . . .' Hugo's younger brother Wolfgang was also amongst those interned in Australia, where he spent two years in a succession of camps, an experience he describes without bitterness as inevitable in the circumstances, but a profound waste. In April 1938 Buchthal's parents, brother, and sister had all moved to London. (Because of the existence of the London office Eugen Buchthal had been able to send money out of Germany in the Nazi era.) The Nazi race laws inexorably sought to extinguish even the most assimilated families of Jewish origin, such as the Buchthals. In 1936 the Lindenallee villa was sold to Dr Bruno Bruhn, a former director of Krupp (the degree of compulsion involved is not clear, but after the war the family received some compensation), though Hugo's parents were permitted to continue living on the upper floor. Annegerda, whose training as a physiotherapist in Munich had been abruptly terminated in 1933, continued her studies in Bologna. Wolfgang was sent to boarding school in Switzerland. In 1938 the family was able to ship some of the contents of their house to London, where those pictures not already consigned to Wildenstein in Berlin for sale were disposed of (no records survive). They can have fetched little, for in the late 1930s German avant-garde painting of the 1920s was virtually worthless in monetary terms. Wolfgang went to St Paul's School, having previously stayed in London in the summer of 1937 with the sister and brother-in-law of a former governess in an attempt to acclimatise to life in England. The family lived in reduced circumstances in a small flat in West Kensington, and then from 1942 in Putney Heath. All took British citizenship as soon as this was possible in the late 1940s. Annegerda (Anne) practised as a physiotherapist, and in due course married an Englishman. Wolfgang took a degree at the LSE, was advised by his tutor to anglicise his name (he became Wilfred

Bucknall), and made a successful career as an economist. This is to look ahead, however, to more settled times.

On 17 April 1941 the Warburg's librarian, Hans Meier, was killed in an air raid when there was a direct hit on the house in which he was lodging. With him was destroyed the only copy of the Warburg's principal intellectual activity: the complete third volume (which Meier was preparing for the press) of the *Bibliography of the Survival of the Classics*, on which all those connected to the Institute had expended enormous labour over several years. This was not only a shocking personal tragedy but a scholarly disaster for the Institute. In the immediate aftermath Buchthal was appointed librarian (a post he was to hold until 1949), with Otto Kurz as his assistant. It was decided to evacuate the personnel and the working library (that part not in store, augmented by the books of the staff and some other scholars for whom the Warburg was an essential resource, such as Anthony Blunt and Roger Hinks) to The Lea, near Denham, Buckinghamshire, a mansion made available by Lady Gilbey (of the vintners family—it was later owned by the conductor Sir Malcom Sargent, and is currently the home of the entertainer Cilla Black). In this house for more than three years the entire staff of the Warburg lived in close proximity to one another. Saxl and Bing brought their Austrian cook from Dulwich, but when she was off duty a rota of wives had the task of preparing meals. There was no mains water supply, and another unwelcome daily task was to catch and harness the bad-tempered pony, and then to cajole it into driving the apparatus that pumped water from a well. All jobs were shared, and all meals taken together at two tables. The men 'dug for victory' under the enthusiastic eye of Saxl, who was a keen gardener, and clearly relished some aspects of this communal life, even with its privations and lack of privacy. The Imperial Institute was reached by Underground from Uxbridge, and those teaching at the Courtauld travelled on to Guildford, where a handful of students were taught in classes held in Margaret Whinney's house (she was later Deputy Director of the Courtauld). Buchthal was among these regular lecturers at the Courtauld, where his subjects were Early Christian Art, and the Origins of Islamic Painting. Into this difficult world Hugo and Maltschi's only child, Anna, was born in 1944. (She later trained in medicine, became a consultant anaesthetist, and moved to the Netherlands in the 1970s where she currently lives and works.)

