

mention a few: the polyvalent nature of the workshop–house of Biri Grande (where the *bottega* operated between 1531 and 1576); the profile of the ‘*tuttofare*’ Gerolamo Dente; the literary circle around the *bottega* in the 1550s and 1560s, which included such figures as Giovan Mario Verdizzotti and Irene de Splimbergo; the consideration of some of the typical products of the *bottega*, such as *sacre conversazioni* and *poesie*, by means of serial production inherent to these subjects; the different nature, and thus interpretation, of the accounts of late Titian depending on whether they came from artists (Vasari and Palma) or aficionados (Stoppio and Aya-monte); and finally, the important reminder that a *bottega* is not an academy and that its educational role should be judged from a different perspective.

Despite the wealth of topics considered, some of the ideas offered in this section are not entirely convincing, such as that Titian worked simultaneously on different versions of the same theme, retouching them constantly until he had perfected them. This is not the only method of working, and there are numerous examples of replicas which were made a considerable time apart and are characterised precisely by the thinness of the paint layer and the absence of retouching, such as the *Danaë* (Fig.40) and the *Tityus*, both in the Museo del Prado, Madrid. This suggests that Titian kept some kind of *ricordi* of works before they were despatched, probably on canvas. Tagliaferro rejects both the suggestion that Biri Grande had what he called a kind of ‘archive-catalogue’ to facilitate the production of replicas and that such *ricordi* even existed. Nevertheless, from 1540 onwards it is recorded that Titian kept considerable numbers of works in his workshop–house and that these were not necessarily works he was still working on. What function did these paintings have? As is often the case with Titian, they probably had more than one purpose and served both as the starting point for replicas, and as possible purchases by interested buyers. At present we know a great deal about replicas but little about how they were acquired by their owners. The hypothesis that one could both commission a work of art or buy one ready-made at the *bottega* has not been considered, even though there is documentation to support it.³

The book as a whole suffers from Titian-centrism. It would have been interesting to compare Titian’s *bottega* with other contemporary workshops, or at least with those active in Venice. Little is said of the *modus operandi* in the *botteghe* in which Titian trained – those of Sebastiano Zuccato and of the Bellini – beyond a few comments on the latter. Similarly, there is no analysis of his collaboration with Giorgione. If these earlier *botteghe* of the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries influenced the practice in his own workshop, after 1550 we need to consider those of Jacopo Tintoretto and Paolo Veronese in particular. Evidence would suggest that their working and organisational



40. *Danaë*, by Titian. 1553. Canvas, 129.8 by 181.2 cm. (Museo Nacional del Prado, Madrid).

modes differed from those of Titian. Gentili has observed how from around the mid-1550s the number of commissions Titian received in Venice declined as a result of his working almost exclusively for foreign clients.⁴ I would like to suggest another cause: I wonder if Titian’s *bottega* would have been able to guarantee the successful completion of such ambitious works as Paolo Veronese’s in S. Sebastiano or Jacopo Tintoretto’s in the Scuola di S. Rocco. The rise of Veronese and Tintoretto presented a new direction in painting which seduced the younger painters in Venice. Thus, Titian was not only overlooked for the great Venetian commissions, he was also to a certain extent ‘betrayed’ aesthetically by many collaborators who in their independent works showed themselves to be less ‘Titianesque’ and more indebted to Veronese or Tintoretto. Meijer and Saporì noted as much with respect to the northern European painters Christoph Schwarz and Dirck Barendsz,⁵ and the book under review also emphasises the influence of Veronese in the works of Camillo Ballini, and Damiano Mazza’s Tintoretan tendencies. The situation of those painters who proclaimed themselves to be disciples of Titian (even though nothing in their works or documents supports their claims), such as Pablo Scheppers, Simone Petterzano and El Greco, is equally interesting. They illustrate a paradox which is barely addressed in the volume: while Titian’s influence diminished in Venice after 1555, he remained the most famous painter in Europe and the only Venetian painter known outside the *Serenissima* until his death in 1576. This explains why in Venice, many of his own collaborators showed greater interest in Veronese and Tintoretto, while outside the city, and especially in circles in which Titian enjoyed great prestige (in Lombardy, in the circle of Alessandro Farnese in Rome, and the Spain of Philip II), many painters claimed they were his disciples as a means of self-promotion.

The book has ample illustrations and is well edited with constant cross-references among the texts. It is a necessary, stimulating and, at times, provocative read. It delves into essential aspects of the life and work of Titian so that, regardless of whether one agrees with it entirely or not, it is a very welcome addition to the field.

