

Reviews

Ad Summum 1248. Der gotische Dom im Mittelalter. Ausstellung des Historischen Archivs der Stadt Köln aus Anlaß der Grundsteinlegung des Kölner Doms vor 750 Jahren. Köln: Historisches Archiv, 1998. 239 pp., 8 colour plates, 8 b/w plates, 4 tables.

The title of this book harkens to Petrarch, and more specifically to his amusement that people spoke of the cathedral in Cologne simply as “the highest,” bequeating money to it in their wills by writing only *ad summum*. The book celebrates the 750th year of the Cologne cathedral, as dated from 1248 when archbishop Konrad laid its cornerstone. To remember the jubilee, the city archive of Cologne hosted an exhibition on “Gothic cathedrals in the Middle Ages” (14 August – 2 October 1998). More than an exhibition catalogue, however, this work is a critical study of documents related to the construction of the Cologne cathedral. It is a ‘calendar’ of sorts for manuscript sources, joined not by their proximity in one archive, but by their relevance to one topic.

The scholarship is the joint contribution of eight authors. Joachim Deeters examines, in two chapters, plans for the cathedral and its construction progress over the next centuries. After a catastrophic fire in 1248 that burned much of the existing building, the cornerstone was laid for a new Gothic cathedral (document A8, pp. 19f.). The magnificent church marks the endpoint, both architecturally and chronologically speaking, in a series of High Gothic cathedrals that includes Chartres, Reims and Amiens. Manfred Huiskes, in the next two chapters, studies construction finances and the selection of chief architects (*Dombaumeister*). In contrast to other cathedrals, Cologne’s bishopric did not profit from benefices dedicated specifically to the expense of construction. The lion’s share of those costs was borne by parish churches in the archdiocese. Klaus Militzer, in the following four chapters, analyses relationships between the cathedral in Cologne and other cathedrals; the cathedral and its canons; its archbishop; and finally the citizens of Cologne.

This last chapter (the eighth of thirteen) is no doubt the most germane to a study of confraternities; yet because of its place in a book about medieval Gothic architecture, it may not be seen by scholars intrigued by confraternities. The first document described is a thirteenth-century, one page text on vellum about the *Dreikönigenbruderschaft*, or confraternity of the Epiphany (H1, p. 137). Following it are descriptions of three manuscript volumes (H3-H5, pp. 138f.), dating from the fifteenth to the seventeenth century, which contain documents from, respectively, the confraternities of St. James, the Holy Cross, and St. Eloi (see below my review of Militzer, *Quellen ...*).

Each chapter includes a bibliography and a detailed list of pertinent manuscripts. The beautiful colour plates, rare today because of high printing costs, are the result of generous sponsorships, duly acknowledged in the foreword. In spite of the book’s promise, implied by its title, to discuss “medieval Gothic cathe-

drals,” it is instead a fine, labour intensive list of documents, related to Cologne and its cathedral, ranging from the thirteenth to the seventeenth century. Each chapter is introduced with a solid, if short, summary of the literature and sources, written by one of Cologne’s archivists.

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Aranci, Gilberto. *Vittorio Dell’Ancisa. Un prete fiorentino del Cinquecento e l’origine delle “Stabilite nella Carità”*. Pubblicazioni dell’Archivio Arcivescovile di Firenze, Studi e Testi 4. Firenze: Giampiero Pagnini Editore, 1997. 141 pp. ISBN 88-8251-015-8

This is a study of the origins of the “Stabilite nella Carità,” a women’s organization (and eventually a convent) originally established in Florence in the sixteenth century but now in Monticelli (Tuscany). With this work Gilberto Aranci focuses on the figure of Vittorio Dell’Ancisa and on his role in the founding of the Stabilite. He analyses carefully the relatively limited source material available at the convent and Dell’Ancisa’s correspondence.

The volume is divided into seven chapters. Chapters one to five focus on Dell’Ancisa’s life (1537–1598), something that has not received sufficient attention in other scholarly works on the Stabilite or on Florentine religious life in the Cinquecento. In providing such a detailed biography, Aranci’s expressed intention is to shed more light on the progressive steps that finally led to the founding of the convent. One of the most important sources for this section is the late seventeenth-century biography of Dell’Ancisa by Francesco Cionacci, who also gathered a number of Dell’Ancisa’s letters into a folder. Aranci also pays careful attention to Dell’Ancisa’s friendship with Saint Philip Neri, a key figure in his life for he encouraged and supported Dell’Ancisa’s already generous inclination to charitable activities. Aranci also stresses the fact that the Stabilite were originally established as a hostel for pilgrims, it then became reserved exclusively for women, and only at a later date (1589) did Dell’Ancisa decide to turn it into a temporary shelter for homeless young women. Some of these young women eventually took the veil and remained in the community for the rest of their lives (hence the name Stabilite, meaning “established, settled”).

The last two chapters are dedicated to Vittorio Dell’Ancisa’s written works, especially to those that established the regulations for the running of the House and set the rules to be followed by the women in it. Aranci explains in detail the elaborate allegories of Dell’Ancisa’s works on the body and the soul, and looks closely at his treatise on meditation, providing an edition of it in the appendix.

Aranci’s study will be of interest to scholars working on Florentine confraternities and on the religious life of Cinquecento Italy because of the enormous contribution it makes in bringing to light the life and works of Vittorio Dell’Ancisa, a Florentine priest (an Oratorian) whose spiritual life and whose