Research, Teaching and Publication: the Warburg Institute Years, 1945–65

The end of the war saw the Warburg reinstalled in the Imperial Institute, now as part of the University of London. In 1945 Buchthal was appointed Lecturer at the Warburg, a post he held jointly with that of librarian until promoted Reader in April 1949, and succeeded by Otto Kurz as librarian in October 1949. In 1945 he is also recorded as beginning work on 'the influence of the Crusades in illuminated manuscripts of the 12th and 13th centuries'. This laconic reference marks the start of what was to prove his life's magnum opus. Buchthal seems to have been encouraged in this direction by T. S. R. Boase, Director of the Courtauld Institute, who had contributed an article on 'The Arts in the Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem' to the second volume of the *Journal of the Warburg Institute* in 1938–9.[20] Boase must have felt that Buchthal's extraordinary command of languages, as well as his knowledge of the art history of the Near East in these centuries, and his knowledge of manuscripts equipped him ideally for the task. Certainly the presence in the British Museum of the Psalter of Queen Melisende, one of the key manuscripts in the entire project, was also a strong incentive. For more than ten years Buchthal worked intensively on the project, which was published in 1957 as *Miniature Painting in the Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem*. Throughout most of this time he published only a few reviews, and had, by current standards, relatively little teaching (certainly he also had more research time after relinquishing the librarianship in 1949). Starting in 1947–8 he gave up to three courses annually on manuscript illumination at London University's Institute of Historical Research (IHR). These classes would be attended by a small group of students and others from, for example, the Department of Manuscripts of the British Museum. Occasionally he might make special arrangements: Michael Kauffmann recalls a course 'An Introduction to Book Illumination' at the Warburg in the early 1950s. It began with a consideration of Trajan's Column as an exercise in narrative art. But there is no record of its being repeated. From 1951–2 Buchthal began to teach jointly at the IHR with Francis Wormald, Professor of Palaeography, and later the IHR's

[20] *Journal of the Warburg Institute*, 2 (1938–9), 1–21; note especially pp. 14–15 and pl. 3a–d on the Melisende Psalter.

Director.[21] Wormald discussed liturgical texts in Crusader manuscripts, Buchthal talked about their illuminations, and some of the students contributed papers. This collaboration was appreciated by Buchthal, who always spoke very warmly of Wormald. He also continued to lecture regularly on Early Christian and Byzantine art at the Courtauld Institute, and he travelled systematically to examine Crusader material in libraries throughout Europe, as well as in the United States when on leave at Dumbarton Oaks (Washington DC) in 1950–1. In particular he made more or less annual visits to the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris.

The first published fruits of the Crusader work were two articles on miniature painting in Norman Sicily, which appeared in 1955 and 1956. Because they are more or less self-contained spin-offs from the big project they give little impression of the magnitude of what was to come. But this is not to belittle their originality or achievement. They follow the same methodological procedures, carefully assembling visual and liturgical evidence which is then integrated with material from the narrative historical sources. Subsequent work by other scholars, notably Angela Daneu Lattanzi (in Palermo), has built successfully on the foundations that Buchthal proposed for Sicilian illumination in these articles.[22]

Miniature Painting in the Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem is beyond question an art historical milestone. In it Buchthal set out to assemble all the evidence for the existence of a hitherto unsuspected school of manuscript illumination active largely at Jerusalem in the twelfth century, and at Acre in the thirteenth. He purposely excluded only those manuscripts 'illustrated by Western masters in a purely French style', a corpus later studied, with support from Buchthal, by Jaroslav Folda.[23] Buchthal assembled his corpus on a mixture of stylistic and liturgical grounds, and such was the thoroughness of his work that after forty years of intense activity there have been no major additions to (or subtractions from) his corpus. As a result the cautious and defensive tone of the book's preface now seems rhetorical, for it is hard to think back to a time when the pioneering nature of

[21] Wormald was one of those British scholars quick to recognise the scholarly value of what the Warburg and its staff had to offer. He contributed two articles to the first volume of the *Journal of the Warburg Institute*, (1937–8): 'The Rood of Bromholm', 1–45; 'The Crucifix and the Balance', 276–80.