¹ Nevertheless, the book abounds in questions of attribution, some insightful, such as the idea of classifying the *Tarquin and Lucretia* in the Akademie, Vienna, as a ‘Titian only in appearance’, but others are more problematic, such as the discernment of Titian’s hand in the *Deposition* in the Ambrosiana, Milan (absent even in the figure of Joseph of Arimathea, which is in the manner of Marco Vecellio); and the tentative attribution to Navarrete el Mudo of the *St John the Baptist* in the Escorial.

² It is regrettable that the volume did not include two of the essays published in *Studi Tizianeschi* 4 (2006), which offered partial results of the project treated in greater depth in the book under review: G. Tagliaferro: ‘La Bottega di Tiziano: un percorso critico’ (pp.16–52), on the state of the question, and E.M. Dal Pozzolo: ‘La bottega di Tiziano: sistema solare e buco nero’ (pp.53–98), on the theoretical and methodological limits of the project.

³ For example, in 1572 the Council of Ten sent an administrator to Biri Grande to choose two works from the many housed there to give to Antonio Pérez.

⁴ A. Gentili: ‘Titian’s Venetian commissions: events, contexts, images, 1537–1576’, in S. Ferino Pagden and G. Nepi Sciré: exh. cat. *Late Titian and the Sensuality of Painting*, Vienna (Kunsthistorisches Museum) and Venice (Galleria dell’Accademia) 2007–08, pp.48–51.

⁵ B. Meijer: ‘New light on Christoph Schwarz in Venice and the Veneto’, *Artibus et historiae* 39 (1999), pp.127–56; and G Saporì: *Fiamminghi nel cantiere Italia 1560–1600*, Milan 2007, p.81.

South Indian Paintings: A Catalogue of the British Museum Collection. By A.L. Dallapiccola. 320 pp. incl. 285 col. ills. (British Museum Press, London, 2010), £60. ISBN 978-0-7141-2424-7.

Reviewed by JENNIFER HOWES

THIS BOOK IS the British Museum’s first illustrated catalogue of their one thousand-strong collection of paintings from South India. It is richly illustrated and provides a complete list of all the paintings, making it an essential reference book. Not only does it open doors to previously unpublished facets of the British Museum’s collections but also to a discussion of a neglected area of South Asian art history.

The painting traditions of South India have never been as well researched as those of North India. The reasons for the scholarly emphasis on the latter are various and complicated, but at the core they relate to an overriding interest in North Indian history, and of the painting traditions connected with Mughal rule, which fit into ‘schools’ of painting that arose within specific kingdoms, successor states and geographical areas. In South India such rigorous study of regional schools and their links to particular historical phases during the late pre-Colonial and early Colonial periods, has not been as thoroughly described. In reaction to this, Dallapiccola’s book begins with a solid political analysis of South India from 1500 to 1900, describing the historical circumstances that influenced the numerous painting traditions of the South. This is a complicated subject, but Dallapiccola

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gives an extremely clear, readable account of these political circumstances.

One example clarified by this political analysis is the author's discussion of the broadly used term, the Thanjavur Style. This term is generally assigned to any paintings coming from central Tamil Nadu, from the Thanjavur/Madurai area, but rarely is any analysis given to why this term has been so broadly used. Dallapiccola talks the reader through the importance of the Thanjavur region by looking at its connection with the Vijayanagar Empire during the Nayaka Period (early sixteenth century to 1730s), then, later, under Maratha rule. She examines the history of Thanjavur's trade alliances with the West, which in 1799 led to the Maratha king Serfoji II relinquishing administrative control of Thanjavur to the British. The surprising result of this East India Company takeover was Serfoji's cultivation of courtly arts, and his decision to collect and preserve other works in the Sarasvati Mahal Library, which he founded, and that still exists today. This artistic cultivation gave rise to painters trained to work on paper who made 'Company Paintings'. Dallapiccola even goes so far as to discuss the use of the Anglo-Indian term 'Moochy' to describe painters from Thanjavur.

The most contentious term that Dallapiccola deals with is 'Company Painting' (Fig.41). It was first used in the mid-twentieth century to define paintings by Indian artists who were commissioned by European officials, presumably in the employment of Western trading companies. Today, the term 'Company Painting' is considered by many scholars as problematic, as there is often no difference between paintings commissioned during the Colonial period by Indian patrons and Western patrons. Dallapiccola deals with 'Company Painting' by looking at the history of Europeans commissioning work from South Indian artists. She then discusses both the utility and the problems associated with the term's use. In doing so, she shows us that, like it or not, 'Company Painting' has found a place in the vocabulary of Colonial India's art history, and deserves to be used.

