

or upper and lower Saxony, they tended to remain passive. Even here, however, the dominant powers were anxious to maintain the impression of activity so as not to allow unfavourable comparisons to be made with more active Circles.

Winfried Dotzauer has been one of the pioneers in this field of research and this book is a revised and extended edition of his *Die deutschen Reichskreise in der Verfassung des Alten Reiches und ihr Eigenleben (1500–1806)*. Originally published in 1989, that was the first-ever general study of the institution. The original introductory chapter has now become three dealing with the late medieval precursors of the early modern Circles, with their structural evolution in the early modern period and with the outlines of the political role that they played until 1806. Completely new to this edition are further general chapters on aspects of the activities of the Circles: the role they played in attempts to regulate the currency; the execution of their duty to nominate members of the *Reichskammergericht*; the evolution of flags and uniforms in their military contingents. The documentary section gives for each Circle the text of one *Kreisabschied*, a document summarizing the decisions made by the Circle assembly, together with one example of the decisions reached by a joint session of the Electoral Rhine, Franconian, upper Rhine, Westphalian and lower Saxon Circles. Finally, Dotzauer appends as complete a list as the sources allow of all the meetings of the Circles (though the information given concerning the apparent passivity of the Bavarian Circle now needs to be revised in the light of C. P. Hartmann's work, which indicates a much greater degree of activity).

Dotzauer himself emphasizes that his book contains nothing sensational. Much of the work of the Circles was humdrum. Much of it was also futile: the *Kreisabschiede* often give a quite erroneous impression of active decision-making while in fact prevarication and delay were more characteristic. On the other hand the very fact that he is able to document so much continuous activity and consultation underlines the significance these institutions achieved both as agencies of the Reich and as systems of regional self-government and co-ordination. It may be fanciful to suggest that the Circle assemblies are the true forerunners of modern parliaments and the Circles themselves the prototypes of the modern *Länder* or even the regions of the European Union. However, Dotzauer's massively documented study leaves little doubt that the role they played in the early modern Reich has often been underestimated.

*Gonville & Caius College, Cambridge*

JOACHIM WHALEY

*Kunstpatronage in der Frühen Neuzeit. Studien zu Kunstmarkt, Künstlern und ihren Auftraggebern in Italien und im Heiligen Römischen Reich (15.–17. Jahrhundert)*. By Bernd Roeck. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht. 1999. 236 pp. + 33 ill. DM 48 (paperback).

Money not only makes the world go round; it is also one of the most important impulses and indicators for art and architecture. Thus—in brief—the essence of this book in which Bernd Roeck has compiled five essays written by him during the last fifteen years. All these papers are concerned with the historical dimensions of Renaissance patronage for art and architecture in Germany and Italy, mainly in Augsburg, Nuremberg, Florence and Venice. These four cities form the geographical and cultural framework from which the author investigates different patterns of interaction between artists and patrons from

the fifteenth to the seventeenth centuries from the viewpoint of both the historian and the art historian.

Roeck first sets out his methodical aim in an introduction in which he suggests a more interdisciplinary approach to arts and architecture. Up to now, the author maintains, most art history studies and methods have mistakenly placed the work of art or the building at the centre of the study and then looked backwards in search of the historical, social and aesthetic factors that influenced its formation. As Roeck puts it, it is not the product, i.e., the work of art or the building, that should be the starting point of the investigation, but the circumstances which gave rise to it. His purpose is thus—in partial emulation of earlier works by Baxandall, Kent and Warnke—to prepare the economic, political, social, and cultural base from which the history of a work of art's development can be observed. It is therefore necessary to know the environment in which an artist worked and could be selected and supported by patrons, themselves pressed by various demands of representation and social or religious duties.

The following five chapters show how networks of artistic production could originate and which intentions led to them. From a more general discussion of the civic patronage of art and architecture in Italy and Germany, the book culminates in two already-famous essays that form the methodical nucleus of the whole book: the efforts of the Doge Agostino Barbarigo to balance personal, familial, and official obligations while acting as a donor of memorial art (first published in *Zeitschrift für Kunstgeschichte*, 61 (1992), pp. 1–34) and the economic circumstances that led to the building of the Town Hall in Augsburg and the embellishment of the whole city in the early seventeenth century (first published in *architectura*, 14 (1984), pp. 119–38).

