

E. Butler suggests relationships between projects initiated by Pope Sixtus IV; Alessandra Galizzi Kroegel discusses the *Dispute over the Immaculate Conception*, attributed to Guillaume de Marcillat, in Berlin; and Pamela M. Jones establishes links between the cults of the Magdalen and St. Carlo Borromeo.

More information about the relationships of the various contributors to Dempsey would have been welcome to this reviewer, but its absence certainly does not detract from the value of the scholarship included. As a collection, these essays offer an encouraging view of the state of art history in the early twenty-first century. Their approaches range through a wide variety of methodologies and are consistently fresh, even when dealing with traditional problems. Though collections of this sort are not often read cover to cover, doing so in this case is highly recommended.



Le porte della storia. L'età moderna attraverso antiporte e frontespizi figurati.

Genoveffa Palumbo.

Rome: Viella, 2012. 562 pp. €45.00. ISBN: 978-88-8334-485-5.

REVIEWED BY: David D'Andrea

Oklahoma State University

In her most recent work, Genoveffa Palumbo, historian of early modern family and religious history, contributes to the growing Italian scholarship investigating the social and cultural history of images. In a dense and insightful study, Palumbo examines the iconography of early modern title pages and frontispieces (terms she uses interchangeably). Bibliophiles and antiquarians have long admired and catalogued the illustrated title pages of printed books, but Palumbo argues that frontispieces should be studied more widely as important interpretive tools of early modern intellectual history. In an effort to bridge the gap between texts and images, two fields of scholarly inquiry often studied in isolation, Palumbo analyzes the symbols authors and publishers used to convey the central meaning of their works. The title pages and what they reveal about early modern history are explored in six thematic chapters: sacred history, art history, antiquities, history of science, political science, and natural history. Palumbo's interpretive lens focuses on the depiction of time and history from the sixteenth to eighteenth centuries. The images she selects for analysis illustrate how established intellectual traditions, rooted in biblical texts and Greco-Roman knowledge, gave way to the idea of progress and modern secular historical writing.

Palumbo begins her history with a discussion of the Bible, which served as both the model for historical writing and the starting point for epistemological debates. Biblical exegesis encouraged the humanist emphasis on philology and provided the intellectual context for the religious reforms of the sixteenth century. The title pages from Luther's translation of the Bible and a later Jesuit commentary clearly and cleverly illustrate the core issues of the intellectual and religious debates. An analysis of Kircher's *Arca Noë* demonstrates the early modern effort to assimilate the people, flora, and fauna of the New World into the canonical religious paradigm. After establishing the importance of the biblical narrative to the historical and scientific conception of the world, Palumbo traces the rupture with this tradition in five thematic chapters.

Chapters 2 and 3 examine the emergence of art history and the study of antiquities. Of particular importance is the role of fame as a means to achieve immortality. The effort to copy works and preserve monuments and documents from the ravages of time is adroitly illustrated by several carefully selected title pages, including Vasari's *Vite* (1568), Ripa's

Iconologia (1603), and Muratori's *Rerum Italicarum Scriptores* (1723). The celebration of erudition based on paleography, diplomatics, epigraphy, and archeology helped to form a new learned history as illustrated in the frontispiece of Vico's *Principi di Scienza Nuova* (1744).

In chapter 4 Palumbo moves the narrative from the struggle to preserve and catalogue knowledge to the scientific debate regarding the authority and veracity of ancient texts. Images from the *De humani corporis fabrica* (1543) by Vesalius and Bacon's *Instauratio Magna* (1620) suggest that the Herculean efforts to recover Greco-Roman learning were no longer perceived as the key to new scientific learning. Chapters 5 and 6 build on this theme with efforts to reformulate accepted religious-political notions of the state (illustrated by Hobbes's *Leviathan*) and to integrate New World discoveries into Old World religious and scientific paradigms. The emergence of anthropology and ethnography liberated historical writing from the Eurocentric desire to convert or integrate other cultures. Scholars of the Enlightenment transformed depictions of Time from those of an enemy of History to those of an ally, and the idea of humanity's progress had been established. As the frontispiece of the *Encyclopédie* suggested, truth would be revealed by reason, and future generations were to be educated as enlightened global citizens.

The strength of the book is the author's breadth of research and knowledge. Although the author relies heavily on Italian examples, Palumbo's extensive notes and bibliography cite the relevant French, German, and English primary and secondary works. Palumbo's ambitious, interdisciplinary approach requires that the scholarship in some disciplines be summarized, and specialists will undoubtedly find fault with the neglected aspects or characterization of their disciplines. Historians of the book, for example, will be disappointed that Palumbo does not contribute to the scholarship examining the development of title pages and frontispieces, leaving this technical matter to codicologists. Another challenge of such a wide-reaching overview is to provide the readers with enough context as not to overwhelm them by such a vast topic as early modern title pages. Unfortunately, there are only a few guideposts provided by Palumbo, who never clearly explains why the 47 illustrations she selected from the *mare magnum* of illustrated works most succinctly demonstrate the early modern intellectual trends under examination. The introductory comments by Francesca Cantù, however, do provide needed scholarly context for the work and note two overarching themes: the increasingly scientific approach to knowledge and the challenge to European archetypes posed by the New World (xii).

Palumbo's erudite work should be read because it not only revives an important early modern genre but also provides a didactic tool for the contemporary classroom. One would hope that an American publisher would take a serious interest in transforming Palumbo's study into a textbook. Exploring historical themes through the imagery in early modern printed books would appeal to university students raised in a digital age, and the plethora of images available in a wide range of disciplines would make the textbook an engaging source for interdisciplinary study. Her work could serve as an innovative method to teach American students, who are traditionally anti-intellectual and increasingly visual, the core ideas of early modern intellectual history.

