

*Come le armature e l'armi. Per una storia delle antiche biblioteche della Compagnia di Gesù, con il caso di Perugia.* By NATALE VACALEBRE; introduction by EDOARDO BARBIERI. (Biblioteca di bibliografia, 205.) Florence: Olschki. 2016. xxi + 291 pp. €35. ISBN 978 88 222 6480 0.

Founded in 1540, as a teaching order and a magnet for intellectuals, the Jesuits from the beginning interacted with books and libraries, also as prolific authors, as the great bibliography by Carlos Sommervogel duly testifies. The suppression in 1773 meant, however, that much has been lost; albeit re-established in 1814, the order had lost its books forever, in many cases absorbed into the local seminary library or, more simply, into the town library. The present monograph provides a slightly uneasy balance between a general history of the order's libraries and the analysis of a specific case-history, based on extensive archive research, the college at Perugia, founded in 1552.

*Comino Ventura tra lettere e libri di lettere (1579–1617).* Ed. by GIANMARIA SAVOLDELLI and ROBERTA FRIGENI. (Biblioteca di bibliografia, 201.) Florence: Olschki. 2017. vi + 353 pp. €39. ISBN 978 88 222 6478 7.

After the annals of this Bergamo-based printer and publisher in 2011 (see *The Library*, VII, 14 (2013), 102), this follow-up volume illustrates one of his specialities, collections of letters, which enjoyed a huge vogue in Italy in the second half of the sixteenth century, to the point that they were often written with an eye to publication. Ventura seems to have been something of an enthusiast as far as dedicatory letters were concerned. As well as prefacing them to his editions (212 of them are transcribed here), he published a collection of thirty volumes of dedications from 1601 to 1617, comprising 551 items, including sixty-six from his own pen. As suits the tone of the age, much is fustian and flattery, but this volume is scrupulously conducted and inserts itself into a tradition begun with the great edition of the Aldine prefaces and dedications by Giovanni Orlandi in 1975, recently made available in English (see *The Library*, VII, 20 (2019), 122–24).

*Da Lucca a New York a Lugano. Giuseppe Martini libraio tra Otto e Novecento.* Atti del convegno di Lucca, 17–18 ottobre 2018. Ed. by EDOARDO BARBIERI. (Biblioteca di bibliografia, 206.) Florence: Olschki. 2017. x + 252 pp. €35. ISBN 978 88 222 6541 1.

Giuseppe Martini (1870–1944) is a name that many people handling rare books and manuscripts, especially in major American collections, have encountered, usually from the ex-libris that he invariably stuck into volumes that passed through his hands, arousing the ire of fellow booksellers who found his personality rather too obtrusive. Some might even have wondered who he was. This volume provides many answers. He was born in Lucca in Tuscany, studied for a medical degree at Pisa, which he never completed (though this did not prevent him from employing the title 'Dr' in later life, perhaps in competition with A. S. W. Rosenbach, who did have a Ph.D. in English literature from the University of Pennsylvania), opting instead for courses in palaeography at Florence, where again he did not complete a degree. Between 1898 and 1901 he published his first eight 'Lucca' catalogues; trouble, however, was on the horizon: he was caught trying to sell a letter of Columbus stolen from the library in Perugia and received a number of court sentences, leading to a precipitate departure for the New World (appropriately enough). In New York he lived hand-to-mouth for a decade, eking out a living as a cataloguer of rare books, before re-establishing himself as a bookseller and publishing his first American catalogue (no. 9 in 1912, followed by others, up to no. 18 in 1922). Within a short space of time he became a major dealer in a market of big collectors, who bought often to donate to their former *alma maters*. In 1924 Martini returned to Florence, but, wary perhaps of the sentence hanging over his head, as well as of the Fascist