

Corpus Christi's religious and civic identity after Vigri's departure in 1456. Arthur assesses the diffusion and legacy of the *Sette Armi Spirituali* and examines transformations to the convent's character in the late fifteenth to early sixteenth centuries under the patronage of d'Este noblewomen—Eleonora of Aragona, Bianca Maria d'Este, Lucrezia Borgia, and Isabella d'Este.

Arthur's book makes an important contribution to our understanding of female convents, Observant Franciscan piety, and religious women's engagement with visual culture. By integrating Caterina Vigri's written and artistic production into the social, spiritual, and visual context of the Ferrarese convent of Corpus Christi, Arthur enriches our perceptions of both Vigri's devotional works and female piety.

Marilyn Dunn, *Loyola University Chicago*
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Il carisma della magnificenza: L'abate vallombrosano Biagio Milanese e la tradizione benedettina nell'Italia del Rinascimento. Francesco Salvestrini.

I libri di Viella 265. Rome: Viella, 2017. 762 pp. + 32 color pls. €70

This is a monumental study of Abbot Biagio Milanese of Vallombrosa (1445–1523), with a first edition of Milanese's *Memoriale*. Part 1 has fourteen chapters on the life and work of Milanese in the context of Florentine and Renaissance church history; part 2 offers an edition of the *Memoriale*; and part 3 provides eleven documentary appendixes. A bibliography and indexes of persons and places complete the volume. Salvestrini's thesis is that a study of Milanese can cut through, or open up in new ways, the commonly held belief that a conservative Benedictine culture was left behind by secular humanism and challenged by new centers of monastic reform. His book does that and more.

The author does a masterful job of interpreting Milanese through a thorough familiarity and careful reading of all available documents. His notes are exhaustive. He demonstrates that "a representative [Milanese] of contemplative religion vested with high dignity of government can figure among the great men of the period" (359). His abbot is a conservative Benedictine doing all that he could to preserve both the independence and the holdings of Vallombrosa and the unity (*vinculum caritatis*) of its widespread congregation. With respect to humanist studies, Milanese strove to provide an education that would enable his coreligionists to hold their own before secular powers. The abbot himself emerges as a capable leader of a community that was a protagonist in Florentine history. Part of Milanese's vision of leadership was the practice of the Aristotelian virtue of magnificence ("the magnificent man is like an artist; for he can see what is fitting and spend large sums tastefully" [*Nicomachean Ethics* 4.2, trans. Ross (1984), 86]). The pathways of these expenditures were in the commissioning of

major art works and the patronage of printed books. Herein is revealed the impetus of Salvestrini's choice of title, which joins a Christian term denoting a special spiritual gift that the abbot had received for the service of the church and the humanist employment of an ancient Greek virtue in fulfillment of that charism. Salvestrini likens the patronage of Milanese to the actions of mercantile families for whom "riches were an indispensable condition of the exercise of active virtue, civic responsibility and charity" (261). The abbot practiced magnificence especially at the founding of the congregation of Vallombrosa (as an independent rival to that of Santa Giustina) between 1485 and 1490, and the recovery, from 1499 to 1515, of possessions formerly in the *commenda* of the Medici.

The *Memoriale*, in Salvestrini's estimation, is one of the most important sources of Renaissance-era Vallombrosan history. The edition provides a good codicological and paleographic report of this vernacular text and dates it to 1517–19. There are six extant manuscripts. The work is divided into three books. Book 1 concerns the healing of six schisms within the congregation. Book 2 treats the reform and enrichment of Vallombrosa. The last book recounts the expansion of the congregation and ends with the author's account of his deposition, torture, and exile by Pope Leo X. It is striking that the three principal actors in the *Memoriale* are Milanese, monastic chapters both general and local, and the founder, Saint John Gualbert, as a heavenly agent. Capitular actions are cited ninety-five times and the founder's fifty-one times. Milanese's love for his monastic brotherhood and filial devotion to the founder carry the action from start to finish. The present edition of this work is a boon for scholarship both as a cultural artifact of the time and as a richly detailed account of local history.

The eleven appendixes are editions of contemporary sources, the most significant of which are the Vallombrosan constitutions of 1504. It would have been useful to identify the eleven items briefly in the table of contents. Salvestrini has given us an exhaustive examination of his subject, yet at the end, Milanese remains a bit of a cipher. Abbot Biagio's writings are void of spiritual reflection. His religious sense was more institutional. In presenting this aspect of the person, our author does a lot with a little.

Charles Hilken, *Saint Mary's College of California*
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Dying Prepared in Medieval and Early Modern Northern Europe. Anu Lahtinen and Mia Korpiola, eds.

The Northern World 82: North Europe and the Baltic c. 400–1700 AD. Peoples, Economies and Cultures. Leiden: Brill, 2018. x + 212 pp. \$109.

This anthology addresses from many perspectives the problem of preparation for death and the memory of the deceased. The authors are historians and church historians who