pope and encourage his continued friendship. Although Philip II hoped to work in cooperation with the papacy to achieve the goals of the Counter-Reformation, frequently arguments about jurisdiction and political goals destroyed the relationship. Dispatches from both embassies regularly complained of the Italian attraction to novelty and change (*novedades*), which challenged the ambassadors to master a political scene that altered daily and seemed impossibly inconstant. Moreover, Philip's own silence or his orders to delay negotiations or reverse their position based on secret Spanish objectives at times caused the ambassadors to lose face (*reputación*) in the Italian courts. In combination, these factors encouraged the ambassadors to fear the superficiality of Spanish hegemony in Italy and heightened their anxiety over political unrest.

On a less apprehensive note, Levin discusses the secondary role of the ambassadors as conduits of Italian culture and commodities to be sent back to Spain. The Habsburg kings' relationship with the artist Titian and the construction of the Escorial library were special projects that involved the ambassadors' expertise and Italian contacts. They acted as agents responsible for purchasing hard to find luxury items, including manuscripts and printed books, cloth, artworks, and relics. The ambassadors also contracted Italian professionals, military and artistic, who expressed interest in working for Philip in Spain. Levin argues that to the king and his men Italy was a resource to be exploited, rather than an equal partner, which culturally and politically formed the basis of Italian dislike of Spanish authority.

In conclusion, this volume is an excellent study of sixteenth-century diplomacy and political tactics on the Mediterranean stage. Levin has incorporated a large number of political dispatches from the Archivo General de Simancas (Valladolid) into his narrative in an accessible manner that neither bores nor overloads the reader. He writes engagingly and has crafted a political study that presents the ambassadors' idiosyncratic personalities in a way that both entertains and clearly reveals the truth of his thesis. Furthermore, he does this succinctly while presenting a view of European politics that is wider than merely the Italian peninsula.

JENNIFER MARA DESILVA

University of Toronto

Bellori, Giovan Pietro. *The Lives of the Modern Painters, Sculptors and Architects. A New Translation and Critical Edition*. Translated by Alice Sedgwick Wohl. Notes by Hellmut Wohl. Introduction by Tomas Montanari. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2005. 504 pp. ISBN 13 978-0-521-78187-9

Since its publication in 1672, Giovan Pietro Bellori's *Lives of the Modern Painters, Sculptors and Architects* has been a central text in the scholarship of the Baroque period in Rome. Determined to follow in the tradition of Vasari, Bellori, who trained briefly as an artist but who became a highly accomplished cultural academic and antiquarian, determined to provide biographical accounts of those artists most influential in his own time. What has most fascinated historians of the Baroque, particularly when Bellori's biographies became a central text in twentieth-century historiography of the period, is his canon of inclusions and exclusions.

In the 'Introduction' to his *Lives*, Bellori calls himself a "mere translator" avoiding the impulse of "imputing to the figures meanings and passions that are not present in them" (50). This declaration seems a little disingenuous, since through his choice of inclusions and exclusions from his biographical canon he was certainly determined that the reader, and presumably the contemporary viewer of Roman art, learn to prefer, through a careful articulation of cultural norms, certain works over others, thus imputing value, if not meaning, to a selective and representative repertoire. For example, the original edition of the *Lives* included twelve biographies; of the Carracci brothers, Annibale and Agostino, founders of the classicizing Bolognese academy in the tradition of Raphael; of Federico Barocci, Caravaggio, Rubens, Van Dyck, Domenichino, Lanfranco and Poussin. He included two sculptors, Francois Du Quesnoy and Alessandro Algardi, and only one architect, Domenico Fontana. Already, we can see a predilection for painting which, for Bellori, was the single art in which modern masters were equal to the accomplishments of the ancients.