[22] A. Daneu Lattanzi, *Lineamenti di storia della miniatura in Sicilia* (Florence, 1966), 20–33. See also the discussion in Helen C. Evans and William D. Wixom (eds.), *The Glory of Byzantium: Art and Culture of the Middle Byzantine Era, A.D. 843–1261* (New York, 1997), catalogue no. 316.

[23] *Crusader Manuscript Illumination at Saint-Jean d'Acre, 1275–1291* (Princeton, 1976).

the work meant its author ran the real risk of having overlooked some vital example—hidden away in a little known library, perhaps, or overlooked amongst the inexhaustible riches of some great collection—that might call the whole argument into question. The book is now universally credited with having created a vigorous new field in art history. Within a few years of its publication Kurt Weitzmann, in his work on the icons at St Catherine's Monastery on Mt Sinai, found a large number of 'Crusader' panels which he was able to fit neatly into the schema Buchthal had proposed, and further work followed rapidly. Even the formulation of the title Buchthal chose for his study, which for long seemed an encumbrance because it is almost impossible to abbreviate, can be seen to have stood the test of time. In recent years the notion of Crusader art, widely used in the 1960s to '80s, with its inevitable focus on the possibly tendentious 'Crusader' element, came to be questioned in the light of growing sensitivity to the complex mixture of elements at play.[24] Buchthal can be seen to have specifically avoided the term 'Crusader' in his title. He refers in his conclusion to 'a multi-racial society whose character, at the same time cosmopolitan and super-national, was so far ahead of its own time'.[25]

Miniature Painting in the Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem was immediately recognised as a classic, and its author was soon the recipient of welcome honours. He was appointed a corresponding member of the Deutsches Archäologisches Institut in 1957, awarded the Prix Schlumberger of the Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres in 1958, elected to fellowship of the British Academy in 1959, and appointed Professor of the History of Byzantine Art in the University of London in 1960. The book remains a monument to absolute standards in art historical research and publication. Buchthal took infinite pains, for example, over the photography and printing of its 567 black-and-white illustrations, most of them reproduced actual size. When the proofs showed them to be too dark, he insisted—to the dismay of the Clarendon Press—that the entire body of plates (on more than 150 pages) be reprinted. It was somehow characteristic of Buchthal's life, however, that a large number of copies of the book

[24] For example, Bianca Kühnel, *Crusader Art of the Twelfth Century: A Geographical, an Historical, or an Art Historical Notion?* (Berlin, 1994); Jaroslav Folda, *The Art of the Crusaders in the Holy Land, 1098–1187* (Cambridge, 1995), especially pp. 1–4 and notes on pp. 481–2; see also the collected studies in Lucy-Anne Hunt, *Byzantium, Eastern Christendom and Islam: Art at the Crossroads of the Medieval Mediterranean*, 2 vols. (1998).

[25] *Miniature Painting in the Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem*, 105.

should have been pulped by Oxford University Press when they moved their depository. 'They got their revenge' he would say, with a smile so mischievous it caused you to wonder whether the story was entirely true, or even entirely untrue.

