

lapses occur in the editors' introduction, e.g. Huizinga's first name is germanified as Johann (p. 8); the subject of the four-part etching *The Procession of Death* by Pieter van der Borch the Elder (c.1530–c.1611) is incorrectly described as a *Dance of Death* (fig. 1 and p. 10), which shows little understanding of this motif; and the adjectives 'funerary' and 'funeral' are used indiscriminately throughout. However, these are minor points in a beautifully produced volume rich in high-quality illustrations. Each essay (including the introduction) has its own endnotes and bibliography. Unfortunately NKJ volumes are exorbitantly priced so prospective readers will probably want to consult them in a university library.

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Notes

- 1 For the contents of earlier issues see <https://brill.com/display/serial/NKJ>.
- 2 E. Kavalier et al. (eds), *Netherlandish Sculpture of the 16th Century / Zestiende-eeuwse beeldhouwkunst uit de Nederlanden*, Netherlands Yearbook for the History of Art/Nederlands Kunsthistorisch Jaarboek, 67 (Leiden and Boston, 2017), esp. M.A. Bass, 'The *Transi* Tomb and the *Genius* of Sixteenth-Century Netherlandish Funerary Sculpture', pp. 160–87.
- 3 See also F. Baron et al., *Les tombeaux des ducs de Bourgogne. Création, destruction, restauration* (Paris and Dijon, 2009), and S. Jugie, *The Mourners. Tomb Sculptures from the Court of Burgundy* (Dallas, 2010), jointly reviewed by S. Oosterwijk in *Church Monuments*, 25 (2010), pp. 183–84.
- 4 In reality these tombs are cenotaphs, the four bishops being buried in the crypt below.

Jan L. de Jong, *Tombs in Early Modern Rome (1400–1600): Monuments of Mourning, Memory and Meditation* (Leiden: Brill, 2023), xix + 401 pp., 135 colour & b/w illus. ISBN: 978-90-04-17936-3. Price: €149.00 (hardback) / ISBN: 978-90-04-52693-8. Price: €149.00 (eBook).

This book makes a valuable contribution to the scholarship on early modern funerary monuments in Rome. While this corpus may be perceived as already well explored, the research presented here raises new questions and offers a fresh perspective, in particular by considering tomb monuments through the prism of their inscriptions and their link to a particular social group, an interesting approach for research into church monuments generally, beyond the author's focus on Rome.¹ De Jong starts from the central premise that monuments do not necessarily commemorate the deceased as they were during their lifetime but offer instead an image that has been carefully crafted, either by the deceased or the bereaved (pp. 1, 374–75). His analysis is structured around a series of questions: who commissioned the monument; were the deceased's choices respected; what image does the monument convey of the deceased and of the bereaved, and to what end; who benefits from this specific memory: the deceased, the patrons, or is there perhaps also a collective dimension? In order to tackle these questions de Jong has studied a significant number of memorials (around a hundred) built in the churches of Rome between 1400 and 1600. He focuses in particular on tomb monuments 'in the sense

of a combination of tomb and monument, distinguishable from so-called cenotaphs' (p. 2). Within this category he has studied a wide variety of examples ranging from elaborate and ornate marble mausolea with several figures in the round to simple, inscribed stone slabs. From a methodological perspective the author gives special attention to epitaphs and other inscriptions – those on the monuments themselves and those known only from ancient books and manuscripts (such as compilations of inscriptions and city guides), of which he has an extensive knowledge. Inscriptions are sometimes overlooked by scholars, although, in de Jong's view, the information and 'food for thought' they offer are essential for a more complete understanding of tomb monuments (p. ix).

The book consists of five chapters divided into two unequal parts: chapter one gives a detailed, general introduction to the study of tomb monuments. It will appeal to a wide audience, not only those studying commemoration in early modern Rome but also those with a broader interest in the topic. The following four chapters are analytical, each focusing on the monuments of a different social group. Chapters two and three focus on those of (wealthy) clergymen, who represented a significant proportion

of the population of Rome between 1400 and 1600. As a counterbalance, chapters four and five cover more modest monuments dedicated to lay people belonging to other layers of society, including women and married couples. Each analytical chapter begins with a series of questions, and these are reiterated in the intermediate conclusions along with a summary of the author's findings for that chapter; a structured approach that makes his analysis very clear and easy to follow.

Chapter one establishes the three main themes that underpin the author's approach to his subject: the monuments themselves, the mortal remains and the soul. De Jong starts by discussing the practice of burying the dead inside churches in the early modern period and how this affected both building and tomb. He then considers the functions and purposes of tomb monuments as well as beliefs and convictions related to death, the afterlife and the particular and the final judgement. He also insists on the idea that tomb monuments stimulated meditation and presented the deceased as exemplars of virtue and glory to encourage imitation, concepts that are fundamental to their study and understanding but which are often overlooked in modern studies (pp. 53, 375), a view I fully endorse.