Bellori taught twentieth-century scholarship to identify Caravaggio as the major misfit among the painters of this period. The prelude to the *Lives* is Bellori's essay on the 'Ideal' which enshrined the Neo-Platonism that came to dominate the classical revival of the later eighteenth-century. For a Neo-Platonic 'idealist' Caravaggio was the lowest point on the scale of artistic accomplishment, a raw imitator of nature without the benefit of proper artifice. In his 'Idea' Bellori says "in our time Michelangelo da Caravaggio was too naturalistic, he painted men as they are, and Bamboccio painted the worst" (58) – a curious sentiment for someone who fancied himself a 'mere translator'. It is because of Bellori that later scholars moulded Caravaggio into an outsider, a pure naturalist, deliberately flaunting the classicizing tendencies favoured by the 'rival' Carracci school. More recent scholarship has tended to debunk a lot of this myth; Caravaggio seems to have been a rather learned artist who preferred the singularity of the exceptional expression over more traditional depictions. In his way, as Tomas Montanari points out (or at least seems to suggest) in his excellent 'Introduction' to this edition, Caravaggio's independence and removal from the 'academy' placed him in roughly the same category as another upstart of the period, Gian Lorenzo Bernini, whom Bellori deliberately omitted from his biographies. He limits his discussion of sculptors to De Quesnoy and Algardi for a reason; specifically because "sculpture to date lacks a sculptor, because it has not been raised to the level of painting, its companion, and marbles remain deprived of narrative, boasting only some few statues such as those of Michelangelo, which are inferior to ancient works" (49). Take that, Bernini (and Michelangelo, too, who Bellori needed to devalue to assure the apotheosis of Raphael).

It seems more than apparent now that he excluded Bernini (whom he seems rather to have actually admired) not on formal grounds (which is why most seventeenth-century theorists ignored Borromini) but on political ones. Bellori was among the disciples of the Carracci, and with the ascendancy of the Barberini Pope Urban VIII, artists of the Bolognese school were dropped in favour of artists like Bernini and Pietro da Cortona (another artist Bellori excluded from his biographies). It seems that Bellori was particularly sensitive to the disenfranchise-

ment of Domenichino, who was displaced by Cortona and went to Naples. As an adherent of the Carracci school, Bellori preferred tradition to innovation, and thought that papal authority was best expressed in the vein of the Raphaellesque academic mode that the Carracci effectively institutionalized. As supervisor of Roman antiquities after 1670, one of Bellori's projects was the installation of the busts of Annibale Carracci and Raphael in the Pantheon (12). To acknowledge Bernini would be to endorse an art that was fundamentally anti-academic and maybe even anti-intellectual, and that thrived on a papal favouritism that celebrated and cultivated new forms rather than relying on the classicizing norms that had spoken a language of papal power for several generations.

It was Bellori who effectively solidified the reputation of Raphael for artists of the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Bellori's admiration for Raphael was based not only on intellectual premises, but on a fairly detailed technical understanding of Raphael's work. With the painter Carlo Maratti, Bellori made a plan for the restoration of Raphael's frescoes in the Loggia of Psyche in the Farnesina, which he examined, along with the Vatican *stanze* frescoes, in such meticulous physical detail that he really should be credited as a founder of modern documentary techniques in conservation and restoration (these examinations were published posthumously in 1696 as *Descrizione delle immagini dipinte de Raffaello d'Urbino*). In enshrining Raphael as the true model for painting, Bellori marked the culmination of a process that had begun in the sixteenth-century. The deification of Raphael is clearly found in Ludovico Dolce's treatise *L'Aretino* (first published in 1557), so it is perhaps not surprising to learn that Maratti knew and admired this work (see *Dolce's Aretino and Venetian Art Theory of the Cinquecento*, Mark W. Roskill, University of Toronto Press, 2000, 67).

One of the biographies included in this edition of the *Lives* is the first complete English translation of Bellori's biography of Maratti, one of three lives to be published after Bellori's death (the others are of Guido Reni and Andrea Sacchi). Maratti is a much overlooked figure in art scholarship, so having this biography available in English should permit a more attentive re-examination of his life and career, as well as provide insight into the development of Bellori's theoretical stance in his later years (the life of Maratti is perhaps Bellori's greatest project of deification, which might come as a bit of a surprise to a modern reader).

The translators have done an excellent job in capturing the nuances of Bellori's 'plain' language, allowing him to speak for himself. What emerges is an entirely new appreciation of the breathtaking detail of his observations and descriptions, which is certainly one of his most important contributions to our picture of this period. Working from earlier editions of the work, and with a dedication to Evelina Borea and Giovanni Previtali, who produced their magisterial version of the *Lives* in Italian in 1976, the translators have produced a particularly useful tool for advancing art historical scholarship on the seventeenth-century, keeping in mind, of course, that even the best translation is another form of interpretation.

SALLY HICKSON
University of Guelph