By the late 1950s Buchthal was already deeply involved in his next long-term research project, a study of the Venetian Trecento illustration of manuscripts of the *Historia destructionis Troiae* of Guido de Columnis, seen against the background of Benoît de Ste-Maure's twelfth-century Roman de Troie. This was not published (as *Historia Troiana*) until 1971, by which time Buchthal had left London for New York, although its appearance in the series Studies of the Warburg Institute somewhat masks the fact. It grew from a project in which Saxl (who died in 1948) had been interested, and was also in a sense a spin-off from *Miniature Painting in the Latin Kingdom*. An extensive and systematic card index in the Photographic Collection of the Warburg testifies to the work of a team of assistants, stretching back over many years (but the various hands do not include either Saxl's or Buchthal's). Writing to Gombrich from the Institute for Advanced Study at Princeton, where he was a fellow in 1959–60, Buchthal discusses progress, and cites the help that Weitzmann has given him: 'I have at last been able to solve the problem which had haunted me during the last two years, i.e. the sources of the illustrations of Guido de Columnis . . . I owe a great deal to Weitzmann who gave much of his time to look at my photographs and to advise me. And I feel that this is a new and promising beginning.'[26] The answer was that the pictorial relationships were to be explained by a number of lost models. But perhaps Buchthal's most remarkable finding was far from hypothetical in its formulation: he demonstrated that the artist of the Madrid manuscript (Biblioteca Nacional 17805) must have consulted the famous sixth-century Vienna Genesis manuscript, in Venice, in the years around 1340. This consultation, he argued, was undertaken specifically in order to give a late antique feel to the images of the Troy story. In the relatively better documented world of the fourteenth-century Veneto Buchthal then set out to locate his Troy manuscripts in a context of ideas as well as art. In some ways *Historia Troiana* is Buchthal's most intriguing publication, and it is fair to say that its implications have yet to be fully explored.

[26] I am very grateful to Sir Ernst Gombrich for providing me with photocopies of letters from Buchthal at this period: HB to EG, 31 Oct. 1959.

At the Institute of Fine Arts, New York University 1965–75

In the 1940s Saxl had a running joke that would surface at discussions of the Warburg's projects. Gently mocking Buchthal's desire for status and recognition, Saxl would remind those present that when it came to planning for the future they must consider '*ein Fürstentum* (a principality) *für Dr Buchthal*.' In 1965 Buchthal finally received his *Fürstentum*.

It was Richard Krautheimer who first suggested to his colleagues that Buchthal should join the faculty of the Institute of Fine Arts of New York University (a centre for graduate teaching and research).[27] Previously Buchthal had been wooed by at least one American university,[28] and he had been a visiting professor at Columbia University as recently as 1963. He accepted New York University's offer and commenced at the Institute in the autumn of 1965. If the move from Hamburg to London had been difficult in every way, the move from London to New York was altogether different. Buchthal arrived already established as a 'great man'; he was well paid; he and Maltschi were able to rent a succession of fine apartments, including one on a top floor overlooking Central Park; his emigré status was a mark of distinction in New York society. And a striking transformation began to take place. Buchthal had written of meeting Panofsky at Princeton in 1959, and the change he found in him from student days: 'He is very sweet and accessible, and no longer so forbidding as he used to be'.[29] As Buchthal found himself the centre of an admiring and devoted coterie of clever and ambitious young scholars (to whom he was known by a distinctly americanised pronunciation of his surname, or more familiarly by his first name) he too became much less forbidding. Those who were not his students also sought out his advice and patronage. And most remarkable, perhaps, he achieved this without making any attempt to woo even a scholarly public. He let there be no question that what he and his students were engaged on was an undertaking of importance, to be tackled with complete dedication, and to those for whom such seriousness was no obstacle the effect was inspiring.

[27] Craig Hugh Smyth in *In Memoriam Hugo Buchthal*, 2.

[28] See HB to EG, 11 Dec. 1959, and 8 Jan. 1960.

[29] HB to EG, 31 Oct. 1959. A sense of just how forbidding Panofsky could be at this period is conveyed in the colourful memoirs of William Heckscher, see Elizabeth Sears, 'The Life and Work of William S. Heckscher: Some Petites Perceptions', *Zeitschrift für Kunstgeschichte*, 53 (1990), 107–33, esp. pp. 116–18.

