

in the context of multi-plate colour printing as a way to ensure that the plates print in register. More particularly, Bosse wrote of its use for the technique of colour intaglio printing for which he and Charles Delafontaine were granted *lettres patentes* in 1637 (1645, pp. 72–73). No prints in this manner are known. Bosse next described the method by which he thought François Perrier might have printed his chiaroscuro etchings in black-and-white ink from two plates on grey-brown paper, with the second white plate printed upside down within the platemark of the black impression (fig. ~~###~~, where the overlapping white ink clearly hides the black ink). Griffiths referred to the 1745 edition of Bosse's treatise revised by Charles-Nicholas Cochin *fils* for three further uses. The first is for printing *images satinées*, which probably means prints on fabric rather than on paper with a glazed or opaque surface, which would become dull again when dampened. The second is for printing a number of small plates on one sheet. This may also be useful for a text page with spaces saved for the illustrations (see Fertel, above). Third, the method can be applied for printing on cardboard or thick paper when it is difficult to see or feel whether the plate is still in the right position, in which case the printer slides his fingers over the verso of the sheet to feel the plate underneath.

The common practice in book printing was to dampen the blank sheets the day before, printing the recto sides and stacking the fresh impressions. Relief printing ink always contained a drying agent and was near dry to the touch after coming from the press, which prevented off-setting of the printed text from the lower sheet onto the blank verso side of the sheet above. The sheets were kept in a pile to keep them damp and were taken off again for printing the verso sides shortly afterwards, after which they were hung up to dry. Plate printing has to be done on a different press, with ink of a different formula. Until around the mid-seventeenth century we regularly find documentation of workshops with both book and roller presses, meaning that the printing of illustrations on text pages could have been performed under the same roof. But even if book and roller presses were at hand, too much water would have evaporated from the sheets and therefore they would have become too stiff after two print runs. They presumably had to be re-dampened in order to make them resilient enough for the following intaglio printing. Additionally, with more than just a day or two between text and plate printing the sheets would have to be dried first, otherwise mould would grow and stains show, especially in warm weather. AD STIJNMAN

THE ART OF THE ILLUSTRATED BOOK IN SEVENTEENTH-CENTURY VENICE. In studies of the Venetian Baroque, engraving has received little critical attention or acclaim, unlike contemporary painting, sculpture and architecture of that era. With few exceptions, mostly represented by painter-engravers such as Odoardo

Fialetti, Giulio Carpioni and Giuseppe Diamantini, the activity of almost all the masters who specialized in reproductive engraving has long been minimized, if not reduced to the level of an artisan practice. Although peaks of quality may be lacking, there was a regular and diligent production that was sometimes even refined and original. Prints frequently established a very fruitful relationship, anything but subordinate, with the major arts.

Francesca Cocchiara has the merit of carefully analysing and summarizing this complex subject in her study *Il libro illustrato veneziano del Seicento* (Saonara [Padova], Il Prato Casa Editrice, 2010, 252 pp., 329 b. & w. ills., €50). Through cross-analysis of the socio-cultural background, publishing dynamics, individual artistic personalities and patronage, she has constructed an exhaustive overview, without omitting the necessary references to the technical and especially the iconographic aspects of the prints.

Three phases characterize this century. The first, lasting 30 years from about 1600 to 1630, corresponds to a time of political difficulties and stagnation in the publishing industry; book illustrations, many by the editor-engravers Giacomo Franco and Francesco Valesio, still reveal a sixteenth-century mentality, preferring figured frontispieces and plates complementing texts. The situation, Cocchiara explains, changed radically after the plague of 1630–31, thanks also to the initiative of the patrician Giovan Francesco Loredan, founder of the *Accademia degli Incogniti* (Academy of the Unknown) and promoter of artists and men of letters.

Contemporaneously to what was happening in other Italian and European centres, a new type of illustration – that of the title-page – spread in Venice and achieved rapid success because of its great semantic and visual value. It attracted the reader and introduced the subject of the book, and could cite the title and celebrate the author or the dedicatee, often immortalized in a separate plate. The undisputed protagonists of this phase were the engravers Giacomo Piccini, who bore the title of ‘*Regis Christianissimi Sculptor*’ (engraver of the most Christian king [Louis XIV]), and Giovanni Georgi, both responsible for engraving allegorical and encomiastic inventions created by the most famous painters of the time, from Francesco Ruschi to Pietro della Vecchia, Pietro Liberi and Daniel van den Dyck (fig. 1). Artists such as Dario Varotari the Younger and Marco Boschini, who in 1660 illustrated and published his book *Carta del navigar pitoresco* (Map of the picturesque journey), etched themselves. Venetian books of this period are so enriched by title-pages and plates after famous artists that they constitute a veritable picture gallery.

In the third phase, from the 1660s, the production of engravings, supported by the publication of opera libretti, continued along the same path, but almost never surpassed the previous era. In spite of qualitative discontinuities, the works of Isabella Piccini, Giacomo's daughter, Antonio Bosio and Giacomo Ruffoni stand out for the number of



1. Giacomo Piccini after Francesco Ruschi, Title-page from *Le glorie de gli Incogniti* (The Glories of the [members of the Academy of the] Unknown; Venice, 1647), engraving, 188 x 128 mm (Venice, Private collection).

prints they made; important foreign presences are Martial Desbois and Arnold van Westerhout. Among the inventors of the images, the most important were Ludovico David, Louis Dorigny, Gregorio Lazzarini, Valentin Lefèvre and Antonio Zanchi, although Cocchiara, with questionable choice, defines them rather indiscriminately as painter-engravers. At the end of the century, the learned Franciscan monk Vincenzo Maria Coronelli strove to reinvigorate the art of engraving, sponsoring masters such as Domenico Rossetti and Alessandro Dalla Via.

Cocchiara's volume expands the perspective provided by the two-volume census of seventeenth-century Venetian editions (*Le edizioni veneziane del Seicento. Censimento*, edited by C. Griffante, Milan, 2003–06) and by an exhibition held in Padua dedicated to sixteenth- and seventeenth-century illustrated books (*Le Muse tra i libri. Il libro illustrato veneto del Cinque e Seicento nelle collezioni della Biblioteca Universitaria di Padova*, edited by P. Gnan and V. Mancini, Padua, 2009) and fills a serious gap. It is a milestone for any future study. PAOLO DELORENZI