

*Portrait Cultures of the Early Modern Cardinal*. Piers Baker-Bates and Irene Brooke, eds.

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The central claim of *Portrait Cultures of the Early Modern Cardinal*, a fresh collection of essays devoted to portraiture of the curia from ca. 1420–1655, is that the cardinal portrait emerged as its own discrete subgenre during this period. This mode of portraiture, the editors posit, evolved from the prototype of fifteenth-century papal portraits to encompass its own distinctive formal features and politicized functions. Although many previous studies have examined the phenomenology surrounding cardinals, Baker-Bates and Brooke's edited volume is the first to isolate visual culture for critical inquiry. The editors envision their book as an expansion of the slightly earlier collection, *A Companion to the Early Modern Cardinal* (2020) by Mary Hollingsworth, Miles Pattenden, and Arnold Witte. Indeed, the essays here, though at times somewhat sparsely illustrated, effectively shift the conversation to a complex new array of questions interrogating traditions across portrait media—fresco, manuscript, easel painting, printed, medallion, sculpted—of the over seven hundred men who served as cardinals in the early modern period.

The chapters in parts 1 and 2 examine the allegiances certain figures held to Florence, Venice, and Rome and how such ties were embodied in their portraits. One of the editors' chief aims in their useful (though methodologically thin) introduction is simply to codify the parameters of the cardinal portrait as a type, given the diverse composition and agendas of the college of cardinals. They reveal how a crucial touchstone in this respect is Francesco di Antonio del Chierico's depiction of prelates alongside Pope Eugenius IV (1470). The image would prove paradigmatic for later artists, the editors argue, in its display of the cardinals' unified corporate, social, religious, and political network over individual likeness. Nowhere is such a phenomenon better visualized later, as the editors duly illustrate, than Leonardo Parasole's woodcuts compendium of curial *Effigies* (1593).

Miles Pattenden's introductory essay further articulates the historiographic and theoretical stakes underpinning the essays at hand. Noteworthy in this respect is Pattenden's contention that they succeed in undermining the methodological assumption, dominant in Renaissance portrait studies since Burckhardt, and subsequently Pope-Hennessy, of the primary goal of portraiture as the depiction of individualized likeness. Instead, many authors adduce lesser-known examples to reveal how artists and patrons, as mentioned above, prioritized the corporate identity of the cardinalate in their portraiture over physiognomy, due to legal, political, and spiritual motivations.

In reality, as a marker of their lofty spiritual office, cardinals' vestments often constituted a major priority, and the worldly goods that members of the curia collected and displayed are investigated in part 3. For example, Philippa Jackson examines in her essay



“Renaissance Cardinals and Pontifical Mules,” a strikingly original contribution within the collection, the significant investment made in mules and their tack for public rituals. Jackson ingeniously rediscovers pontifical mules as bearers of elite status in their dualistic signaling of *magnificenza* but also *umiltà*.

The chapters appearing in the fourth and final section explore the profusion of portraits produced in response to the quasi-celebrity status some cardinals achieved from the late sixteenth century onward. For instance, Pietro Bembo’s Reformist activities, as well as Carlo Borromeo’s beatification and canonization, precipitated a sharp demand for their images. The authors are to be applauded for bringing to wider attention relatively unknown painted, printed, and numismatic portraits in this vein. Danielle Carrabino’s examination of portraits by the Roman painter Scipione Pulzone is a fitting example.

By way of conclusion, Baker-Bates’s essay, “Cardinal Portraits beyond Italy,” underscores differing priorities of Italian cardinals versus their Spanish counterparts. Most depictions of foreign cardinals—save famous examples by El Greco, Sebastiano del Piombo, and others—often receive scant attention, making his essay particularly valuable. As a summation of the entire volume, however, it proves too hasty, reading more as an afterthought than the synthesis this volume deserves. Yet as admirably evidenced throughout, the push to expand focus from elite, celebrated examples achieves a more genuine picture of the cardinal portrait phenomenon where, in reality, copies and images in serialized media outpaced the circulation of one-off images sequestered in private galleries. Accordingly, the present text stands as a veritable treasure trove for scholars seeking new and robust data for the study of the early modern cardinalate.

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*Rembrandt—Studies in his Varied Approaches to Italian Art.* Amy Golahny. Brill’s Studies in Intellectual History 317; Brill’s Studies on Art, Art History, and Intellectual History 48. Leiden: Brill, 2020. xxx + 258 pp. \$160.

In her recent book, Amy Golahny interrogates a consequential subject for understanding the complex origins of Rembrandt’s art, one not treated at length in over a generation. How fitting it is that a scholar whose lifetime of work has been devoted to this subject is the author of this essential study. Always generous with citing the work of fellow scholars, she offers a rich, nuanced presentation of the various ways Rembrandt’s engagement with Italian art can be understood.

Golahny defines her topic in the preface: “The present study examines selected works by Rembrandt with respect to Italian imagery and concludes with Italians’ reception of Rembrandt with respect to the Ruffo commission” (xi). For me, this proved a