While at the Institute of Fine Arts—from 1970 as Ailsa Mellon Bruce Professor—Buchthal taught a wide range of courses, covering all aspects of Early Christian and Byzantine art, whether in the form of lectures or seminars. (But he showed no interest in working up for publication anything that was not based on primary research.) His lectures were delivered somewhat monotonously from a complete typescript text, while he perched on a stool (he suffered much pain and discomfort in these years from arthritis). As Robert Nelson observed, those enlivening tales of the accidents and incidents of a scholar's life, with which he might have punctuated proceedings, he kept for private discussion.[30] This was precisely the style in which he had lectured in London, but there it had not had the same results. This is not to say that in London his lectures lacked a human side. Peter Lasko, while a student at the Courtauld (later he would become its Director), tells of losing the sole typescript of a Buchthal lecture, which he had been allowed to borrow overnight, on the Underground (imagine the result). Buchthal, however, took the news surprisingly calmly, requesting that his slides be set up again in the lecture room at 20 Portman Square, and a shorthand secretary be in attendance. He then delivered the 'lost' lecture from memory, and it lasted (as is the way in such stories) exactly the sixty minutes of the original.

In the long term certainly one of Buchthal's most striking achievements in New York was the direction of a dozen or more doctoral theses ranging over material from late antiquity to the fourteenth century, and dealing with every type of art from a wide range of perspectives.[31] Some of these dissertations were not completed, it is true, until after he had left New York, but all the students remained deeply indebted to his tutelage. In comparison, the previous twenty years in London had been much less productive of doctorates. Between 1945 and 1965 only Michael Kauffmann (later Director of the Courtauld Institute), Erica Cruikshank Dodd, and Cecilia Meredith, had stayed the course.[32] Bezalel Narkiss, whose principal supervisor was Francis Wormald, also owed much to Buchthal's guid-

[30] Robert S. Nelson in *In Memoriam Hugo Buchthal*, 11–14.

[31] They are conveniently listed in *In Memoriam Hugo Buchthal*, 23–4.

[32] C. M. Kauffmann's thesis of 1957 was published as *The Baths of Pozzuoli: a Study of the Medieval Illuminations of Peter of Eboli's Poem* (Oxford, 1959). Erica Cruickshank Dodd (Ph.D. 1958), published as *Byzantine Silver Stamps*, Dumbarton Oaks Studies, 7 (Washington DC, 1961). Regrettably from Cecelia Meredith's thesis of 1964 only an article appeared: 'The Illustration of Codex Ebnerianus: a Study in Liturgical Illustration of the Comnenian Period', *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes*, 29 (1966), 419–24.

ance.[33] (Paul Hetherington and Robin Cormack had begun research under his supervision.) In the New York years there was also a notable penumbra of scholars who looked to him for teaching or guidance at some critical moment in their intellectual development, and continued to carry the memory. Many of them would congregate in due course for his eightieth birthday celebrations.

In terms of research, after bringing *Historia Troiana* to completion Buchthal turned to the last major subject of his scholarly career: Byzantine illumination of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. This is now such a popular area of enquiry that, like 'crusader' art, it is hard to recall how little understood the field was in the 1960s. His studies bore fruit first in articles in Festschriften for two old friends from Vienna: Otto Demus (whose work on Palaiologan painting was fundamental to Buchthal's own research), and Otto Pächt. In due course he discovered that he and Hans Belting were working on similar material,[34] and they decided to proceed with a joint publication, which finally appeared in 1978: *Patronage in Thirteenth-Century Constantinople: An Atelier of Late Byzantine Book Illumination and Calligraphy*. This is a magisterial volume, even if not primarily a study of patronage. It groups together on stylistic grounds a small and remarkably homogeneous corpus of manuscripts with connections with the Byzantine imperial family. So clear is the definition of the characteristic style of these books that it later proved possible, for example, to add a manuscript in which virtually all the decorative elements had been cut out.[35] The approaches of the two authors are very different, which adds a certain piquancy to the volume.

