

die besprochenen Kunstwerke fallweise auf spätere Generationen (von Stiftern wie von Künstlern) ausgeübt haben, ist sie gewissenhaft nachgegangen. Hingegen hat sie den stilgeschichtlichen Fragen, die oft von denselben Werken aufgeworfen werden, weniger Beachtung geschenkt; in der Regel begnügte sie sich damit, diesbezüglich die Meinungen der älteren Literatur zu referieren. Ganz allgemein beobachtet man, daß ästhetische Würdigungen ebenso wie Stilanalysen weitgehend vermieden werden. Der Text beschreibt das jeweils vorgestellte Objekt detailliert, exakt und völlig nüchtern; bei Werken Sluters etwa begnügt er sich mit der gelegentlichen Feststellung, diese entwickelten sich in den Raum und seien durch einen „expressiven Realismus“ gekennzeichnet. Suggestivere Metaphern werden so selten eingesetzt, daß der Leser schon überrascht aufhorcht, wenn (auf S. 94) vom Grabmal Philipps des Kühnen sehr anschaulich gesagt wird, die schwarze Tumbenplatte „scheine über der filigranen Alabasterarchitektur (scil. der Tumba-Flanken) zu schweben“.

Angesichts so bedeutender Kunstwerke, wie es die Statuenensembles Sluters sind, mutet eine solche sprachliche Zurückhaltung geradezu bewundernswert an. Diese emotionale Askese kann einer Kunsthistorikerin wie Frau Prochno nicht leicht gefallen sein, doch ging es ihr offenbar ganz bewußt nicht um Einfühlung in das künstlerische Genie Sluters (oder Broederlams und der anderen Meister von Champmol), sondern ausschließlich um die quellenmäßig belegten Fakten. Aus dieser Gesinnung heraus hat sie ein zwar nicht packendes, dafür aber sehr nützlich Buch verfaßt.

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La Villa di Vincenzo Giustiniani a Bassano Romano, dalla Storia al Restauro; Agostino Bureca (ed.), Rome: Gangemi Editore 2003; 254 pp., 227 ills. mostly in colour; ISBN 88-492-0517-1; € 40,-

The first thing to do for the Giustiniani family, headed around 1600 by Vincenzo and his brother Cardinal Benedetto, when they transferred their seat from Chios to Rome, was to establish a representative court. This comprised three elements: a *famiglia*, with courtiers and intellectuals related to it; a *palazzo* and *villa*, to live in, and to display the third element of their image, the *collezione*. The latter element was the theme of two recent exhibitions, both in Rome, one on the collection of paintings owned by the Giustiniani, and the other their rich holdings of antique sculpture¹. These were temporary exhibitions as both collections had been sold in the nineteenth century². The

1 For these exhibitions, see the respective catalogues: *Caravaggio e i Giustiniani: toccar con mano una collezione del Seicento*, ed. by Silvia Danesi Squarzina; Milan 2001; this exhibition was also shown in Berlin: Caravaggio in Preußen. Die Sammlung Giustiniani und die Berliner Gemäldegalerie; hrsg. von Silvia Danesi Squarzina; Berlin 2001; and *I Giustiniani e l'antico*, ed. by Giulia Fusconi; Rome, 2001.

2 See for this episode GIOVANNA CAPITELLI: La collezione Giustiniani tra Settecento e Ottocento: fortuna e dispersione, in: *Caravaggio e i Giustiniani* (see note 1), pp. 115–128.

intellectual culture at the Giustiniani court, which centred around Vincenzo, is an even more ephemeral theme; Vincenzo's complex personality has thus far eluded a coherent image, not in the least due to the dispersion of sources. A main entry to this important personage, his family and their important position in early Baroque roman society is thus through the two buildings still standing today. To one of these, the Villa in Bassano Romano situated approximately 50 kilometres north of Rome, now a first volume of a planned series dedicated to this monument has appeared. This building, sold by the Giustiniani in 1845 and dilapidated in the last decades due to a lack of maintenance by the last private owners, was bought by the Ministero per i Beni e le Attività Culturali in 2003, which opened the way for a campaign of research and restoration.

The profusely illustrated publication, 'La Villa di Vincenzo Giustiniani a Bassano Romano' is the outcome of, and contains for a large part the preparatory documentation for, the conservation of the Villa and its possible new function as museum – or, as has also been suggested, as representative seat of the Italian Senate³. The text discusses various aspects related to these issues: the geographical situation of building and adjacent garden, the building-history and the used materials, the future use of the complex after restoration, its frescoed interior and the meaning of the decoration, the architectural typology, and a possible attribution of the design to Vincenzo Giustiniani himself. In this profuseness, the book tends to be too variegated, but at the same time contains interesting material to a large audience.

