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Marcantonio Raimondi: Raphael's Engraver and Beyond

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Marcantonio Raimondi. Il primo incisore di Raffaello. Atti del Convegno Internazionale. Urbino 23–25 ottobre 2019, edited by Anna Cerboni Baiardi and Marzia Faietti, contributions by Barbara Agosti, Laura Aldovini, Roberta Aliventi, Rita Bernini, Anne Bloemacher, Laura Da Rin Bettina, Stefano De Angeli, David Ekserdjian, Giovanni Maria Fara, Corinna Tania Gallori, Antonio Geremicca, Achim Gnann, Monica Grasso, Giorgio Marini, Gudula Metze, Elisa Penserini, Lisa Pon, Cecilia Prete, Mandy Richter, Alessandro Rovetta, Elena Rossoni and Stefania Tullio Cataldo, Urbino, Accademia Raffaello, 2021, 603 pp., 291 ill., €30.

Giorgio Vasari e la Vita di Marcantonio Bolognese, e d'altri intagliatori di stampe. Edizioni e fortuna critica 1568–1760, edited by Giovanni Maria Fara, contributions by Emanuele Castoldi, Paola Croset, Lorenzo Gigante, Émilie Passignat, Selena Spader and Francesca Toso, Calenzano, Olschki, 2021, 187 pp., 44 ill., €25.

The 'major revival' of Marcantonio Raimondi (before 1479–1526/34), as proclaimed by James Grantham Turner when two monographs and an exhibition covered Raimondi's engravings after Raphael in 2016, continues with exhibitions held in 2020/21 in Bologna, Rome and Hamburg and the two anthologies here reviewed.¹ Yet, Marcantonio is never a stand-alone hero, even if his name appears in the title. He participates in Raphael's glory, in exhibitions as well as in the proceedings of the Urbino conference 'Marcantonio Raimondi. Il primo incisore di Raffaello'. The focus chosen by Giovanni Maria Fara for *Giorgio Vasari e la Vita di Marcantonio Bolognese, e d'altri intagliatori di stampe. Edizioni e fortuna critica 1568–1760* – on Vasari's chapter on Marcantonio

Raimondi and other engravers in the 1568 edition of the *Vite* – is less common.² Since the first biography of Raimondi established the perception of him as Raphael's engraver, overlaps in content between the two publications here reviewed were inevitable. For *Il primo incisore di Raffaello*, the conference contributions by Raphael and Raimondi experts were revised to varying degrees during pandemic library closures, whereas the essays in Fara's publication largely condense the results of master's and doctoral dissertations.

Especially the 22 essays in *Il primo incisore di Raffaello* reflect and expand beyond the multitude of different strands of recent Raimondi research announced in the introductory contribution by Marzia Faietti. Contrary to what the title suggests, surprisingly few essays deal with the genesis of engravings based on compositions by Raphael (only Roberta Aliventi/Laura Da Rin Bettina, Anne Bloemacher, Anna Cerboni Baiardi, David Ekserdjian and Achim Gnann). Generally, the authors assume that Raphael was involved in print production, even if the extent of his participation remains an open question, for example in the case of the numerous erotic subjects engraved even before the *Modi*, which Bloemacher connects with both ancient and Renaissance literature. Those essays that shed light on Raimondi's activity beyond the engravings after Raphael recall not only his contacts with other artists, but also his independent artistic activity, such as the early Bolognese engravings and drawings examined by Elena Rossoni within their historical context. Faietti expands the corpus of drawings presented in *Bologna e l'Umanesimo 1490–1510* (Bologna, 1988) by two further attributions, while Laura Aldovini examines Raimondi's little noticed experiments in etching and discusses their position within the

development of this still very young technique (fig. 163). Stefano De Angeli and Mandy Richter acknowledge Raimondi's independent approach to antiquity by distinguishing different modes of appropriation of antique forms and by pointing out the subtle additions to antique statues in his engravings of female nudes (fig. 164). Corinna Tania Gallori analyses Raimondi's *Mass of St Gregory*, one of the few copies after Dürer from his Roman period (and the only one that is documented in the possession of the publisher Antonio Salamanca; fig. 165). These have been deliberately omitted in the last attempt at an overview of this corpus, by Bernice Davidson in 1954.³ The neglected Dürer reception of Raimondi's Roman period is further examined by Fara, who places the portrait of Pietro Aretino in the succession of Dürer's portrait prints. In discussing the authorship of this portrait and in proposing a dating of 1524–25, Antonio Geremicca demonstrates how vague our notion of Raimondi's activity in the 1520s still is. These gaps in knowledge are also rooted in Vasari's *Vite*, whose focus on Raimondi's activity in the circle of Raphael in the 1510s was adopted by scholars from early on. The initial pioneering achievements of Pierre Daret (Paris, 1651) and Carl Heinrich von Heineken (Leipzig, 1778) are highlighted by Stefania Tullio Cataldo and Gudula Metze and set within their cultural-historical context. The traditional perception of Raimondi as Raphael's engraver seems to have been responsible for his historical prominence in print collections (Giorgio Marini) as well as for the use of his engravings as models for frescoes (Elisa Penserini) and the emphasis on his oeuvre in Italian exhibitions of the late nineteenth and the twentieth century (Cecilia Prete).

