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**Williams, Robert. *Raphael and the Redefinition of Art in Renaissance Italy***

**Marsha Libina**

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l'emploi de « commune » aurait été bien imprécis et insuffisant. L'entéléchie (inutile de lui donner son nom grec [474] puisque Ronsard le francise dans les *Amours* [1553], sonnet 69) est « le terme réalisé par l'action et ne renfermant plus aucun devenir » (J. Tricot) ; l'appliquer à un passage de Ronsard (cité, 474) suppose une justification. Enfin, sur bien des sujets, et notamment sur celui du voile (abordé de façon superficielle et disséminée : 130 *sq.*, 166–167 et 186–196), le recours au livre d'Edgar Wind (*Mystères païens de la Renaissance*) aurait pu être utile.

En somme, un livre qui aurait mérité d'être largement ordonné et clarifié pour que les développements intéressants (dont évidemment la première partie sur la fantaisie et la vraisemblance dans les poétiques du temps) apparaissent plus clairement et soient davantage justifiés.

FRANÇOIS ROUDAUT

Université Paul-Valéry (Montpellier III)

**Williams, Robert.**

***Raphael and the Redefinition of Art in Renaissance Italy.***

Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017. Pp. xi, 314 + 113 b/w ill. ISBN 978-1-1071-3150-7 (hardcover) US\$114.95.

The status of painting, which traditionally had been placed low in the hierarchy of knowledge among the mechanical arts, underwent profound change during the sixteenth century. The rise of linear perspective, art theory, artists' academies, and the new attention given to individual style are just some of the indicators that image-making was being redefined in Renaissance culture and was vying for an elevated status among other fields of knowledge. Understanding the driving force and the broader implications behind these Renaissance achievements lies at the heart of the late Robert Williams's critical reevaluation of Raphael's art. We are fortunate to have seen this important contribution come out before Williams's passing last spring.

In *Raphael and the Redefinition of Art*, Williams credits Raphael with the development of a new notion of art as a systematic and rational intellectual activity, akin to philosophy or poetry. The argument is an extension of Williams's essay on the systematicity of representation (Elkins and Williams,

2008) and builds on Williams's earlier work on the transformation of art from "techne" to "metatechne" in his examination of art theory from the second half of the century (Williams, 1997). In his new book, the focus is shifted to the early 1500s and grounded in Raphael's *oeuvre*, although Williams's analysis is nonetheless often informed by a close reading of Giorgio Vasari and other art theorists. At stake for Williams are much larger questions about how we define the modernism of the early modern period. In asking his reader to reflect on current notions of modernity—which Williams aligns with a neo-Romantic distaste for mass-production and preference for subjectivity—and to consider how these notions might differ from those of the Renaissance, Williams seeks to correct a common view of Renaissance art as an anti-rational, purely visual (read sensual) enterprise. The book succeeds in its ambitious task, locating Raphael's modernity in the systematicity of his practice and its claim to reveal higher, universal truths. Central to this thesis is that a key Renaissance achievement was the establishment of art's relation to literature and to reason.

Chapter 1 traces the implications of Raphael's practice of synthetic imitation, that is, his conscious selection and recombination of different artistic styles and modes of working, namely those of Perugino, Leonardo, Fra Bartolommeo, and Michelangelo. Williams aligns this mode of working with Pietro Bembo's theory of literary imitation and with Baldassare Castiglione's ideas on imitation in speech and behaviour. According to Williams, Raphael's conscious construction of his authorial persona can be understood as an "effortful process of self-overcoming" (75) in the pursuit of a universal style that transcends individual identity and thus opens up endless pictorial possibilities for selection through good judgment and reason—what Williams calls Raphael's "systematic variation" (43). It is refreshing to see the terms of the conversation shift away from notions of regional style as something that is naively acquired to a consideration of the calculated process by which artists construct or perform style through imitation. Such an approach has broader implications and allows us, for instance, to consider more critically the terms often used to discuss artistic rivalries and collaborations that rested on stylistic differences, such as the case of Michelangelo and Sebastiano del Piombo.

