

Minonzio pays particular attention to this last conflict, in which—to use the author’s words—the marquis would complete a “process of political and military individuation” (19). Hired by the Gran Duke of Florence Cosimo I, Giangiacomo violently dominated the revolt of the Sienese Republic, which received the support of French militia and the Florentine exiles of the anti-Medicean party. In Siena, he committed heinous crimes against civilians, as contemporary pro-Medicean and anti-Medicean testimonies attest. Confronted with the general’s ruthlessness, the author explores the culture of warfare of the time, pondering about the extent of brutality in Giangiacomo’s conduct. The answer leaves no doubt: judging by the contemporary reflections on *buona guerra* and *mala guerra*, his methods were indeed unorthodox. From Minonzio’s perspective, the reasons for this cruelty, which have often been glossed over in the historiography, must be sought in Medeghino’s life experiences. Coming from a family of fallen nobility, he had a contempt for commoners and poverty; having spent part of his life in a band of brigands, he had little track with ethical military codes; aspiring to princely status, he nourished a profound aversion to republican values.

Minonzio’s monograph is not a biography in the traditional sense, nor does it aspire to be. Looking at a key figure in the complex geopolitics of the early sixteenth century, the author provides a rich reading of the sociopolitical context of Central and Northern Italy. His analysis allows us to deepen our understanding of Italian Wars from a different point of view, exploring the crisis of the Renaissance institutions through the experience of one of its seemingly minor actors. This book is therefore a valuable contribution for anyone interested in this troubled phase of early modern European history.

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Niccolò Acciaiuoli, Boccaccio e la Certosa del Galluzzo: Politica, religione ed economia nell'Italia del Trecento. Alessandro Andreini, Susanna Barsella, Elsa Filosa, Jason Houston, and Sergio Tognetti, eds.
I libri di Viella 363. Rome: Viella, 2020. 316 pp. €38.

Niccolò Acciaiuoli was one of the most powerful merchant bankers of fourteenth-century Italy. He was also a shrewd politician between the two different, but closely related, cities of Florence and Naples, the latter of which was under Angevin rule when Niccolò was appointed Gran Siniscalco of the kingdom. This explains why his life was balanced between businesses and a coveted noble lifestyle. This book, which follows an international conference held in Florence in 2019, is especially focused on his person and his time, with the result that Boccaccio and the Certosa del Galluzzo become supporting figures.

After the biography of Francesco Paolo Tocco, edited in 2001, we know many things about Acciaiuoli and his family. These essays try to understand this family by fitting it within the political, economic, and religious context of that period. This period was characterized by repeated wars and famines, the bankruptcies of the Bardi, Peruzzi, and Acciaiuoli companies in the middle of the forties and, finally, the Black Plague of 1347–48. Niccolò's life was obviously affected by all these catastrophes, but he was also able to take advantage of them, using the ecclesiastical immunity granted by the project of the Certosa to regain his confiscated properties (through some fiduciaries precisely quoted in Laura De Angelis's essay); installing a feudal regime in the kingdom of Naples and the Peloponnesian area (Morea), that his descendants extended up to Athens. This remains still relatively unknown, as Claudia Tripodi demonstrates and points out in her essay.

William Caferro rightly recalls the wrong perception of some anglophone historiography about the distinction between the Italian bankers and merchants and the feudal lords. Acciaiuoli is a clear example of the overlap among those fields, but he also looked at wars—the classical domain for a nobleman—with his merchant's eyes, as an avenue for business. Like many other sovereigns in Europe, Niccolò founded a Neapolitan chivalry order, the Holy Spirit or the Knot, and commanded mercenary troops and hired warships. He also made use of the ecclesiastical members of his family to strengthen his power in Florence and Greece.

The religious and diocesan situation in Florence during the fourteenth century is covered by Francesco Salvestrini's and Lorenzo Tanzini's essays. They examine the phenomenon of the *Osservanze* among the Mendicant friars; the renewed tension towards the hermit life; the *inurbamento* of the traditional monastic orders—Silvestrini, Camaldolesi, Vallombrosani, and Olivetani, for instance—working also as incubators of Christian humanism. In contrast, bishops were mostly men of power, with the two diocesan seats of Florence and Fiesole acting as political patrons of the most prominent Florentine families and their coteries. But the bishop worked also as a keeper of the collective identity and as a mediator in difficult situations, like Angelo Acciaiuoli during the brief Florentine lordship of the Duke of Athens, Gualtieri of Brienne, in 1342–43.

However, the real power of the Florentine families was above all economic. Sergio Tognetti clearly summarizes the origins and the functioning of the local companies and their branches all around Europe, by paying special attention to the changes during and after the 1340s, when a concentration of wealth took place. He analyzes a series of crucial issues like the close relationship with the Papacy, the success of the Guelphism, the fiduciary relationship at the base of the creation of the companies, the importance of the professional training in the Florentine schools (*abaco*) and abroad, and the invention of many credit instruments, registers, ledgers, and account balances that we continue to use today.

Tognetti invites readers to think about that fascinating domain not with the eyes of the following industrial revolution but by stressing the relevance of the peculiarities of

the merchant European, and particularly the Italian, elites. These were characterized by the predominance of the families and their clients, who worked together to form marriage alliances and collaborate in the fields of politics, culture, and religion. The political domain was a crucial element which permitted these families to participate in obtaining power, as Vieri Mazzoni exhaustively demonstrates in his essay, in which he stresses the succession of an oligarchy, a *signorile*, and a democratic regime during the central decades of the Trecento. Niccolò was surely a merchant banker, but one who desired not only wealth and power: his Certosa is a telling demonstration of his quest for fame and celebrity.

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Ámbitos artísticos y literarios de sociabilidad en los Siglos de Oro.

Elena Martínez Carro and Alejandra Ulla Lorenzo, eds.

Estudios de Literatura 141. Kassel: Edition Reichenberger, 2020. vi + 382 pp. €72.

This volume brings together a wealth of essays that contextualize the literary, musical, and artistic output of Golden Age Spain within a social continuum characterized by pragmatism and a high degree of self-awareness. All four parts of the collection highlight the intrinsic and complex relationship between art and society as a dynamic exchange many times exemplified in the relationship between patron and protégé and invariably reflected in and altered by art.

In the first essay in part 1, Julio Vélez Sainz examines the dynamics between literary tradition and the contemporary needs of playwrights to assert authorial dominance while demonstrating, for literary and social reasons, their knowledge of the symbolism contained in traditional genres. María Rosa Álvares Sellers compares Spanish plays by Portuguese playwrights Jacinto Cordeiro and Juan de Matos Fragoso and finds that both authors make use of the *comedia nueva* style in its native tongue to advance their careers, albeit in strikingly different ways and with distinct goals. The last two essays of part 1, by Adriana Beltrán del Río Sousa and Christophe Couderc, focus again on the relationship between literary output and the merging of social and personal circumstances. While Beltrán del Río analyzes the impact of a patron on the works and personal life of poet Agustín de Salazar, Couderc contemplates evidence of relationships articulated in paratexts pertaining to theatrical works.

In part 2, music becomes the object of consideration. Álvaro Torrente traces the many types of collaborative webs to which musicians belonged, and the heroic professional and creative lives they led ambulating to and from different parishes while collaborating with peers from all over Spain. Carmelo Caballero also explores a type of web, one characterized by the fruitful relationships between musicians and