

According to Falciani's investigation moment in which the puzzle broke into pieces was a dinner organized at Palazzo Minerbetti in Florence, likely at the very beginning of January 1553. It was on this occasion that Benedetto Varchi, Ippolito II d'Este, and Marcantonio Falconi, together with their host, discussed the notion of patience. Following the hypothetical reconstruction of facts, Minerbetti showed his friends both Vasari's description and the now-lost drawing of *Patience*, piquing the interest of Ippolito d'Este, since his brother, Duke Ercole II, had chosen "Patience" as his personal impresa. Fearing that he would be despoiled of Michelangelo's unprecedented invention, the bishop likely did not wish to unveil the painting hanging in the dinner room. Starting with this episode, Falciani succeeds in reconstructing the chain of events step by step, analyzing the epistolary exchanges between Minerbetti and the artist, the iconographic and formal shift from Vasari's description to the autograph *Patience* and Filippi's version, the divergences from one variant to another, and the presence or absence in the different artworks of the *Diuturnia tollerantia* motto, conceived by Annibal Caro specifically for Minerbetti. In following this line, Falciani gets the facts straight: as new evidence he not only reveals Vasari's prototype *Patience* and the unpublished artworks derived from it but also suggests, in the conclusion, a very interesting hypothesis about the form in which Michelangelo's invention appears today.

This book reshuffles the cards of "the whole question of the *Allegory of Patience*" and rearranges the complicated puzzle that has, until now, given art historians (including myself!) such a hard time.

Antonella Fenech Kroke, *Centre national de la recherche scientifique /  
Centre André Chastel*  
doi:10.1017/rqx.2022.353

*Women Artists, Their Patrons, and Their Publics in Early Modern Bologna.*  
Babette Bohn.

University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2021. xvi + 316 pp. \$74.95.

---

Laura Ragg's *The Women Artists of Bologna* (1905) first examined "the Bolognese phenomenon," via Caterina dei Vigri, Properzia de' Rossi, Lavinia Fontana, and Elisabetta Sirani. In her deeply researched new book on this important topic, Bohn brings to light sixty-eight women who were active as painters, sculptors, printmakers, and embroiderers between the fifteenth and eighteenth centuries. There is necessarily a reconsideration of those four illustrious figures, about whom we know significantly more, but, eschewing biography, the author considers the political, cultural, and social circumstances that permitted them to succeed in larger numbers in this city. Perhaps unsurprisingly, they benefitted from a system of decentralized political and economic interests. Yet we also

learn about the power of precedent, increased access to training, and strong community support.

Bohn is professor of art history at Texas Christian University, where she also teaches women's and gender studies. As a specialist on the art of early modern Bologna, she has authored numerous articles on Elisabetta Sirani as well as previous books on Guido Reni and Ludovico Carracci. This much-anticipated culmination of years of research is illustrated with 141 images (81 color plates), 4 charts, and 8 tables. Content is divided into two parts, the first of which offers context and explores the roles of key individuals in establishing and celebrating a model of the female intellectual in Bologna (chapters 1–4). The second part delves into issues of patronage, self-fashioning, and the importance of drawings and prints in assessing women's capabilities (chapters 5–7). Three useful appendixes list all sixty-eight women artists active in Bologna from the fifteenth to the eighteenth century, including primary sources (appendix 1), and provide inventories with work by Lavinia Fontana (appendix 2) and Elisabetta Sirani (appendix 3).

Bohn opens with Bolognese writers Paolo Masini, Carlo Cesare Malvasia, Luigi Crespi, and Marcello Oretti, who wrote a combined one hundred biographies of women artists, a vast number when compared to their Roman or Florentine counterparts. She then considers a lineage of figures who established the city's reputation for outstanding women. An entire chapter is devoted to the importance of Elisabetta Sirani, to whom Malvasia attributed honorary virility and placed at the apex of Bolognese painting. She specialized in history painting and created thirty-five public pictures that helped transform Bolognese attitudes about women artists and opened doors to subsequent women. The chapter that follows explores a flowering of women artists that took place after Sirani's death, seen as a "a response to her example rather than the direct product of her artistic training" (96). The second part of the book begins with an assessment of how "patronal heterogeneity" (125) in Bologna benefitted women artists.

It is here that Bohn elaborates on the limitations of traditional approaches to researching women artists, who could not legally sign contracts. She turned to private inventories (where Sirani's work appears most frequently), legal documents, letters, and unpublished biographies to discover important patronage networks. A chapter exploring signatures and self-portraits indicates that these strategies represented "a struggle for recognition" (146) and an attempt to claim "legitimacy and dignity" (170). Bohn also puts women's works on paper into broader contexts. Once again, Sirani stands out for the nature of the praise she received and her numerous extant drawings. Women's draftsmanship was rarely celebrated by early modern critics, and women's drawings from this period are mostly lost. Is this scarcity connected to limited professional training, asks Bohn, or is it linked to limited interest from collectors and consequent attrition? In the realm of printmaking, no single figure dominates, and it is argued that while the growing publishing industry expanded opportunities for women, it often failed to credit them.

Vasari's model of artistic genius required the exceptional woman artist, a marvel of nature, to establish the general rule that creativity was an attribute of maleness. Feminist art history still struggles at times with a paradoxical desire to celebrate women of genius while interrogating this concept. To a gratifying degree, Bohn balances these concerns by celebrating Sirani's remarkable achievements in context and conversation with male and female peers. Bohn not only creates solid foundations for future study but also carefully facilitates the next generation of scholarship here, lifting as she climbs.

Jennifer S. Griffiths, *Umbra Institute*  
doi:10.1017/rqx.2022.354

*Kepler's New Star (1604): Context and Controversy*. Patrick J. Boner, ed. Medieval and Early Modern Philosophy and Science 31. Leiden: Brill, 2021. xii + 298 pp. \$180.

---

*Kepler's New Star (1604): Context and Controversy* is a volume of ten essays, edited by Patrick J. Boner, focusing on the political and scientific discourse that enveloped German astronomer, philosopher, and devoted Lutheran Johannes Kepler and his study of the supernova of 1604. Known for his work in astronomy and his laws of planetary motion, Kepler is a key figure of the Scientific Revolution. This edited volume examines Kepler and one of his lesser-studied works, *De Stella Nova*. Published in 1606, *De Stella Nova* not only provides a detailed account of Kepler's observations of the supernova that appeared in October of 1604 in the constellation Ophiuchus; it also offers a recounting of the observations of his contemporaries.

The authors of this collection come from a wide variety of backgrounds, from astrophysics to Renaissance philosophy and early modern history of science. The essays can be loosely categorized around several themes. The first set of essays focuses on aspects of Kepler's arguments that challenged many of the theories presented by his contemporaries, which made up the fundamental cosmological beliefs of the time. Tessicini examines the role of Aristotelian concepts used by Kepler to support his argument against the endless extension of the universe, or "the infinite altitude." Graney provides a full translation of chapter 16 of *De Stella Nova*, which includes Kepler's response to Tycho Brahe and other astronomers over the size of stars, while Luna analyzes Kepler's response to Bruno and William Gilbert over the scale and size of the cosmos—yet another way in which Kepler challenged the accepted cosmological beliefs of the period. As Boner notes, the work of these three scholars "sheds light on the early evolution of Copernican theory and how Kepler attempted to tailor it according to his own ontology."

The next two essays focus on the interactions and exchanges that occurred between Kepler and other intellectual figures of the time. Boner examines the contentious