

Andreas Sohn and Jacques Verger, eds. *Die regulierten Kollegien im Europa des Mittelalters und der Renaissance / Les collèges réguliers en Europe au Moyen Âge et à la Renaissance*.

Aufbrüche: Interkulturelle Perspektiven auf Geschichte, Politik und Religion 4. Bochum: Winkler, 2013. 232 pp. €35.70. ISBN: 978-3-89911-198-9.

The fourteen essays that comprise *Die regulierten Kollegien im Europa des Mittelalters und der Renaissance* were originally presented at the conference of the same name held in Paris on 18 September 2010. Conceived as follow-up to a 2008 conference focusing on secular colleges, organizers sought to bring together international and interdisciplinary perspectives to explore the impact of the regular colleges on medieval and Renaissance universities. The conference also sought to shed light on the continued importance of Christianity in European society and culture. Despite the preponderance of contributors from France and Germany and the near total absence of English and Iberian examples — a fact Jacques Verger laments in his closing comments — the volume still provides significant chronological and geographical coverage.

The work is divided into four sections. Part 1, “Grundlegungen,” includes a single essay by Jacques Verger, “Qu’est-ce qu’un ‘collège régulier’ au Moyen Âge et à la Renaissance?” Although the essay does not break new ground, Verger provides a concise overview of the key distinctions between the regular and secular colleges, as well as insight into sources of tensions between the regular colleges and the universities. Part 2, “Kollegien und *Studia* bei den Bettelorden,” contains five essays focusing on the mendicant educational system. These essays include discussions of the range of mendicant schools from the convent level through the *studia generalia*. The essays of Sophie Delmas, who revisits the contested issue of the second Franciscan chair in theology, and Claire Angotti, who provides the first comprehensive examination of the library of the Paris convent of the Augustinian Hermits, merit special praise for the significance and clarity of their insights.

Part 3, “Bildung und Kollegien bei monastischen Orden, Ritterorden und Chorherrenverbänden,” examines the connection between the universities and the Benedictines, Cistercians, Teutonic Knights, and the Premonstratensians. Unlike the mendicant orders, especially the Dominicans, these groups did not immediately embrace university study for its members. All of the colleges associated with these orders faced significant economic challenges as well criticism from within the orders. Even after the establishment of the first monastic colleges in the mid-thirteenth century, the commitment to university education varied widely both institutionally and chronologically. The range of responses is perhaps best illustrated in the summary of comments of Denyse Riche and Klaus Militzer. Riche notes that, despite the difficulty reconciling school and cloister, the monks of Cluny devoted significant human and financial capital to their foundations at Paris and Avignon. In a decidedly more negative vein, Militzer concludes, “The Order of the Teutonic Knights was never an institution that especially esteemed learning” (175).

The essays that make up section 4, “Regulierte Kollegien: Erbe und Auftrag für Kirche, Orden, Politik und Wissenschaft,” bring the broad theme of the role of the

church in the intellectual and cultural development of Europe into the twenty-first century. These essays, which engage current debates about the place of Christianity within an emerging European identity, are the shortest and the least historical of the contributions. They are, however, likely to engender the most discussion. Egon Kapellari, in his article “Chancen und Herausforderung für das Projekt Europa,” highlights the importance of Christianity to the development of core European values and culture in the face of what he characterizes as the twin threats of secularism and radical fundamentalism. Kapellari’s essay in particular seems animated by concerns over the potential extinction of European culture, dissatisfaction over the exclusion of explicit references to Christianity in the preamble of the European Constitution, and fears about deleterious consequences of morally indifferent relativism.

The collection as a whole would have been better served by a more extensive introduction and conclusion as well as the inclusion of an index. In addition, while each essay is accompanied by a summary in English, German, and French, they are often too brief and too vague to be of much use to those unable to read the articles in their original languages. Nevertheless, the volume does succeed in highlighting the diversity of institutional responses to, and interest in, higher education. The essays also underline the important contributions made by regular colleges to medieval universities and to the broader European culture.

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