

Gateways to the Book: Frontispieces and Title Pages in Early Modern Europe.

Gitta Bertram, Nils Büttner, and Claus Zittel, eds.

Intersections: Interdisciplinary Studies in Early Modern Culture 76. Leiden: Brill, 2021. xxxiii + 601 pp. + 201 pls. \$199.

This edited volume presents a collection of sixteen articles covering a wide range of topics concerning illustrated title pages of early modern European books. The volume opens with a rich and substantial overview of research. While noticeable overlaps and repetitions signal that it is the work of three authors, it is nevertheless useful in its details and extensive bibliography. The book is divided into three parts, each one presumably edited under the auspices of the editor/author in the respective section.

Part 1, “Culture of the Frontispiece,” contains three essays. Gitta Bertram presents wider aspects of the historical development of the frontispiece, such as iconographic traditions, format, and printers’ marks from the incunabula period through the sixteenth century. The two other contributions in this section include Lea Hagedorn on the design of title pages as a form of advertising for the printer and publishing house, and Hole Rößler on the use of author portraits in printed books.

Part 2, “The Frontispiece between Art and Science,” contains five essays that widen the focus to the aesthetics and epistemology of the illustrated frontispiece. The lengthy contribution by Claus Zittel provides abundant examples from German drama and poetry of the seventeenth century. While Zittel acknowledges Jutta Breyll’s pathbreaking work on German Baroque novels as a reason to exclude this genre from his accounting, there is otherwise little engagement with her methodologies and approach. Zittel’s discussions can become convoluted in the extreme, especially in his treatment of allegories, emblems, and religious devotions as meditative practices. His bibliography lacks Albrecht Schöne’s central work *Emblematik und Drama*, as well as essays by Richard E. Schade, Sibylle Penkert, and Gerhard F. Strasser on emblematic title pages. His discussion of the series of engravings for Andreas Gryphius’s drama *Catharina von Georgien* would have profited from their insights. The article lacks a conclusion that summarizes and synthesizes the massive amounts of information presented here, with little analysis that draws this huge corpus together. A tighter focus would have been a virtue. This essay, like some others in the volume, shows clear signs of oral delivery that have not been revised for print.

The much shorter and better-focused essays in part 2 are more balanced, and shift the perspective to the relationship between the title illustrations and the contents of the books. They include essays by Fabian Kolb, with his investigation of music theoretical works; Constanze Keilholz, on art treatises in the early modern period; and Delphine Schreuder, on the frontispieces for works about fortifications. The section concludes with Conrad Zwierlein’s piece on depictions of Northern Africa in travel accounts of the period. Together, they present a varied overview of text-image relationships in a number of genres across a fairly large chronology.

Part 3 offers seven case studies of frontispieces or individual artists from the sixteenth to the eighteenth centuries by Miranda Elston, Nils Büttner, Alice Zamboni, Alison Fleming, Martijn van Beek, Daniel Fulco, and Malcolm Baker. Their subjects include the frontispiece for a Greek lexicon with a discussion of the Tabula of Cebes, title pages by Rubens, anatomical works, title pages in Jesuit works juxtaposed with the title page for a Benedictine manuscript, the architectural folios of Jeremias Wolff, and sculptural works in eighteenth-century book illustrations. This concluding collection is heterogeneous and lacks a cohesive theme, methodology, or general approach. Nevertheless, some essays stand out as particularly well framed, such as Daniel Fulco's on the Augsburg publisher Wolff.

This volume offers a wealth of detail with broad overviews and case studies. It is useful for the large number of illustrated title pages it reproduces, and the general and bibliographical information it provides about the early modern illustrated title page. It must be noted that the English of the essays is uneven, and, other than the essays by native speakers, there are problems with diction at all levels to a greater or lesser degree. The book should have been more carefully edited to avoid repetitions and overlaps across the entire volume. A more compact version would have produced a more pleasing result and perhaps reduced the exorbitant price. As noted above, one has the impression that several of the contributions were not revised beyond an oral presentation. However, the volume offers much useful information about early illustrated title pages in a single place.

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Domestic Georgic: Labors of Preservation from Rabelais to Milton. Katie Kadue. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2021. 228 pp. \$95.

Most who read Renaissance literature know the admiration and envy that the epic—or sometimes merely its manner—inspired in readers alert to the possibilities of imitation and parody; fewer focus on the georgic, although Virgil himself wrote in that genre. No wonder that Edmund Spenser found it irresistible to write an epic with the hero of its first book (on holiness) named George. Virgil would smile. Katie Kadue's wittily learned study should inspire an increased awareness of the genre as well as pleasure in witnessing how the author snatches the georgic from the fields and woods into the kitchen and storehouse, collecting and exploiting material by Rabelais, Spenser, Montaigne, Marvell, and Milton.

This intelligent book is not perfect. Its flaws include a paucity of needed dates and a seeming compulsion, one shared by many younger academics, to summon a mob of modern scholars who could well have been demoted to humbler footnote references. An editor