

authenticate *La Bella Principessa*; the presence of Cesare Borgia, Machiavelli, and Leonardo in Imola, in the autumn of 1502; and the discussion of the range and depth of Leonardo's to-do lists (get the measurement of the sun promised me by Maestro Giovanni Francese, describe the tongue of the woodpecker).

Early modern specialists will find other sections less compelling—for example, Isaacson's account of the rivalry between Leonardo and Michelangelo, one social and handsome, the other unattractive and antisocial, and the contemporary observation that the realism of *The Lady with an Ermine* offers an example of a portrait that does all but speak. But such factors do not detract from Isaacson's splendid achievement, at once a magisterial biography and tribute to every aspect of Leonardo's observatory prowess. The book is magnificently produced, with ample reproductions, an illustrated timeline, and an uplifting conclusion on how we can all learn from Leonardo's omnivorous curiosity.

Deborah Parker, *University of Virginia*
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Jacopo de' Barbari: Künstlerschaft und Hofkultur um 1500. Beate Böckem. Studien zur Kunst 32. Cologne: Böhlau Verlag, 2016. 516 pp. €65.

The name Jacopo de' Barbari resonates now only faintly among specialists in Northern Renaissance art, as the obscure Venetian artist who spent his career in the Holy Roman Empire (ca. 1500–16) and who may have reinforced Albrecht Dürer's reception of the Italian Renaissance. As Böckem's excellent study makes clear, Barbari's extant oeuvre may be small and somewhat mysterious, but he was also part of the transformative wave of Italian innovators that swept across the empire. Altogether, Böckem has assembled an extant corpus of possibly twelve paintings, two drawings, thirty engravings, and two woodcuts. (She is doubtful or uncertain about a few of the attributions.) Importantly, Barbari created art for major rulers of the empire, especially for those engaged in promoting humanism: Emperor Maximilian, Elector Friedrich the Wise of Saxony, Elector Albrecht of Brandenburg, and Archduchess Margaret of Austria, regent of the Hapsburg Netherlands. In her study, Böckem pursues two goals: she offers a comprehensive analysis of Barbari's "artistry" ("Künstlerschaft") in several media—his techniques, style, themes, and achievements—as well as a thorough historical reassessment of the artistic culture of the courts with which he was associated. Indeed, nearly half of the book is devoted to wide-ranging analyses of these courts, with especially insightful portrayals of the ambitions of Friedrich the Wise and Margaret of Austria. Moreover, Böckem expertly and vividly charts Barbari's connections to Venetian art from the late fifteenth century.

As for the Dürer question, Böckem documents all known associations between the two artists and concludes that influence probably flowed both ways. It is conceivable, but not likely, that the artists met during Dürer's first trip to Italy, and it is certain that they knew each other during Barbari's Nuremberg residency, in 1500–01, the year Barbari worked for Maximilian. In two discarded drafts for an introduction to *Four Books on Human Proportions* (1528; see pp. 123–34), Dürer claims that Barbari initiated him into the canons of proportions. For unspecified reasons, according to Dürer, Barbari was not able to explain proportional representation in detail, which motivated Dürer's scholarly immersion into Vitruvius. On 7 June 1521, Dürer requested (but did not receive) Barbari's "little book" from Margaret of Austria, possibly a sketchbook. This would appear to indicate Dürer's respect for Barbari's work. On an earlier occasion, however, Dürer wrote, mockingly, from Venice that the local painters claimed Barbari "would have stayed (i.e., in Venice) if he were any good" (7 February 1506). Böckem focuses her analysis on comparisons of important nudes by Dürer with closely related compositions by Barbari. Both artists also used the innovative Venetian frontal portrait of Christ as *Salvator Mundi*. The composition exists in two variants in Barbari's oeuvre and in one major unfinished painting by Dürer; it also informs Dürer's *Self-Portrait* of 1500.