Following a discussion of Raphael's synthetic mode of imitation, chapter 2 examines the systematicity of representation in Raphael's frescoes for the Vatican Stanze and the Loggia of Pope Leo X. Taking Vasari and Giovanni

Pietro Bellori's descriptions of the frescoes as his starting point, Williams points to the works' emphasis on decorum. He defines the term by its three modes of operation; among others, it is an organizing principle for thinking about the world, which is therefore dependent on philosophical thought. Williams argues that the frescoes "foreground the process of canon creation" (99) and point to a single formal ideal by virtue of their self-referentiality and use of repetition and formal correspondences, which in turn generate an internal visual vocabulary or system. The Loggia, the Sala dei Palafrenieri, and the Sala delle Prospettive at the Villa Farnesina are similarly characterized by "controlled variation" and the juxtaposition of genres. This emphasis on pictorial repetition and poetic elaboration, which Williams likewise identifies in Raphael's devotional paintings and portraits, can be understood as part of a broader interest in the discursivity of painting. In other words, the works point beyond themselves to higher, abstract concepts and virtues, which they embody.

In the last and most provocative chapter, Williams focuses on the notion of art as labour and the moral stakes of making art. Vasari's presentation of Raphael as an ideal exemplar of a gentle and kind master to his workshop assistants is brought into sharp focus against the changing socio-economic realities of the artist's vocation in the sixteenth century, as recounted by Giovanni Battista Armenini. Williams argues that Raphael's new model of collaborative, streamlined workshop practice developed in response to the destructive effects of market pressures, as well as the breakdown of the traditional system of artistic training within a climate of increasing competition. An emphasis on invention and the intellectual work of art, rather than on mere material production, was Raphael's way of preparing his assistants for these new labour conditions and, more importantly, a way of insisting on the elevated status of art.

Williams's insightful analysis will be of great interest to scholars working on both art and art theory in Renaissance Italy. Given Williams's earlier work, the book raises important questions about how this earlier moment in Renaissance Italy might be said to differ from the development of art as an intellectual, theoretical activity in the latter half of the century. Yet another valuable question that the book raises is how works that were less inclined to follow rule and decorum, like those of the *maniera* artists or images catering to popular devotion, might complement or nuance this account of the development of art as a systematic and rational activity. Williams's book and

his legacy as a scholar mark an important contribution to our understanding of the intellectual aspirations common to Renaissance art and literature, and their grounding in discursive modes of thought.

MARSHA LIBINA

Centre for Reformation and Renaissance Studies  
University of Toronto

**Zapf, Hauprecht.**

***Johannes der Evangelist über alle Kapitel erklärt. Ein Bibelkommentar von 1597.* Ed. Martin Rothkegel.**

MacGregor, MB: Hutterian Brethren Book Centre, 2017. Pp. xx, 446. ISBN 978-1927913-57-4 (hardcover) n.p.

Hauprecht Zapf (ca. 1546–1630) grew up in a Swiss Brethren congregation that had migrated to Moravia and joined the Hutterites. He was trained as a professional scribe and exercised that role for thirty years as the highly esteemed secretary of the Neumuehl/Nove Mlyny Hutterite community. He was elected to the ministry in 1594. In addition to this commentary, he wrote, among other things, a codex of baptismal catechesis.

Martin Rothkegel is professor of church history at the Elstal Baptist Seminary near Berlin. His critical apparatus is outstanding. It includes judicious modernizing of German orthography and style, footnotes for shifts in meaning of words, endnotes for specific word substitutions, and comprehensive indices.

This commentary on the Gospel of John is part of a recent wave of publications by late sixteenth-century successor movements to Anabaptism. For instance, Arnold Snyder's *Later Writings of the Swiss Anabaptists* documents the theological development of the Swiss stream. The foreword to *Johannes der Evangelist* reminds the reader that this manuscript is one of many that have been discovered recently in Eastern European archives. Martin Rothkegel's editing of Zapf's *Johannes der Evangelist* documents the evolution of Hutterite scriptural exposition in the post-tolerance era of the movement. Writings from the founding era are widely read and used by Hutterite communities today for sermon preparation and edification.