

Gábor Hajnóczy and László Csorba, eds. *Il Palazzo Falconieri e il palazzo barocco a Roma; Atti del convegno indetto all'Accademia d'Ungheria in Roma: Roma, 24–26 maggio 1995.*

Soveria Mannelli (Catanzaro): Rubbettino Editore, 2009. 362 pp. illus. €25. ISBN: 978–88–498–0852–0.

It took almost fifteen years for these proceedings of a 1995 conference on the Falconieri palace in Rome to be published, but this is just one of the surprising features of this book. Three out of six contributions that it contains specifically deal with the palace famously refurbished and enlarged by Francesco Borromini between 1646 and 1649 for the Falconieri family. The first, by Christoph L. Frommel, focuses on the early sixteenth-century building erected on the site of today's Palazzo Falconieri by an unknown architect on behalf of Giuliano Ceci, an ambitious cleric who made his fortune at the papal court. The reader's understanding of this essay, which is richly informed and documented, is undermined, however, by the missing twenty-three illustrations that should have illustrated it. The second essay, by Elizabeth G. Howard, who has studied the Palazzo Falconieri in depth in a 1981 monograph, reconstructs the forms and functions of the apartments designed by Borromini, with the intention of allowing the reader to "enter" and visualize the living quarters of various members of the family; but the indispensable ground plans of the palace have been forgotten in the publication, so that figures between n9 and n17 are omitted, skipping exactly the plans that are constantly referred to in the text. In addition, Howard's essay, in Italian, is so overridden with mistakes that one wonders why the author did not submit her essay in English. The third essay on the palace, by Péter Klanaczay, outlines the main refurbishments after Borromini's interventions ending with the creation of new facilities in the late 1970s. Two short essays on the decorations of Palazzo Lancillotti and Palazzo Origo (again, with missing illustrations) complete this problematic book.

However, the reader will be amazed to discover that this book contains a jewel, almost a book within the book, which will become absolutely fundamental reading for any further study on the urban history of Rome in the sixteenth century. Suzanne B. Butters and Pier Nicola Pagliara have contributed to this publication an essay of 252 pages on the Palazzo dei Tribunali designed by Bramante for Julius II along the Via Giulia, providing an exemplary contextualization of the building within the urban fabric and discussing at length its design and functions. The essay turns out to be a fundamental study on the exercise of justice in Rome in the early modern period, as it explains the intricate judiciary system that characterized the

papal city, connecting people and functions to specific places, thus providing the reader with an ideal map of the sites devoted to justice in Renaissance Rome. By reading it, we discover the circle of intellectuals and jurists that may have contributed to form Pope Julius II's ideas about the making of the new grand project for a palace for the Tribunali, where the most important criminal and civil ecclesiastic courts would have been located. The authors examine in detail some of these individuals, such as the inflexible Governor Niccolò Bonafede, for their influential role in reforming the administration of justice. Other chapters are dedicated to the urban plans that were designed along with the construction of the palace, including a never-executed large square, a real forum, in front of it, which is discussed in conjunction with the functional, economic, and ideological issues that it would have raised. At the level of the interpretation of Julius II's strategies, also, the essay is innovative. Ruling out on solid documentary grounds the intention of the pope to transfer the Capitoline tribunals to his new palace, the authors show that Julius II did not intend it as a direct attack on municipal independence, as is commonly maintained, but that the pope's principal goal was to reform and improve the ecclesiastic administration of justice that was compromised by the lack of a unified, functional architectural setting. The essay, which is divided into thirteen chapters, is well written, clear and highly enjoyable, with innumerable archival and bibliographic references contained in the 789 footnotes that complement the text, and is enriched by ninety-eight excerpts of mostly unpublished sources and seventy-one figures. In conclusion, this essay amply compensates the flaws of the publication and makes for an essential reading for whomever is interested in the exercise of justice in early modern Europe, on the urban and architectural history of Rome, and on the terrible character of Julius II.

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