Retirement in London 1975–96

In 1975 Buchthal retired from the Institute of Fine Arts, and returned to his house in Highgate, and to an Honorary Fellowship and an office at the Warburg. (It was in this period that I came to know him.) While in New

[33] Narkiss's thesis of 1963 was published as *The Golden Haggadah: A Fourteenth Century Illuminated Hebrew Manuscript in the British Museum* (1970).

[34] Hans Belting had recently published *Das illuminierte Buch in der spätbyzantinischen Gesellschaft*, Abhandlungen der Heidelberger Akademie der Wissenschaften, Phil.-hist. Klasse, 1970, 1 (Heidelberg, 1970).

[35] Robert S. Nelson and John Lowden, 'The Palaeologina Group: Additional Manuscripts and New Questions', *Dumbarton Oaks Papers*, 45, 1991, 51–68, esp. pp. 65–7.

York he had maintained his links with London, spending some months every summer in the Warburg. Initially retirement seems to have provided a welcome break from the demands of students, and with that the opportunity to complete a number of projects, but before long he was looking back on the New York years with undisguised nostalgia. It was impossible to recreate in London the special atmosphere that had marked those years. Yet London remained an incomparable base in which to work, thanks to the Warburg library; it was also on everybody's itinerary at some point, and the Buchthals welcomed friends and former students into their house; and it continued to be a convenient place from which to depart to sunnier Mediterranean sites, in order to visit monuments perhaps, as Buchthal had done tirelessly all his life, or just to escape the miserable English weather.

For ten or more years Buchthal continued to work with undiminished vigour. In addition to seeing the *Patronage* book through the press, he brought a number of new projects to completion. One of the fruits of this period is his book on *The "Musterbuch" of Wolfenbüttel and its Position in the Art of the Thirteenth Century* (Vienna, 1979). It was published by the Austrian Academy of Sciences, who had elected him a corresponding member in 1976. The *Musterbuch* effectively brings together his Venetian and Byzantine interests, while once more setting him in vigorous debate with Kurt Weitzmann. The project marks, perhaps, his most developed use of the theory of lost models. The problem that the modelbook presents is not so much its relation to Saxon, Venetian, and Byzantine iconographic and stylistic formulae (which Buchthal is able to demonstrate in a masterful fashion), but the fact that the artist appears to know his Byzantine 'sources' some thirty or more years prior to their first appearance in surviving works of Byzantine (often specifically Serbian) art. To explain this situation Buchthal posits a complex and subtle series of receding arguments in which the Musterbuch becomes merely a copy of a lost Musterbuch, itself based on sketches made of lost works somehow brought together in Venice and then used in Saxony. His conclusion is characteristically Buchthalian in its somewhat mournful tone: the Musterbuch is 'only a selective copy, an incomplete and utterly disorganized second-hand reflection of a collection of Byzantine and Byzantinizing formulas'. This was unquestionably the same Buchthal who had expressed 'infinite regret' in the final sentence of *Historia Troiana*, and concluded *Miniature Painting in the Latin Kingdom* by observing that the art of Acre 'was not destined to survive the noble cause it served'.

Among the further notable publications in these years is a massive

article, with 93 illustrations, 'Studies on Byzantine Illumination of the Thirteenth Century'.[36] This builds on the work of his New York period, and formulates stylistic patterns much along the lines taken by Annemarie Weyl Carr, who had worked closely with him since the days of her doctoral thesis (1973).[37] Georgian and Armenian material is considered, along with Byzantine works, and as with all his works on illumination in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries the study of ornament plays a crucial role in assembling stylistic groups. Regrettably, the opening up of the former Soviet bloc came too late to allow him to take advantage of the new opportunites that now exist to study monuments, and works in museums and galleries (but he did visit the Matenadaran Library at Erevan). His swan song was the pair of articles comprising his recollections of studying in the thirties, based on a lecture given in Vienna in 1990. Although written in German the structure of thought and ideas in them is completely familar to those who heard him narrate similar reminiscences in English.

