

THE BURLINGTON MAGAZINE



Sculpture

The Gagini at Petrapertusa | Two bronzes for Milan Cathedral by Brambilla

North German bronze lions from Bordesholm | Rococo altarpieces in Santiago de Surco, Peru

The Citizens' War Memorial in Christchurch, New Zealand

Barbara Hepworth's sculpture at Tate Britain and the Hepworth Wakefield

Donatello in Padua | Medici tapestries | Kentridge | Epstein | Caro | Quinn and Hirschhorn | Salcedo

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of the two near-simultaneous inventions of photography) led directly to his estrangement from communities of learning which were fast becoming hostile to the non-professional. He comes across finally as a peculiarly inconsistent character, left behind by his times in spite of his enormous contributions to modern visual culture.

Those remarkable achievements in the history of photographic imaging serve more as a counter-narrative than the immediate subject-matter of this book. The editors are quick to remark that in the decade preceding his somewhat shambolic announcement of the 'photogenic drawing' technique before the Royal Society in 1839, Talbot was at least as much distracted by work in mathematics, philology, classics and botany, as by his research into photochemistry. These other pursuits are the basis of most of the material considered here, with much derived from research among newly accessible archives of correspondence and notebooks as well as from better-known publications and photographic records. The volume is divided into three main sections covering themes of experiment and investigation, invention and discovery, and the analysis of institutions. These are complemented by two editors' introductions setting out methodological and historical concerns, and by a critical commentary from Simon Shaffer. While the essays are often more provocative than conclusive, the content is elaborated vividly and with scholarly attention to detail, such that the editors' desire to see Talbot properly situated 'amid the networks [. . .] of Victorian intellectual enterprise' (p.4) is easily satisfied.

Talbot's often beautiful photographs are only rarely treated in explicitly aesthetic terms, and they are presented throughout the book as fundamentally practical objects, participating in the wider nineteenth-century project of Modernising perception. Sustained attention to the 'cultivation of observational skill' (p.8) in essays from Anne Secord and Eleanor Robson requires the reader to consider the role of aesthetic proficiency in science in general (perhaps the crux of this book as a whole). Talbot's aesthetic experience was of obvious significance for his activities in botany and Assyriology, for example, where tasks such as classification and decipherment required precise application of visual acuity. Likewise, these pursuits appear a kind of training in speculation and judgment without which Talbot may not have been able so successfully to realise the fantasy of recording photogenic images. In her excellent essay on the art of discovery, Vered Maimon observes that what every photograph should call to mind most emphatically is the strange phenomenon of photography's invention, which, according to this volume, is something very nearly inexplicable in established scientific terms.

In Looking Back One Learns to See: Marcel Proust and Photography. By Mary Bergstein. 304 pp. incl. 105 col. + b. & w. ills. (Rodopi, Amsterdam and New York, 2014), €63. ISBN 978-94-012-1074-4.

Professor Bergstein distinguishes her book from the great volume of literature concerning Proust and photography on the basis that it is a work of cultural history 'told after the fashion of interpretive anthropology' (p.19). It is not a piece of literary criticism but a book which examines the experience of an author for what it may indicate about the meanings and uses of photography in the period of the Third Republic. Proust was a privileged social and intellectual insider and a man enormously sensitive to the burgeoning photographic culture. Bergstein elicits many fine points on the subject, and, while much of what she mentions has been discussed elsewhere in more detail, she does succeed in bringing together phenomena which may otherwise have remained disparate. Topics covered include photography's symbolising functions; the archiving of images by art historians, clinical psychiatrists, the police and the general public; picture postcards and cult images; and travel, orientalism and ethnography. Many potentially excellent illustrations are sadly marred by the poor quality of the reproductions.

HAYDN APPLEBY

Strukturen und Schauplätze der Gestik. Gebärden und ihre Handlungsorte in der Malerei des ausgehenden Mittelalters.

By Florens Deuchler. 287 pp. incl. 12 col. + 121 b. & w. ills. (Walter de Gruyter, Berlin and Boston, 2014), €49.95. ISBN 978-3-11-031814-2.

Gestik is usually translated as 'gestures', but 'gesture' in its widest interpretation, to include body language and the expression of emotion, is more appropriate in the context of the book under review. All aspects are covered, from body parts and hair styles to consideration of the figures' social class and the perspectival depth of dress and backgrounds.

The first section provides a chronological survey embodied in three major works: the Ingeborg Psalter of c.1200 (the subject of one of Deuchler's earliest books), the Manesse manuscript of the *Minnelieder* in Heidelberg, c.1300-30, and the wall paintings of the Months in the Torre Aquila in Trento, c.1400-30. The amount of detail covered is conveyed early on. Twenty different gestures are listed as appearing in the Ingeborg Psalter. A few of these are seen as new inventions without parallel in twelfth-century manuscripts, for instance Isaac in the scene of his Sacrifice moving his legs in such a way as to convey terror. For the Trento wall paintings, gestures, narrowly defined, are hardly discussed, the emphasis being on the compositions mingling lords and ladies at leisure with the peasants at work in the newly naturalistic landscapes.

