

they include Giovanni Bellini's *Lamentation* (c.1513–14; Gallerie dell'Accademia, Venice); Tullio's Vendramin Tomb; Giuseppe Salviati's *Assumption*, once above the high altar (c.1555; SS. Giovanni e Paolo, Venice); and Veronese's *Supper in the house of Simon*, once in the refectory (c.1570; Versailles). But the book, like its seven predecessors in the same, excellent series, *Chiese di Venezia*, is not meant to provide a comprehensive survey, but instead offers a range of stimulating new perspectives on a lost monument of outstanding historical and art-historical importance.

Giovan Pietro Bellori: Das Leben des Domenico Zampieri, gen. Domenichino / Vita di Domenico Zampieri, Il Domenichino

Edited by Marieke von Bernstorff. 480 pp. incl. 25 col. + 5 b. & w. ills. (Wallstein Verlag, Göttingen, 2022), €34. ISBN 978-3-8353-3983-5.

by JANIS BELL

This is the eighth in a series of thirteen projected volumes of *Le vite de' pittori, scultori et architetti moderni* by Giovan Pietro Bellori (1613–96), a series of artists' biographies first published in 1672. It results from a project based at the Bibliotheca Hertziana – Max Planck-Institut für Kunstgeschichte, Rome, led by Elisabeth Oy-Marra, Tristan Weddigen and Anja Brug. For each Life, one member of the project group was asked to provide an edition of the Italian text with a German translation, a biographical essay and commentary.

The strength of Marieke von Bernstorff's volume on the Life of Domenico Zampieri, known as Domenichino (1581–1641), lies in her ability to reveal how Bellori wove together art-theoretical ideas with personal, historical and literary narratives. The panegyric tone adopted by Bellori for this Life can be explained by the fact that at the age of sixteen or seventeen, shortly before Domenichino left Rome for Naples in 1631, Bellori trained as a painter in his studio.

Bernstorff's introductory essay, 'Bellori's Domenichino – tragischer Held im Wettstreit', highlights two themes in Bellori's biography: the tragedy of Domenichino, whom he perceived as an underappreciated and maligned hero, and the importance of competition either to spur artists to excellence or feed the envy of inferior painters. In contrast to Carlo Cesare Malvasia, who in his Life of Domenichino (1678) expressed his

reservations about the artist's tight facture,¹ Bernstorff shows that Bellori turned such criticisms into virtues; thus, the artist's slow and often dilatory working pace exemplified diligence, study and imagination; his depictions of wine dissolving in water and his ability to use colour in a way that evokes a dying figure, as, for example, in his *Last communion of St. Jerome* (1614; Vatican Museums), testify to his skills.

Bellori appealed to readers to show sympathy for his hero, whose fertile mind was devising three designs for the cupola of S. Andrea della Valle, Rome, while his competitor Lanfranco was already starting to paint the dome (1625). Although Annibale Carracci recognised the potential of the young Domenichino, his peers ostracised him for his appearance (one of his feet pointed inwards) and what they perceived as his lack of grace and awkward, crude, sullen and reclusive behaviour. Yet, according to Bellori, it was exactly these characteristics that led Domenichino to develop an exceptional ability to imitate nature, capture the fleeting feelings of his subjects and reveal their souls, and allowed him to cultivate his intellect and judgment, attaining grace through study.

Bernstorff highlights the importance of passages in which Bellori departs from the chronology to expound on subjects ranging from art-theoretical themes, such as the close relationship between painting and poetry, to the importance of drawing. She presents Bellori's use of *descrizione*, an innovative method of describing paintings, as paratexts, which subdivide the Life into 'chapters'. His decision to describe *The hunt of Diana* (1617; Borghese Gallery) at the end of the Life underlines his belief in the importance of *poesia* in painting. Bernstorff explains allusions that Bellori embedded in single words and phrases. The ox tilling fertile soil refers to Albertus Magnus's defence of the young Thomas Aquinas, who rose above the ridicule of his classmates who compared him to an ox. Moreover, Bellori's description of the *Sacrifice of Iphigenia* (1609; Palazzo Giustiniani Odescalchi, Bassano di Sutri) recalls the ekphrasis by Pliny of a work by Timanthes of the same subject. Bernstorff suggests that Bellori compares himself to ancient orators and Domenichino to legendary ancient painters. Less convincing is Bernstorff's argument that the structure of the Life parallels Classical theatre. She maintains that in the Life, Domenichino's move to Naples in 1631 serves as a plot twist that frees the hero from responsibility for the fate that befell him in that city. Yet Bellori

admits that Domenichino ignored the advice of friends to stay in Rome. Bernstorff rightly emphasises the Baroque topos of the world as a stage with events unfolding as spectacles, but overlooks the fact that from at least the early quattrocento addressing the viewer as 'spectator' was a conventional part of painting, in which history is depicted as events taking place in the present.

Bernstorff wisely avoids taking sides in controversies about the chronology of the artist's life. There are always avenues that could be explored further, such as exploring what Bellori meant when he wrote that no one surpasses Domenichino 'in the science and doctrine of painting' (p.347). The book went to press before the author inserted life dates for Giovanni Gabrielli, a comedian active 1603–11, leaving '(? - ?)' in their place. Overall, however, the quality of editing is excellent, and the author's exegesis of Bellori's sources and methods enhances our appreciation of both the writer and his subject.

¹ The 2013 edition of Malvasia's *Life of Domenichino* and Francesco Gessi was reviewed by Francesca Cappelletti in this Magazine 161 (2019), pp.610–12.

Les Cahen d'Anvers en France et en Italie: Demeures et choix culturels d'une lignée d'entrepreneurs

By Alice S. Legé. 1008 pp. incl. 490 b. & w. ills. (LFDJ, Paris, 2022), €45. ISBN 978-2-37032-374-3.

by THOMAS E. STAMMERS

Alice Legé won the Louis Joinet prize for her comprehensive study of the Cahen d'Anvers family, distinguished members of the *haute banque*, who amassed a significant property portfolio in nineteenth-century France and Italy. Moving adroitly between both national contexts, Legé's work strikes a satisfying balance between a review of the family's economic activity and their significant architectural and artistic legacy. While their renovation of Champs-sur-Marne, the one-time home of the marquise de Pompadour outside Paris, may be familiar, she breaks new ground in reconstructing the other eleven properties owned or rented by the family over three generations, from Parisian townhouses to Belgian manors, Roman villas and the exuberant castle outside Orvieto known as Torre Alfina. In the process, the book offers a fascinating window onto the European country house in the age of historicism.