Then follows the analytical section. Chapter two is devoted to (*vivens*) *sibi posuit* monuments of cardinals, that is, monuments of cardinals who either had their tombs built during their lifetime or who left instructions to this effect.² De Jong considers the kind of self-image the cardinals were trying to create with such commissions. Although very different in appearance, their monuments were, for the most part, highly ornamental sculptural ensembles, often opulent in terms of size and material (different types and colours of marble or stone, with gilding), and with elaborate iconography (effigies, sculptures personifying virtues or holy figures). They were also engraved with flattering inscriptions referring to the deceased's career and noble ancestry and praising their virtues and achievements. All of these features contributed to an impression of vanity. For this reason they were criticised by contemporaries who saw them as vainglorious monuments to personal pride and self-promotion and therefore incompatible with Christian modesty. Yet these aspects were counterbalanced by reminders of the transience of worldly pomp and the uncertainty of human

life, particularly in the form of inscribed religious mottoes and sculptured representations of the cardinals lying in state or meditating, urging viewers to reflect. For a cardinal whose tomb was completed during his lifetime, seeing an image of himself in death would prompt personal reflection on his own mortality and the afterlife (p. 130). De Jong argues that this extra dimension is essential to our understanding of the *sibi posuit* tombs of cardinals: they were not simply monuments to vanity, they also communicated the need to be always mindful of death and to live a virtuous life. This tension between vanity and humility is explored and developed through numerous case studies, in particular the tomb monument of Cardinal Giovanni Ricci (d. 1574), to which an entire sub-chapter is devoted (pp. 131–43). Erected in a specially commissioned chapel in S. Pietro in Montorio, tomb and chapel are discussed together. The building and its painted, sculptured and stuccoed decorations were part of one large project and reflected the sumptuous Del Monte chapel in the same church, commissioned by Pope Julius III (d. 1555) as a family mausoleum and designed by Vasari.

Chapter three deals with the monuments of popes and the images they reflect. Most of the popes in the studied period were buried in grandiose tombs in the form of magnificent sculptural ensembles built after their death, none of which corresponded to their own wishes. They were commemorated as rulers of the Church in a comparable way to secular monarchs, leaving aside considerations of death and the transitoriness of human life. De Jong provides four in-depth case studies of papal monuments: those of Pope Pius III (d. 1503), now in S. Andrea della Valle; Pope Adrian VI (d. 1523) in S. Maria dell'Anima; Pope Clement VII (d. 1534) in S. Maria sopra Minerva and Pope Pius V (d. 1572) in S. Croce, Bosco Marenga. De Jong points out that each papal monument was commissioned by a relative or a friend who made sure that the pope would be remembered as a 'Prince of the Church' with a successful pontificate, without mentioning his personal life, character or sensibilities (pp. 220–21). The memory of popes was thus not individualised but shaped to convey a generic idea of the papacy as an immortal institution enduring through the centuries. The patron was often associated with the papal tomb – via the epitaph or a spatial connection with his own grave – which was doubly beneficial for his

reputation, allowing him to be associated with the pope in perpetuity and to be presented as a pious individual respectfully honouring the memory of the deceased.

Chapter four focuses on mothers and the images created by their tomb monuments. To this end, de Jong investigates monuments commissioned by children for their mothers and monuments commissioned by mothers for their children. These memorials are far more modest than those of popes and cardinals. Although some examples include effigies and sculptures in the round, most of them consist of a simple, inscribed stone slab set into the pavement or wall. For this reason, the analysis focuses mostly on epitaphs. It emerges that monuments commissioned by children created a rather stereotypical image of mothers, emphasising a standard set of virtues: faith, raising the children, caring for the home, chastity, etc. They also served as an opportunity for the patrons to highlight their noble ancestry and their filial piety. Monuments commissioned by mothers were more about grief, the disrupted natural order due to the premature death of a child and a woman's duty to commemorate family. Furthermore, while monuments commissioned by children created an image of their mothers as pious in a passive and introspective way, those commissioned by mothers showed a practical piety, their monuments emphasising the desire to keep their children's memory alive and their family united after death.

Chapter five is dedicated to (*vivens*) *sibi posuit* tomb monuments of married couples, examining the motivation for being buried together. The examples studied here are similar to the previous chapter: mostly inscribed slabs with some more developed sculptural monuments. From a theological point of view, the hope of being reunited after the Last Judgement and remaining together in the afterlife beyond the threshold of death does not seem to have any religious basis. Nevertheless, the epitaphs on these tombs demonstrate that spouses seemed to have maintained that hope, with emotional reasons outweighing theological teaching. Apart from expressing spousal desires for the afterlife, de Jong argues that such

monuments constituted exemplary role models for those who saw them, embodying harmonious marriages blessed by children.

The book concludes with a general bibliography and an index organised by categories (persons, scriptural passages and churches in and outside Rome). Regrettably, the bibliography does not include all the works cited by the author. Since recurring footnotes are shortened in the text, this makes it difficult for the reader to follow up references. Apart from that, the book has very few weaknesses. The inclusion in the final two chapters of minor monuments, which have not so far been much studied, is clearly valuable. However, the discussion strays away from analysis of the monuments themselves towards a literary consideration of their epitaphs, abandoning the reflection on art-historical matters (commission, composition, iconography, ornamentation) of the earlier chapters. Another quibble is the inconsistent quality of some of the illustrations – but the difficulties of taking good photos in churches are well known, and most of these were taken by the author and represent an impressive amount of work *in situ*. None of this diminishes the book's great strengths: the investigation of categories of monuments that have, in some cases, never been studied together, in particular those of mothers and the (*vivens*) *sibi posuit* tombs, the effective use of ancient textual resources and a clear and highly pedagogical analytical method and structure based on questions. All of this renders the book not only a great addition to the study of tomb monuments in Rome but also a significant methodological work for the study of church monuments more generally.

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Notes

1 See for example A. Amundsen et al (eds), *Norwegian Epitaphs 1550–1700: Contexts and Interpretations*, trans. by John Anthony (Regensburg, 2023), reviewed by H. Mytum in this volume, pp. 154–55.

2 (*vivens*) *sibi posuit* can be translated as 'he had [this monument] built to himself (in his lifetime)' (p. 66).