The following section deals in detail with the whole body and body parts, beginning with the head, arms, legs and hands, moving on to the naked body and then to the development of facial expressions over the period 1200-1500. Subsequently the field is widened to consider individual and group dynamics within the settings depicted, with an emphasis on social custom. Consideration of gestures relevant to social status, particularly in a courtly, ecclesiastical and military environment, is followed by a heading for uncontrollable gestures, notably of pain and terror. Concluding sections deal with decorative accessories, from fashion to the choice of colours. Finally, a dozen pages on 'nature as a show place', which describes the symbolism of gardens in terms of fruitfulness, Paradise and the erotic, may seem to be going beyond the subject of gesture, however broadly defined. The use of pictorial models is briefly considered in the appendix. At each stage, discussion of pictorial imagery is supplemented by quotations from literary sources, most frequently from Quintilian's *Institutiones oratoriae*, one of the first to describe gesture and body movement in sculpture and paintings.

All this takes the reader very far from the narrow interpretation of gestures as hand movement and eye contact. Although there are times when the sheer number of headings and sub-headings becomes overwhelming, high praise is due for the breadth of treatment and stimulating interpretations. Given the very detailed coverage, it is perhaps surprising that there is so little discussion of the major changes of spiritual expression in the early thirteenth century, the beginning of the period under consideration. Christ's suffering on the cross, with eyes closed, is hardly touched upon and the newly depicted intimate relationship of Mother and Child is only fully dealt with in a fifteenth-century context. Yet such quibbles should not be allowed to detract from a very positive assessment of this important book.

C.M. KAUFFMANN

Incontri di civiltà nel Mediterraneo tra l'Impero Ottomano e l'Italia del Rinascimento. Storia, arte e architettura. Edited by Alireza Naser Eslami. 184 pp. incl. 56 col. + 19 b. & w. ills. (Olschki, Florence, 2014), €25. ISBN 978-88-222-6364-3.

Over the past decades books of essays on Italian-Ottoman artistic relations have become something of an Italian industry. The essays in this slim volume appear to be the product of a seminar of this title held in Genoa in 2013, chaired by Alireza Naser Eslami, an architectural historian at Genoa University. They are mostly too few and too short for it to rank as a major contribution, but it does at least mark a change in Italian Mediterranean

studies in introducing, if not considering here in detail, the contribution of the Republic of Genoa, which has long seemed curiously neglected, to the history of commerce and the arts in the Eastern Mediterranean.

The novelty, importance or indeed relevance of the present contributions is rather varied. Some of the contributors are already well known – Giovanni Curatola on carpets in paintings; Anna Contadini on the connections of Italian and Ottoman Renaissance ornament; and Marco Spallanzani's study of a late sixteenth-century Florentine inventory. Some, notably Professor Eslami's own survey of Italian-Ottoman artistic and architectural relations in the Renaissance, which were first broached more than a century ago by Karabacek and Babinger, cannot be said to break new ground, though Aygül Ağır's study of the now scanty remains of Genoese architecture in Istanbul is welcome. Luigi Zangheri's essay on Ottoman and Italian gardens, however, appears to be unaware of recent Turkish scholarship; and Francesco Cardini's rather superficial survey of the military campaigns in the Balkans following the Relief of Vienna in 1683 seems intended for another volume altogether.

A topic which Anna Contadini's contribution raises is the rather neglected possibility that some Italian works of art in Ottoman style, for example the 'Venetian' binding of a copy of the *Syllogia* of Fra' Giocondo (c.1520-30) in the library at Chatsworth, were specially ordered in an Istanbul workshop by resident foreigners. The general assumption that Ottoman trade with Italy was limited to raw materials certainly needs to be questioned.

The star of the collection is Marco Spallanzani's analysis of an inventory dated 1583 of Palazzo Portinari Salviati in Florence with a list of Iznik wares and their identification. From the numerous late-Renaissance inventories he and his pupils have published in the past decades, he concludes that, while Chinese imports of porcelains are increasingly listed, Iznik wares are remarkably few.

There are some odd, almost comical mis-statements of fact, for example, the identification of the author of *The Siege of Corinth* as 'Gorge G. Byron', which certainly puts him in his place, or the attribution of Ottoman architecture depicted by an anonymous German draughtsman in a Habsburg embassy of the 1570s in the Freshfield Codex in Trinity College, Cambridge as '*disegno inglese del 1588*'. These suggest that a deficiency of the volume is the apparent absence of editorial direction.

J.M. ROGERS

Death, Torture and the Broken Body in European Art 1300-1650. Edited by John R. Decker and Mitzi Kirkland-Ives. 280 pp. incl. 77 b. & w. ills. (Ashgate, Farnham, 2015), £65. ISBN 978-1-4724-3367-1.

This volume is organised in two parts corresponding to the sacred and the secular spheres. The first part, 'Holy Violence, the Creation of Martyrs', opens with depictions of physical wounding in a work of Guido da Siena (c.1260), continues with essays on the suffering of Christ in late medieval Netherlandish devotion, on the iconographic type of John the Baptist's severed head, on the Counter-Reformation rediscovery of Early Christian martyrs and finally on Protestant mockeries of Catholic martyrs. The second part, 'Social Violence, the Creation of Civic Identities', begins with a detailed study of Rubens's battle scene *The death of Decius Mus* followed by essays on Western perceptions of Ottoman impaling, on rituals of execution by image and finally on a series of seventeenth-century Dutch prints commemorating public beheadings and dismemberments.

The term 'European Art' in the title should be taken in the broadest sense, as the material discussed ranges from old-master paintings to rough effigies made to be beaten up and burnt in lieu of those they represented. Although not groundbreaking, the papers are of a good standard. Their disparate character, especially in the second part, leaves the reader with the impression that the volume does not quite add up to more than the sum of its parts. Nevertheless it provides multiple points of access to the dark universe of early modern brutalities.

FRANÇOIS QUIVIGER