Böckem's reconstruction of Barbari's career reveals clearly that the intellectual status of the painter was undergoing a significant elevation in the empire during the first decade of the sixteenth century. In a letter of inquiry sent to Elector Friedrich the Wise, Barbari declares that the art of painting was the culmination of all the liberal arts. This intellectualization of the visual artist, which is derived entirely from the Italian Renaissance, first appears in the north at precisely this time, with artists such as Dürer and Cranach the Elder. Böckem also demonstrates convincingly that Barbari's social milieu was the humanist professorate of the fledgling University of Wittenberg in 1503/04–05. One of his paintings, *Christ Giving a Blessing*, is notable for the expertly rendered Hebrew on two bands decorating Christ's clothing. This painting is attributed to Barbari on the basis of a 1553 woodcut reproduction by Lucas Cranach the Younger that illustrates a pamphlet validating visual representation of Christ by Protestant artists. Barbari's role as a purveyor of the Italian Renaissance style is also indicated by other contemporaneous reproductions of his designs, by the Augsburg sculptor Hans Daucher and in the innovative etchings from the Hopfers, a flourishing workshop in Augsburg that also reproduced designs by Raphael, Marcantonio Raimondi, and Dürer.

Understandably, Böckem expresses warm enthusiasm for Barbari's work, but she does so without overstating the evidence for his influence or achievements. Her keen eye and historical rigor lead her to qualify the attribution of the magnificent view of Venice (woodcut in six blocks, 1500) to Barbari, suggesting that he probably only contributed to the work. She also strongly questions the attribution of the well-known

double portrait with the renowned mathematician Luca Pacioli. Overall, this book is a rich study not only of an enigmatic career but also, more generally, of the emergence of humanism and Renaissance art at the major courts of the empire.

David H. Price, *Vanderbilt University*
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Colorito: La technique des peintres vénitiens à la Renaissance. Michel Hochmann. Turnhout: Brepols, 2015. 396 pp. €150.

This book poses a challenge to a certain way of practicing art history, as a discipline that sometimes forgets that paintings are complex bodies and not only incorporeal images! Archival sources, case studies, and examination data that the author assembles and interacts with are not art historians' usual reading, and they are even less common in university training in art history. Making and the sense of making are at the core of Michel Hochmann's research, which takes place in a dialogue between art historians, historians, restorers, and scientists. Such interaction leads to a deeper understanding of the artists' practices and reassesses the clichés about Venetian technique, a myth for both artists and art theorists from the sixteenth century onward.

Chapters follow each other like the layers applied to a painting. In the first ones, on drawing, the author brings case studies, *libri di spese*, letters, recipe books, art theory, and infra-red reflectogram data face-to-face, demonstrating the variety of graphic practices (similes, sketches, studies, underdrawings, and *cartoni*) among Venetian painters. The conventional idea of drawing's marginal role is therefore deeply reconsidered. Similar observations can be made on chapters about supports and mediums. From the Quattrocento onward, artists used wood panels as well as canvas, depending on the dimensions and function of paintings. If in the Palazzo Ducale the Bellini chose *teleri* as substitutes for frescoes, their easel paintings and some large *pale* are mostly on wood. Later, Giorgione, Palma, or Lotto are just as irregular, even if artists, such as the young Titian, mostly chose simple thread canvases when they used tempera, looking for the homogeneous effects of wooden panels. The choice of support also had to do with cost or time constraints. Hochmann estimates the cost of canvas around 2% of the painting's total price. This could explain why Titian or Tintoretto worked often on composite canvases, sometimes made by scraps dissimilar in dimensions, thread, and typology: Titian's *Triumph of Faith* is made by canvases of various threads, while Tintoretto's *Last Judgment*, in the Madonna dell'Orto, is a patchwork of disparate scraps. Comparing sources and examination data, the book also undoes the story of the oil-painting-industry espionage by Antonello da Messina, who allegedly brought it into Venice. Indeed, though, oil and tempera were used since the early fifteenth century. Giovanni Bellini employs partial oil in the *Transfiguration*, but his *Agony in the Garden* is egg tempera. If in the *Madonna*