

to connect modes of dress to the complex political background of the seventeenth century, which at times seems a bit too facile, nevertheless demonstrates the ambition that marks the entire book. By presenting the discourse of dress through an examination of both art and literature, Ribeiro's project is truly interdisciplinary, the sort of work which many of us value, but do not see enough of.

Gauvin Alexander Bailey, Pamela M. Jones, Franco Mormando, and Thomas W. Worcester, eds. *Hope and Healing: Painting in Italy in a Time of Plague, 1500-1800*. Worcester, Mass.: Clark University, College of the Holy Cross, Worcester Art Museum, 2005. viii + 264 pp. + 43 color and 68 b/w illus. \$39.95. Review by JEFFREY FONTANA, AUSTIN COLLEGE.

The subject of the present volume, which served as the catalogue to an exhibition of paintings held at the Worcester Art Museum in the summer of 2005, could not be more aptly or succinctly stated than by one of the curators of the show, Thomas Worcester: "This exhibition has sought to explore how early modern people (especially in Italy) thought about life and death, illness and health, plague and piety. It has sought to show how painting was a privileged expression of metaphors and symbols, by which painters and their audiences not only coped with plague and the threat of plague, but also expressed their fears and—especially—their deepest hopes for health and salvation in this world and in eternity" (170). The curators, who were also four of the seven authors, have succeeded admirably in their ambition to better define the place of plague in the early modern worldview and to illuminate how paintings functioned instrumentally as a response. Using an interdisciplinary variety of perspectives, the essays focus on the functional aspect of paintings as "spiritual remedies" to the plague, which is similar in approach to the essays in *Saints and Sinners: Caravaggio and the Baroque Image*, the catalogue to a 1999 exhibition in which the four curators of the present exhibition took part. A chief virtue of both books is the ability to resituate objects in their original spaces of belief, hope, longing, despair, death and institutional power, far distant from modern spaces of aesthetic contemplation such as the museum gallery or catalogue page.

The volume is divided into a section of essays and a catalogue of exhibited works, and is weighted heavily toward the former. To a certain degree the paintings themselves are given short shrift; the catalogue entries average about three paragraphs, and much of their contents consolidates more ample discussions within the essays. Information about provenance and appearances in previous exhibitions and in the literature is absent. Though this treatment could be mildly frustrating to a reader wishing to know as much as possible about individual works, it emphasizes the seeming importance to the curators of considering the paintings woven back into their cultural contexts, which the essays achieve, rather than as isolated objects of delectation.

Not surprisingly, the essays by the four curators make the best use of the exhibited works. The three contributions commissioned from Sheila C. Barker, James Clifton, and Andrew Hopkins integrate less well with the catalogued paintings and the other essays, although they do expand the reach of the volume as a whole, making it a broader contribution to the literature on art and plague. The commissioned essays are shorter, and deal with plague imagery in Rome, Naples, and Venice, respectively.

Mormando's introductory essay sets up the other contributions to the volume with an overview of the presence of the bubonic plague in the experience of early modern Italians, and of the role played by art as an "instrument of healing and encouragement" (2). The repeated strikes of the plague in Europe from the mid-fourteenth to the eighteenth century created a sense of helplessness, due to the mysterious natural cause of the disease, and the lack of an effective physical treatment for it. In the light of biblical stories of plague, most accepted the Church's interpretation of outbreaks as God's wrathful punishment of humanity's sins. Since the best "temporal remedy" (one of the "medical-social-political measures"), flight from an infected area, was impractical for the less wealthy, and alternatively the confinement of suspected victims in a plague hospital (lazaretto) meant almost certain death, early modern Italians sought "spiritual remedies" (articulated by the Church), such as prayers, processions, and charitable works, to placate God. Works of art "served to remind the viewer of the necessity, availability, and efficacy of the various 'celestial cures' at their disposal, thus offering comfort and hope in times of despair" (2). The afflicted were depicted with plague buboes on their necks, in their armpits or in their groins, but often they were shown more decorously with a bubo on the upper thigh, pointing to an armpit, with gray

skin (alluding to subcutaneous hemorrhaging), or simply in a languishing state. The sacred personages who might respond to the prayers of the faithful and intercede on their behalf were depicted often in order to give hope and comfort, and included the Virgin Mary, St. Sebastian, St. Roch, St. Michael the Archangel, Lazarus, and St. Rosalie of Palermo. Mormando effectively delineates what to look for in plague art, how it functioned, and how it reflected hopes and fears for centuries.