Without question two high points for Buchthal in this last period were the publication of a volume of his selected studies, edited by some of his former students and friends (*Art of the Mediterranenan World, A.D. 100 to 1400*, Washington DC, 1983), and the celebration of his eightieth birthday at the Warburg Institute in the form of a 'Buchthalfest' in 1989. This latter brought together most of those who had taken their doctorates with him, or taken him as their mentor, the majority coming from the US. All twenty-three gave papers.[38] The roster of their names gives some sense of the importance of his teaching. Yet it was characteristic of Hugo that he did not want an audience at his Buchthalfest, which put the organisers in the awkward position of having to turn away distinguished friends and well-wishers. On the final afternoon Gombrich was heard to say to Buchthal: 'Well, Hugo, I never knew you had so many students [long pause], and to judge by the papers, not at all bad.' Thereafter Hugo mentioned, with a characteristic smile, ironic and knowing, that it was a pity there had not been more people in attendance.

[36] *Jahrbuch der Berliner Museen*, 25 (1983), 27–102.

[37] See her *Byzantine Illumination, 1150–1250: The Study of a Provincial Tradition* (Chicago, 1987). It has to be said that the colour microfiches of Carr's publication are in many cases more useful than Buchthal's monochrome plates.

[38] The speakers were Annemarie Weyl Carr, Carolyn Connor, Robin Cormack, Erica Cruikshank Dodd, Jaroslav Folda, Kristine Haney, Paul Hetherington, Lucy-Anne Hunt, Michael Jacoff, Anna Kartsonis, Michael Kauffmann, Dale Kinney, Charlotte Lacaze, John Lowden, Vivian Mann, Thomas F. Mathews, James Morganstern, Bezalel Narkiss, Robert S. Nelson, Ellen Schwartz, Nancy Patterson Ševčenko, Harvey Stahl, Stephen Zwirn.

Hugo died in his sleep on 10 November 1996, followed just a week later by his devoted wife Maltschi. Their last years had been marked by the increasing problems of old age, which they endured stolidly. At different times Hugo had a serious heart operation (not to mention an experimental hip replacement, that had to be repeated after some years), and Maltschi was severely scalded, but they always seemed to recover, and to have time to talk to well-wishers. In the final years their roles were gradually reversed. Hugo, who for so long had depended utterly on Maltschi to keep all aspects of his domestic life in order, looked after her devotedly as she struggled with various infirmities. He remained in contact with former students and colleagues, corresponding, as he had for decades, on flimsy aerogrammes filled with his small, neat script. They were communications that the recipients carefully preserved. He was also happy to receive further recognition, notably in 1995 the Presidential Medal of Honor of New York University.

Buchthal's publications will stand as a worthy monument to the man. They display a remarkable consistency of approach over more than fifty years. For him it was always the objects that mattered, that is to say the manuscripts themselves. Although he worked a great deal from photographs they always functioned for him as convenient aides-mémoires. Only if it had proved impossible to consult a manuscript would he discuss something that he had not personally examined. With the manuscript in front of him he wanted to answer the usual questions (Where? When? By whom? For whom?, and so forth), but especially he wanted to know how and why images looked the way they did. The resulting publications are, without exception, so carefully crafted as to seem entirely artless. From the infinite pains that went into their research and writing emerges something so cogent as to appear to the reader self-evident. There is not the slightest trace of self-importance anywhere in the writing. The contrast with the writings of Kurt Weitzmann, his friend and scholarly sparring partner for more than sixty years, is intriguing. Weitzmann cited his own writings obsessively. Whereas Buchthal worked his way to often tentative conclusions, Weitzmann set off boldly from a priori assumptions. Despite his early interest in philosophy, and his training with Panofsky, Buchthal did not wrestle in print with fundamental questions of art historical method. For Weitzmann method came first, and he missed no opportunity to remind his readers of what the means and ends of art historical research should be (according to the 'Weitzmann method', that is). For much of the twentieth century it sometimes seemed as though Weitzmann