A key strength of this catalogue is the author's personal contribution as an experienced researcher. In her introduction she discusses not just the British Museum's collections, but also related paintings in other collections, as well as her knowledge of wall paintings inside both temples and palaces in South India. This discussion of paintings *in situ* in South India is particularly helpful for her discussions of painted narratives, and of the artists who worked on South Indian paintings. By mentioning these important archaeological sites, as well as the libraries and archives where similar material is housed, she has prompted future researchers to expand upon the important body of scholarship that she has established.

Although the provenance of most items in the catalogue is dealt with, there are areas that could have been developed a little more. The collection history of some of the albums



41. *A major-general's groom*. Indian, nineteenth century. Mica, 12.5 by 8.5 cm. (British Museum, London).

is not touched upon. For example, the first album described, which contains thirty-eight paintings in total, was collected by the important orientalist scholar William Erskine (1773–1852) in the early nineteenth century. Although the catalogue mentions the manuscript's transfer from the British Museum's old Department of Oriental Manuscripts and Printed Books, it only gives the album's current British Museum 'Oriental Antiquities' accession number (Asia 1974, 0617,0.14) and omits its old British Museum 'Manuscript' number (Add.26549). With the loss of this small piece of information, it is impossible to trace this manuscript back to William Erskine, and part of the manuscript's history is lost.

Anyone who has tackled the task of categorising non-Western objects into a cataloguing format suitable for a modern readership is aware of the careful thought that such an exercise requires. In this book, this thoughtfulness clearly shines through. The paintings are divided into five sections according to subject: 1. Hindu Mythology; 2. Castes, trades and occupations; 3. Natural history drawings; 4. Painted narratives; and 5. A painted model of a processional chariot. In order to cross-reference these categories with different geographical names, monuments, festivals, ceremonies, mythological terms, occupations and other detailed subject-matter, Dallapiccola has created an expansive, four-part index. The index and the categorisation of the material reflect the care and dedication that have gone into her research. This work also connects with the British Museum's impressive online catalogue, where the collection items published in *South Indian Paintings* have also been reproduced in colour.

Spanish Art in Britain and Ireland, 1750–1920. Studies in Reception in Memory of Enriqueta Harris Frankfort.

Edited by Nigel Glendinning and Hilary Macartney. 307 pp. incl. 17 col. + 56 b. & w. ills. (Tamesis, Woodbridge, 2010), £50. ISBN 978-1-85566-223-0.

Reviewed by PHILIP MCEVANSONEYA

OF THE FOURTEEN new essays gathered in this welcome and attractive volume, the first to be devoted to the reception of Spanish art in Britain and Ireland, eleven are by the editors and one each by Sarah Symmons, Jeremy Roe and Marjorie Trusted, so the reader is in the hands of leading specialists in the field. These are preceded by an appreciation of Enriqueta Harris Frankfort, and three of her essays are reprinted to round off the volume. That the study of Spanish art thrives in Britain and Ireland is substantially due to Enriqueta Harris Frankfort who, with Nigel Glendinning, can be said to have laid the foundations on which current studies continue to build.

The volume starts with a scene-setting essay, 'British and Irish Interest in Hispanic Culture', by Enriqueta Harris Frankfort and Nigel Glendinning, reprinted from the inaugural issue (2001) of the newsletter of ARTES, the Iberian and Latin American Visual Arts Group. The following essays cover a variety of topics, such as women writers and travellers in Spain; collectors of and dealers in Spanish art; the accessibility of Spanish art in temporary exhibitions and public and private collections, as well as providing case studies of the critical fortunes and reception histories of individual artists. The reader-friendly structure of the volume allows each essay to be a free-standing treatment of its topic. The large and legible illustrations are well chosen, and due space is given to the consideration of evolving reactions to the visual qualities of individual works of art (although none of the quotations relating to Ribera is as apt as Glendinning's own description of his 'gritty and wrinkled realism').

The historiography of Spanish art in Britain and Ireland constitutes a fascinating chapter. Writers in English were quick to exploit publications by Spaniards such as Palomino or Ponz. From the time of the 'discovery' of Spain in the later eighteenth century views thus derived were extremely influential and helped, for a while at least, to put Murillo at the forefront of British taste. As an example of that pattern it is informative to read that the two-volume *Dictionary of Spanish Painters* . . . (London 1833–44) by Mrs A. O'Neil was substantially derived from Céan Bermudez's *Diccionario historico de los ilustres profesores de las Bellas Artes en España* (Madrid 1800), and was in turn the principal source for Edward Boid's *The History of the Spanish School of Painting* . . . (London 1843). Teasing out a lineage such as this is helpful in understanding the sources of information and opinions as they entered into widening circulation. The esteem first given to Murillo was gradually redirected towards