The author's arguments are particularly convincing in the case of Augsburg. The German town started the large-scale building projects at a time when its economic and political importance had declined drastically. The construction of the Town Hall and other representative public buildings thus cannot be understood as a sign of prosperity. Moreover, using economic statistics, Roeck demonstrates that these tasks were initiated to stimulate the economy of the deeply indebted city, at a time when unemployment was rife among artists and craftsmen. Art patronage in this sense is not a function of self-complacency but an important initiative to sustain the state and its civic leadership in the face of social and economic troubles. Roeck also demonstrates more generally the functional and aesthetic symbolic significance of town halls in the public life of the German cities.

Lastly, the author analyses the economic, social, and religious influences on artists working in southern Germany and northern Italy during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. This treatise focuses not on a few high-ranking artists, but on the host of their mediocre colleagues. Once more, the author interprets art as a reaction to changes in social, economic, and religious behaviour. Artists increasingly become self-promoters and merchants who must survive in the art market by the invention of new themes and styles or by better organization of their workshops.

These intelligently written essays are an important contribution to the wide field of Renaissance art patronage and they will serve as a methodological model for historians as well as art historians. Naturally, practitioners of these disciplines will sometimes balk at generalizations or the omission of theoretical conceptions, such as 'magnificence', which contemporaries construed as implying an obligation to support the arts. Another of the book's problems is the juxtaposition of different essays that frequently refer to each other. Thus the reader is sometimes distracted by redundancies or rep-

etitious material. Nevertheless, this book is of great value for those interested in Renaissance art patronage and its historical dimensions.

*University of Zurich*

MATTHIAS OBERLI

*Fürst und Fürstendiener. Gundaker von Liechtenstein, ein österreichischer Aristokrat des konfessionellen Zeitalters.* By Thomas Winkelbauer. 'Mitteilungen des Instituts für österreichische Geschichtsforschung Ergänzungsband', 34. Vienna and Munich: R. Oldenbourg Verlag. 1999. 656 pp. DM 134 (hardback).

The Thirty Years War, the major conflict which occurred during the epoch which the book under review calls the 'confessional age', reshaped social relationships in central Europe, especially in the Bohemian crown lands. As thousands of Protestants fled into exile, their lands were confiscated and redistributed. 'New men', military commanders prominent among them, profited, as did older families who had remained loyal to the Roman church and to the emperor. Among the longest-term winners were members of the House of Liechtenstein. They managed to appropriate many lands and rights, particularly in Moravia, and were raised to princely status, although, as is here detailed, their position in the *Reichsfürstenrat* was not recognized until the eighteenth century. The Liechtensteins have nevertheless managed to preserve some of their gains for three and a half centuries; the present *regierender Fürst* still rules over his own small principality.

In *Fürst und Fürstendiener* Thomas Winkelbauer describes many facets of the life of one of the first members of the family to bear the princely title, Gundaker von Liechtenstein. Winkelbauer does not do so by offering a continuous biographical narrative, however. Instead he presents a series of contextual studies of vignettes from his protagonist's story. Picking up the line of Lawrence Stone's influential account of the English nobility, Winkelbauer begins with a general consideration of the crisis of the aristocracy in relation to what he terms their *Strukturwandel* in Bohemia, Moravia, and Austria in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. The book then follows the course of Gundaker von Liechtenstein's life through chapters attending to the contexts in which it can be placed. Winkelbauer treats in turn Gundaker's family background, his conversion to Roman Catholicism, his career in the service of the emperor and of the Czech lands, his role as advisor, his friends and 'networks' of clients and patrons, his conflict over recognition of rank, his related efforts to secure recognition of the princely status of his house, the principality of what was called Liechtenstein in its south Moravian form, his court, residences, dwellings, and artistic patronage therein, his diversions, education, piety, and marriages. A brief summary concludes the argument, followed by an extensive list of archival, primary, and secondary printed sources.

Originally presented as a *Habilitationsschrift* to the University of Vienna, *Fürst und Fürstendiener* is the product of years of intensive research in the archives and libraries of central Europe. It may also be regarded as one result of the newer possibilities that changed circumstances (and with them changed persons) have more recently created for research. It is now much easier to work in the Czech Republic than it was before the 'Velvet Revolution' of 1989. Winkelbauer also indicates that the Liechtenstein collections and archives are much more easily accessible than they were a quarter-century ago, when this reviewer could not gain access to them, at a time when even the Czech state