

Andrea M. Gáldy. *Cosimo I de' Medici as Collector: Antiquities and Archaeology in Sixteenth-Century Florence.*

Newcastle: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2009. xxvi + 571 pp. index. append. illus. tbls. bibl. \$82.99. ISBN: 978-1-4438-0172-0.

Andrea Gáldy's richly documented volume presents a contextual analysis of one of the great Renaissance collections of antiquities. Although best known to cultural historians as a patron of artists and scholars, Duke Cosimo I of Florence was also an assiduous collector of ancient sculpture, medals, gems, and other artifacts. He was the first Renaissance patron to purposefully seek out and preserve Etruscan objects. We owe the most significant ancient works in Florence today, the *Chimera of Arezzo* and the *Arringatore*, now in the National Archaeological Museum, to the duke's penchant for *anticaglie*.

More than simply reconstructing this important collection, the author discusses how the display of antiquities influenced the development of sixteenth-century archaeological investigation. A principal theme of the book is *ordine*, defined here as "order" or "classification." The display of antiquities in order of age, provenance, and material, she argues, was a nascent form of scientific classification that shaped the antiquarian studies of Florentine scholars. Cosimo's collecting fostered new research on the origins of Florence and the codification of ancient artistic styles.

Gáldy sets the stage with an overview of the duke's career and his renovation of the Palazzo Ducale (now Palazzo Vecchio). Here, Gáldy provides a plethora of information about the ducal residence, painstakingly reconstructing the physical environment inhabited by the duke's antiquities. In chapter 2, she juxtaposes the accounts of Cosimo's contemporaries with data collected from Medici inventories to outline the duke's collection and his goals as a collector. A strong collection was "an important tool of statecraft" (33) that demonstrated the wealth and influence of the prince; its contents also reflected changes in political circumstances over time.

From this contextual framework, Gáldy turns to a discussion of the display itself. Objects were categorized by type and material: marble busts and bronzes were displayed in the Palazzo Vecchio, while monumental marble statues were relegated to the Pitti Palace. By extension, Gáldy concludes that some categorization took place based on the culture of manufacture, whether Greek, Roman, or Etruscan. She argues that the juxtaposition of Etruscan works alongside more recent Tuscan ones in the Scrittorio della Calliope — Cosimo's study — was intended to showcase Tuscan artistic genius from antiquity to modern times. In contrast, the emphasis on marble statuary in the Sala delle nicchie in the Pitti Palace evoked Rome by emulating the Belvedere statue court at the Vatican. The final chapter examines the interest in periodization and classification in the archaeological research of Florentine scholars, including Giambattista Gelli, Pietro Vettori, Giorgio Vasari, and Vincenzo Borghini.

In these chapters, Gáldy has patiently sorted through a complex and often fragmentary body of primary source material. Unfortunately, her narrative often wanders from the central question, often into areas that have been adequately addressed by others, such as the *soffitto* of the Salone de' Cinquecento, or the use of

*spoglie* in the Middle Ages. Moreover, her effort to associate the use of categories in inventories and display rooms with the ideas of categorization in antiquarian literature is not effectively substantiated. Gáldy asserts that the display of Cosimo's antiquities represented "a new phase in the history of archaeology" (61), yet there is no comparative analysis of the methods of categorization used by other Renaissance collectors. She similarly states that Florentine antiquarians made important strides in archeological method, but offers no point of comparison from which to measure their achievement.

These shortcomings do little to dampen the work's achievement as the first in-depth study of Cosimo's famed collection of antiquities, considered in its physical, cultural, political, and intellectual environment. Gáldy's insightful discussion is enriched with an expansive scholarly apparatus: in addition to her detailed notes and bibliography, she provides appendices with transcriptions of archival documents related to the collection, many published here for the first time. Particularly strong is the meticulously documented and annotated catalogue. Gáldy's work is certain to become a necessary starting point for future research on the antiquarian culture of ducal Florence.

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