and Buchthal were the Plato and Aristotle of the study of illuminated manuscripts. And yet despite all their differences they had much more in common intellectually than separated them. Their shared interest in the search for pictorial sources and models, generally hypothesized in the form of the ubiquitous *Vorlage*, paralleled much philological thinking. Buchthal, I think, stepped back from Panofsky as a scholarly mentor to what he found to be the more congenial approaches of Panofsky's own mentors: Adolph Goldschmidt and Wilhelm Vöge.[39] Goldschmidt was also Weitzmann's supervisor, and revered by him. This Buchthal and Weitzmann certainly had in common. To subsequent generations their cordial respect for one another will also stand as a useful (and sometimes necessary) reminder that scholarly differences do not have to be personal differences, and, conversely, that friendship and respect do not exclude scepticism or dissent.

It is no surprise that Hugo loved to be in the mountains, which for him meant the Alps. He was always physically and mentally remarkably tough, indefatigable. He liked a challenge, and was totally committed to the seriousness of the endeavour on which he had embarked when he abandoned business for scholarship in 1929. He could be excellent company, charming, and with many a story to tell. But somehow, no matter how light hearted the conversation, one always felt that the steel was not far below the surface. In a memorial for Panofsky he wrote that he 'never talked down to students . . . That does not mean that being Pan's disciple was always easy. He was not always relaxed. He was a temperamental master with strong likes and dislikes, with a quick wit and sharp tongue, and he could be very outspoken.'[40] Buchthal was from a similar mould, or perhaps he re-fashioned himself a little in imitation. As an emigré he was profoundly grateful to the country that had taken him in. He sought by his scholarship to repay that welcome, and in the process he helped to transform the sometimes insular, unambitious, and poorly informed art-historical world he found. In the United States he found a welcome too, together with respect and admiration of a sort he never enjoyed in Britain, but in the end he did not find a home there. The pull of the Warburg Institute was too strong for him. He had become a living part of

[39] A point also made by Robert S. Nelson, *In Memoriam Hugo Buchthal*, 14.

[40] 'Erwin Panofsky, March 30 1892–March 14 1968. A Commemorative Gathering for Erwin Panofsky at the Institute of Fine Arts, New York University, in association with the Institute for Advanced Study, 21 March 1968' (New York, 1968), 11–14, especially p. 13.

that classical tradition he studied: human without doubt, but in some ways heroic and superhuman as well.

JOHN LOWDEN
Courtauld Institute of Art

Note. I should like to express my sincere gratitude to the following for their generosity in answering enquiries and providing information or reminiscences, either in person or by letter: Anna Buchthal (daughter), Wilfrid Bucknall (brother), Anne Stuart (sister); Anne Béchard-Léauté, Robin Cormack, Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau, John Flood, Sir Ernst Gombrich, Irmgard Hutter, Elizabeth Jackson, Michael Kauffmann, Ernst Kitzinger, Thomas F. Mathews, Anne Marie Meyer, Ellen Schwartz, Elizabeth Sears, J. B. Trapp, Dietrich Worbs, Wladimir Zwalf.

Bibliographies of the writings of Hugo Buchthal can be found in the volume of his selected studies, *Art of the Mediterranean World A.D. 100 to 1400*, Washington DC 1983, xvii–xxii (to 1980), supplemented in the obituary notice by John Lowden, *Burlington Magazine*, 139 (1997), 198–9. To these should be added one further item: 'Überlieferung und Neuerung in der byzantinischen Malerei des 12. Jahrhunderts', in *Helmarshausen und das Evangeliar Heinrichs des Löwen*, Braunschweigische Wissenschaftliche Gesellschaft 4, Göttingen, 1992, 11–29.

Note that Buchthal's works are only mentioned selectively and sometimes in abbreviated form in this memoir.