Jones's essay focuses on plague imagery in paintings in Milan and Rome from the cult of St. Carlo Borromeo, the sixteenth-century archbishop who was beatified in 1602 and canonized in 1610. Borromeo was highly admired for his care for the afflicted during the plague outbreak in Milan from 1576-77, and his insistence on administering the sacraments to those confined to the lazarettos, at great risk to his own health. Consistent with the general thrust of his reform movement, Borromeo's ministry in time of plague emphasized penitence, intended to improve the state of a victim's soul and to placate God. Borromeo organized several penitential processions during the plague, and one of these, the procession of the Holy Nail, supplied a major theme for the saint's iconography. Paintings for his beatification ceremony at the cathedral of Milan and for his canonization at St. Peter's in Rome began to standardize his plague imagery, which was disseminated through prints. Both narrative and devotional paintings revolved around his administration of the sacraments, his penitential procession, and his charitable donation of clothing and furnishings. In devotional paintings, two of the saint's attributes—bare feet, one of which was wounded, and a rope around his neck—can be traced to depictions of the procession of the Holy Nail, underscoring his role as a plague saint who could bring some hope to the afflicted. Borromeo's devotion to the Holy Nail reveals the importance of Christ's Passion to his personal penitential piety, and this is reflected in paintings representing him in prayer before a crucifix or the holy sepulcher. Jones identifies in paintings key aspects of this popular saint's iconography from his plague ministry, and shows how they presented him following both the active life, and a contemplative life of prayer.

The subject of Bailey's essay is St. Rosalie of Palermo, a twelfth-century reclusive nun whose bones were supposedly found in a cave by a hunter in 1624. Following instructions from a vision of the saint, the hunter had the bones carried in procession through Palermo during a plague outbreak, which

subsided shortly thereafter, conferring upon Rosalie the status of plague saint and patron of the city. The great Baroque painter Anthony van Dyck lived in Palermo from 1624-25, and executed a series of canvases of the saint that established her iconography, but which drew upon lesser regional works. Van Dyck depicted her wearing a Franciscan habit and a rope belt, with blonde hair, accompanied by a skull (a reminder of penitence and plague), and living an isolated existence. The contemplative life implied by the latter suggested comparisons to St. Francis of Assisi, but especially to Mary Magdalene, rendering Rosalie a comparably exemplary post-Tridentine saint. Bailey discusses four painting types of Rosalie by van Dyck, making good use of two works in the exhibition (catalogue numbers 30 and 31).

Worcester studies the development of the cult of St. Roch, the saint perhaps most turned to in times of plague, in the concluding essay. The essay is thorough and informative, and covers the literary sources of the saint's life, paintings that highlight his various roles, the spread of devotion to the saint beyond Italy to northern Europe from the 1500s on, and Roch's importance as a figure of reassurance in a time of fear. Though born in France, Roch traveled widely in Italy giving aid to the plague-stricken while on a pilgrimage to Rome, giving rise to his frequent representation as a pilgrim. The bubo on his thigh is generally exposed, but he shows no other symptoms, alluding to his cure. The presence of the dog that fed him during his illness points to the overcoming of famine, which was often suffered in times of plague. These motifs reflect the selection of only certain episodes to highlight from Roch's life, all chosen to strengthen victims' faith in the saint as an intercessor and hope for the alleviation of their suffering. For Worcester, who refers to almost half of the exhibition's paintings in his essay, images of St. Roch are emblematic of early modern Italian paintings that promoted hope for healing.

John G. Demaray. *From Pilgrimage to History: The Renaissance and Global Historicism*. Brooklyn: AMS Press, 2006. xv + 250 pp. + 28 illus. \$82.50. Review by IRA CLARK, UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA.

In *From Pilgrimage to History* John G. Demaray extends his scholarship on the cosmologies and poetic structures of Dante, Spenser, and Milton into an account of the transformation that occurred between the influence of faith-