The long introductory essay by Agostino Bureca and Michele Campisi tries to cover the entire range from *storia* to *restauro*, and comprises more than half the volume. Although this could be deemed rather overabundant and out of focus, the text does prepare the reader for the subsequent detailed and nicely concentrated chapters. For example, Maria Paolo Cherubini offers an interesting look into the relation between the first owners of the Villa, the Anguillara, and the state of the Villa at the moment of the sale to Giuseppe Giustiniani in 1595. Archival research explaining the different branches of the Anguillara-family turns out to be a good approach for the identification of the individual commissioners of mid sixteenth-century fresco decorations, and subsequently a more precise dating of these works. The following essay by Christina Strunck investigates the pictorial decoration commissioned by Vincenzo Giustiniani, who inherited the building from his father in 1600. It was Vincenzo who defined the present shape of the villa, and Christina Strunck argues that this was done as a willful act of self-representation. In the pictorial embellishment of the building, Vincenzo prolonged the themes chosen by the Anguillara, but gave it a new significance. The iconography of the frescodecoration on the *piano nobile*, executed after 1600 by Francesco Albani, Domenichino, Antonio Tempesta, Bernardo Castello and Paolo Guidotti Borghese, presented to the visitor an ideal image of Vincenzo Giustiniani. Due to the complex history of the family, which had its origins on the isle of Chios,

3 FEDERICO CASTELLI GATTINARA: Il futuro di Palazzo Giustiniani: per le armi Odescalchi o per il Senato? In: *Il giornale dell'arte* 22/231, 2004, p. 37.

he partly lacked the ancestral grandeur for a smooth entry into the aristocratic Roman society. Even the noble title conferred to him in 1605 was rather humble, as it only elevated him to the rank of *marchese*. By stressing the analogy of the Giustiniani name with both the roman Emperor Justinian and the virtue of Justice in visual language, Vincenzo extended both his ancestral past to this first Christian Emperor, and indicated his own ‚just government‘ in Bassano di Sutri. On another level, iconography also included the required themes for a villa, that of the seasons and the conversational topics drawn from Ovid’s *Metamorphoses*.

The discussion of the architectural typology of the palace by Paraskevi Papakosta, based on both the architecture itself and a number of plans and reconstructions of the building, raises some questions. For example, as part of the argument seems to be based on inventories, which regrettably have not been included nor summarized, the definition of the two parallel apartments in the south wing seems at odds with the fresco decoration of the four seasons analysed by Christina Strunck in the preceding chapter as possibly completed during the first years of the seventeenth century⁴. How does the iconographic and functional coherence of the four rooms, according to the doors opening towards one another, coincide with such a functional separation? Is this apparent contradiction the result of changes over time and in ownership?

Finally, Michele Campisi concludes this volume with a discussion of Vincenzo’s possible authorship of the design of the Villa and garden. This is argued on the basis of a manuscript on the practice of building written by Giustiniani, and several drawings from the Giustiniani-Odeschalchi archives, but depends as much on circumstantial evidence. A deeper understanding of the intellectual context of Vincenzo’s court, and the intellectuals with whom he corresponded, seems desirable to make the link between the building and this aspect of Vincenzo’s personality more convincing. Considering the studies on this subject, this might have been discussed more in detail in this last chapter⁵.

The book in general points out directions in how the building, the park, and the frescoes can and should be restored for a future use. The many specialists involved in the undertaking, who have contributed to this first volume, have also pointed out how the different approaches taken together raise interesting art historical questions. Although more attention in the editing might have brought home to the reader these issues more clearly, the book in itself successfully argues that the Villa can, and should, become a proper museum open to the public and future art historians instead of functioning as representative seat for the Italian Senate, and thus mostly inaccessible to the public.

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4 Compare especially pp.154–58 and 205–206.

5 See for example SILVIA DANESI SQUARZINA: The Collections of Cardinal Benedetto Giustiniani. Part I, in: *The Burlington Magazine* 140, 1997, pp. 102–118; and IRENE BALDRIGA: La personalità di Vincenzo Giustiniani nello specchio della sua biblioteca, in: *Caravaggio e i Giustiniani* (see note 1), pp. 73–80.