Although fewer in number, the seven contributions in *Giorgio Vasari e la Vita di Marcantonio Bolognese* are similarly wide-ranging. Emanuele Castoldi examines Raimondi's Venetian period – not the copies after Dürer, which Vasari focuses on, but his study of antiquity (fig. 164). Meanwhile, the essays by Selena Spader and Lorenzo Gigante are devoted to the 'altri incisori di stampe': Lucas van Leyden (1489/94–1533), whom Vasari presented as the antithesis to Dürer, and the woodcutters largely neglected by Vasari. Fara and Francesca Toso comment on the Vasari editions by Carlo Manolesi (Bologna, 1647) and Giovanni Gaetano Bottari (Rome, 1759–60), while



163. Marcantonio Raimondi, *St Margaret Holding a Palm Frond, with a Dragon*, c. 1515, etching (?) and engraving, 113 x 82 mm (New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art).

Paola Croset and Émilie Passignat analyse the reception of Vasari in seventeenth-century England and France.

Both anthologies convey the lack of a commented edition of Vasari's chapter on Raimondi and of a commentary to Adam von Bartsch's *Le peintre graveur* (Vienna, 1803–21, xiv). These might have provided easier access to the neglected results of recent research, such as the reattribution of the compositions of the *Psyche* series to Michiel Coxcié (1499–1592) or the chronology of the three variants of the *Lamentation*, convincingly reconstructed by John T. Spike and Anne Bloemacher.⁴ Yet, the authors do provide important new suggestions

problemi di attribuzione', *Fontes. Rivista di filologia, iconografia e storia della trazione classica*, v–vi, 2000, pp. 189–204. *Lamentation*: D. Ekserdjian, 'Raffaello e Marcantonio: la pittura riprodotta', *Marcantonio Raimondi*, op. cit., p. 109; J. T. Spike, 'Marcantonio's Relationship to his School', *Qualifying Paper*, Harvard University, 1974, pp. 10–13; A. Bloemacher, *Raffaello und Raimondi. Produktion und Intention der frühen Druckgraphik nach Raffael*, Berlin and Munich, 2016, pp. 200–01.

1. J. G. Turner, 'Marcantonio's Moment', *Print Quarterly*, xxxv, 2018, pp. 341–45. *La fortuna visiva di Raffaello nella grafica del XVI secolo da Marcantonio Raimondi a Giulio Bonasone*, edited by E. Rossoni, Bologna, 2020, reviewed in *Print Quarterly*, xxxviii, December 2021, pp. 427–30; *Raffaello 1520–1483*, edited by M. Faietti et al., Rome, 2020; *Raffaello. Wirkung eines Genies*, edited by

A. Stolzenburg and D. Klemm, Hamburg, 2021, reviewed *Print Quarterly*, xxxix, September 2022, pp. 315–18.

2. Touched on in G. Vasari, *The Life of Raphael*, translated and edited by R. Scorza and P. Joannides, London, 2020, see Publications Received, *Print Quarterly*, xxxix, March 2022, p. 92.

3. B. F. Davidson, 'Marcantonio Raimondi. The Engravings of his Roman Period', doctoral thesis, Harvard University, Cambridge, MA, 1954, p. 218.

4. Coxcié: L. Pon, 'Raffaello e Marcantonio nell'Inghilterra di William Ottley', *Marcantonio Raimondi*, op. cit., p. 353; A. di Gnann and D. Laurenza, 'Raphael's Influence on Michiel Coxcié: Two New Drawings and a Painting', *Master Drawings*, xxxiv, 1996, p. 293; S. Cavicchioli, 'Le incisioni del Maestro del Dado fra rimandi raffaelleschi e archeologici: fortuna e



164. Marcantonio Raimondi, *Venus Wringing Out Her Hair*, 1506, engraving, 215 x 150 mm (Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum).

for the genesis of Marcantonio's *Small Saints* (Gnann) or *Christ in Glory* (Aliventi/Da Rin Bettina), and publish new material by cataloguing the printing plates in the Istituto centrale per la grafica in Rome (Rita Bernini) or by describing states beyond those in Konrad Oberhuber's *Illustrated Bartsch* volume (Richter, fig. 164, Gallori, fig. 165).⁵ Gallori, to give one example, noticed that in the *Illustrated Bartsch* the supposed first state of the *Mass of St*

⁵ K. Oberhuber, *The Illustrated Bartsch*, xxvi: *The Works of Marcantonio Raimondi and of his School*, New York, 1970, p. 313,

Gregory was illustrated with a later impression from which Salamanca's address had been removed – yet not from the plate, as she assumed, but scratched from the paper (fig. 165, inv. DG2017/3/6822). The findings of these two publications are certainly of interest for scholars working on Marcantonio Raimondi and would surely serve as the basis for two long-awaited commentary volumes that would demonstrate the diversity of his artistic activity.

no. 312 (234) and xxvii, p. 330, no. 644-I (410).



165. Marcantonio Raimondi, after Albrecht Dürer, *The Mass of St Gregory*, after 1511, engraving, 294 x 204 mm (Vienna, Albertina, It/1/18/18 DG2017/3/6822).