

Reviews

Aiello Lucia and Marco Bascapè (eds.). *Guida dell'Archivio dei Luoghi Pii Elemosinieri di Milano*. Como: Nodo libri, 2012. Pp. 454 + 145 b/w and colour ill. ISBN 978-88-71895-223-2 (paperback) gratis on demand.

This book brings to completion a project twenty years in the making carried out by archivists working on the archival fonds of charitable organizations in Milan. It does not consider all *pia loca* in Milan, but focuses, instead, on the forty organizations that were amalgamated in 1784 as part of Emperor Joseph II's reforms and that, in 2003, became the Azienda di Servizi alla Persona Golgi-Redaelli (Golgi Redaelli Agency for Personal Assistance). The volume is actually a guide to the archive of the Agency. It opens with a short history of the organization and its connections with Milanese history and society. Some of the pious organizations founded "to contain poverty by providing subsidies meant to prevent a family's slide into marginality and delinquency" (p. 27) have a long and ancient history, as is the case for the Scuola delle Quattro Marie, attested in documents since 1305.

These pious associations were governed by a small group of administrators who were part of the city's ruling elite. "The relationship between the pious associations and religious authorities was complex" (p. 30); many charitable organizations had to submit, at least partially, to the control of the Church, especially after the Council of Trent. In general, however, most remained basically autonomous up to the time of Empress Maria Theresa and her co-regent son Joseph II when, "in the context of a project of universal reorganization of resources and administrative structures within the Habsburg Empire, the State entered firmly into the social assistance sector" (p. 31). In 1937 these pious associations were refashioned into E.C.A.s (Enti Comunali Assistenza, that is, Municipal Assistance Entities). In time, they moved more and more towards elder care and incorporated other institutions, such as the Istituto Geriatrico Camillo Golgi (in Abbiategrasso) and the Istituto Geriatrico Piero Redaelli (in Milan and Vimodrone).

The history of the *Azienda* and its earlier incarnations is reconstructed from archival information gleaned, in particular, from the five major fonds that survived the 1784 suppression, that is, from the archives of the Quattro Marie, of the Misericordia, of the Divinità, of the Carità in Porta Nuova, and of the Nostra Signora di Loreto.

The Quattro Marie is documented from ca. 1305 to 1801. Its fond includes documents from various other charitable institutions that were incorporated into the Quattro Marie, that is: Santa Maria della Neve e San Giovanni alle Fonti nella Metropolitana (pre 1454–1784), Santa Caterina in Santo Stefano (1462–1784), Santi Rocco e Vittore nella Metropolitana (pre 1485–1784), Ave Maria nella Metropolitana (ca. 1495–1784), Santa Maria la Cova in Santo Stefano (pre 1528–1784)00, Nostra Signora di

San Rocco in San Romano (pre 1535–1784), Carità nella Metropolitana (1566–1784), and Beata Vergine dell’Abito in Santa Maria del Carmine (1587–1784). Each of these is listed separately and described by providing a short note on its archive, documents, origins, endowments, list of benefactors, prerogatives, assets, liabilities, administration, offices, registers, inventories, protocols, and rubrics. The Misericordia fond is the only one that does not include other, lesser institutions. Its section opens with a brief history of the Misericordia (ca. 1368–1801) and then continues with a description of its archive, documents, registers, and volumes. For the third pious organization, the Divinità (1428–1801), the editors again provide detailed information on all the institutions that were incorporated into it: San Senatore in Sant’Eufemia (pre 1344–1784), Santa Caterina in San Nazaro (pre 1381–1784), San Pancrazio in Sant’Alessandro (ca. 1425–1784), Sant’Antonio Abate in Santa Maria Beltrade (pre 1440–1784), Santa Maria presso San Satiro (1479–1784), Santa Maria Rotonda in San Giovanni in Laterano (pre 1494–1784), Tutti i Santi in Sant’Eufemia (1522–1784), Carità in San Lorenzo (ca. 1568–1784), Carità dei Vivi e dei Morti in San Nazaro (1569–1784), and, finally, Melzi (1636–1784). The Carità in Porta Nova (1442–1801) also included other minor associations: Monte Angelico (1585–1784), Scuola dei Carcerati della Malastalla (pre 1474–1787), Santi Giacomo e Filippo in Sant’Alessandro (pre 1497–1787), San Giuseppe (ca. 1503–1784), Lampugnani (1630–1784), Beata Vergine del Soccorso in San Simpliciano (ca. 1404–1784), Scurolo in Sant’Ambrogio (1509–1785), Crocifisso in San Marco (1521–1784), Santa Maria della Pessina in Santa Maria Segreta (1527–1784), Santa Maria della Passione in San Giovanni Evangelista in Gugiolo (pre 1576–1785), Beata Vergine della Consolazione in San Marco (1581–1784), Immacolata Concezione in Pantano (1640–1785), Cesati in Santa Maria Podone (1736–1784), and Carità verso i Carcerati in San Fedele (1750–1787). The Nostra Signora di Loreto presso San Fedele (1601–1801) contains not only its own fond, but also those of Ricchi e Vecchi in San Giovanni sul Muro (pre 1337–1784), Pagnottella (1357–1784) and Umiltà (1444–1784).

The descriptions of all these various fonds is enriched by a series of photographs of documents from the fonds that include “ancient parchments, delicate seals, extraordinary Renaissance miniatures, admirable *cabrei* (land registers) from the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries” (p. 9).

This rich and detailed guide to the archives of forty different pious associations in Milan from the early modern period to the present day is thus of great interest and value for scholars interested in “the multifaceted history of charity and social assistance” (p. 9) in Milan.

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