

While clearly a work of local history intended for a fairly local readership, this volume nonetheless reflects what we are starting to appreciate about lay religious organizations in Southern Italy: the vitality and longevity of their presence in the region and the unfortunate paucity of documentation from before the eighteenth or, in some cases, even the nineteenth century. The work of documenting their presence and analyzing their role in the spiritual, social, artistic, and even economic life of the population—spearheaded as it is by the Centro Ricerche Storia Religiosa in Puglia and, in this case, by the Centro Studi ‘Giuseppe Martella’—is continuing.

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*Gli Innocenti e Firenze nei secoli. Un ospedale, un archivio, una città*, ed. Lucia Sandri. Firenze: SPES Studio per Edizioni Scelte, 1996. 199 pp., ill. ISBN 88-7242-2752

The Ospedale degli Innocenti in Florence is one of the best-known orphanages in the world. Among the first purpose-built foundling homes in Europe, it gained its high profile as much from Brunelleschi's fine building as from the thousands of children who passed through its wheel and door from the fifteenth through to the twentieth century. Scholars like Richard Trexler, Philip Gavitt, and Lucia Sandri have written valuable articles and monographs on the strength of its well-preserved archives, finding in its operation either the institutional machinery for the gender-selective genocide of Florentine foundlings (Trexler) or the communal effort to preserve population in the face of crisis-levels of abandonment (Gavitt).

With this collection, we see more of the texture of life within the Innocenti's walls, and the impact it had on cultural and economic life in Florence and its hinterland. Though richly illustrated, it is not the kind of empty coffee-table book whose volume and weight are in inverse proportion to its scholarly contribution. The individual articles, while short, are well-documented pieces by respected historians who draw on both the Innocenti's archives and the scholarly work of the past three decades. Three articles by Richard Goldthwaite sketch the Innocenti's origins, construction, and place in local artistic culture. Two articles by Giuseppina Romby lay out both the expansion of the physical fabric and the image of the home from the fifteenth through the nineteenth centuries. Lucia Sandri describes in vivid terms the care given to children, while Allen Grieco expands with customary insight on the social, medical, and economic aspects of food purchases and institutional diet in the Quattrocento. Simona Gelli and Giuliano Pinto discuss the expansion and exploitation of the Innocenti's rural holdings, while Laura Cavazzini surveys its collection of paintings and sculpture. Bruno Dini reviews the archival materials having to do with the Innocenti's sponsor, the Silk Guild, and its economic role in the city.

In short, this is a wide ranging collection which manages to offer scholarly substance in a more accessible format. While it cannot match the academic contribution of the articles and monographs written on the Innocenti over the past three decades, it conveys more immediately the compelling character of the place and its history.

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Kowalski, Waldemar. *Upozazenie parafii archidiakonu Sandomierskiego w XV–XVIII wieku* [transl: *The Revenues of Parochial Institutions in the Sandomierz Archdeaconry in the 15<sup>th</sup>–18<sup>th</sup> Centuries*] Kielce: Wyzsza Szkola Pedagogiczna im. Jana Kochanowskiego, 1998. 400 pp., 3 maps ISBN 83-7133-102-9

This book investigates the revenues of the parochial institutions in the Sandomierz archdeaconry from the fifteenth through to the eighteenth century. After the capital, Warsaw, Sandomierz was the second important city in the religious life of Poland. The author concentrates primarily on the archdeaconry's institutions such as: vicarages, chapels, poorhouses and confraternities. He also discusses the economic conditions of vicars, curates, chaplains, clerical and lay staff. The issue of fixed and irregular incomes is present throughout the book. This study supports the traditional hypothesis that even in times of economic hardship the clergy and lay staff could expect to have a better life.

Divided into two parts, the first consisting of a narrative and the second, more extensive, of statistics, this meticulous and detailed study gives the reader a picture not only of the situation, actions, and behaviour of the clergy, but also of the relationship between the clergy and the peasants. In the narrative part, Kowalski starts with the history of Sandomierz, going back to the 1470s, when the first extant account book was compiled. Chapter one also discusses the general geography of the region. The author then turns to the vicar's homestead, his income, and the incomes of clerical and lay service staff. The final section concentrates on the total, global revenue and structure of the benefices income and expenditure. Considering the fact that in Sandomierz non-agricultural activity was limited to a minimum, Kowalski describes the benefice productions, such as livestock, harvest, taverns or liquor.

Perhaps the most interesting are the forms of income of the vicars. The author points out that tithes were the most important source of all incomes which did not come from the homestead (sheaf tithes predominated). According to him, there is no question that revenues obtained from *iura stolae*—baptismal, marriage, and burial offerings—played a crucial role and were excluded from registration. The author found numerous examples of the clergy's rapacity, and stressed that the vicars pressed for these revenues, even though the church did not require them. This income was augmented by revenues "for the Mass," "for the table," "for the Christmas visit" and by offerings into the church money box on Sunday.