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James Hogg, Alain Girard, and Daniel Le Blévec, Eds., *L'ordre des chartreux au XIIIe siècle. Actes du colloque international d'histoire et de spiritualité cartusienne, VIIIe centenaire de la fondation de la chartreuse de Valbonne, 11-13 juin 2004.* Analecta Cartusiana 234. Salzburg: Institut für Anglistik und Amerikanistik, 2006. 145 pp. Maps, tables, notes. €40.00 (pb) ISBN 3900033595.

Review by Sean L. Field, University of Vermont.

Whether from overexposure to Innocent XI's famous claim that *Cartusia numquam reformata, quia numquam deformata*, or perhaps after absorbing the almost hypnotic atmosphere of the recent film *Die Grosse Stille*, even serious scholars might be tempted to regard the Carthusians as the unchanging order that never left the eleventh century. To the contrary, the thirteen essays in this attractive volume show that the economic, social, and religious changes of the thirteenth century effected even "ceux qui, pour vivre dans la solitude et donc en autarcie, s'étaient séparés du monde" (p. 91). Though many of the individual studies gathered here will be most useful to those who specialize on the Carthusians, taken together they reveal larger patterns that will interest scholars of thirteenth-century France and medieval religious culture.

The first two papers provide the wider context. Daniel Le Blévec's overview notes that although scholars tend to lose interest in the Carthusians (and other monastic groups that arose in the eleventh and twelfth centuries) in the Mendicant-dominated thirteenth century, this was actually a dynamic period of growth and change for the followers of St. Bruno. Roughly as many new Carthusian communities were founded in the thirteenth century (approximately thirty five) as in the twelfth (thirty seven or thirty eight), while the order expanded from its southern French heartlands into new geographic areas, gained in institutional solidity, and established its first semi-urban communities. Cécile Caby's contribution provides a wide ranging and well-documented assessment of the continuing spiritual attraction of the hermetic ideal and its intersection with papal desires for institutional standardization in the thirteenth century.

The next three essays analyze institutional development. The thirteenth century saw rapid development in this field, since the earliest Carthusian legislation, the *Consuetudines Guigonis* (ca. 1127), was supplemented by the *Consuetudines Basili* (ca. 1170), the *Statuta Jancelini* (1222), and the *De Reformatione* (1248), and culminated in the *Statuta Antiqua* of 1259 (fully adopted only in 1271). James Hogg describes the two known manuscripts of the *Statuta Jancelini* ("The Glandier" manuscript--not seen since 1912 but surviving in several transcriptions--and Grande Chartreuse 1 Stat. 23). The discussion of the manuscripts and their history highlights the challenges inherent in producing the first critical edition of these important statutes. Florent Cygler then provides a concise analysis of the birth and development of the general chapter as the governing mechanism of the Carthusians, from its sporadic beginnings in the 1140s to its full-fledged thirteenth-century form. The main internal controversy of the thirteenth century concerned the make up of the *définitoire*--the smaller decision-making organ of the chapter. Originally dominated by the Grand Chartreuse and its prior, with the *Antiqua statuta* the *définitoire's* selection process was reformed to provide for indirect elections of eight *diffinitores* from across the order. By the end of the century, the Carthusians--seemingly so dedicated to individual solitude--had paradoxically become "un ordre éminemment centralisé" (p. 45) that viewed its general chapter as the "vicar of God." John P. H. Clark then surveys the evidence from the *chartae*, the records of the decisions made by the general chapters. Since none of the original thirteenth-century *chartae* are known to survive, scholars must depend on the excerpts made by Dom Jean Chauvet in the mid seventeenth

century. Clark provides a lengthy list of the issues dealt with by the thirteenth-century chapters, including liturgical questions, discipline, and the place of female communities in the order.

A meticulously documented essay by Sylvain Excoffon on Carthusian practices of animal husbandry introduces the four following studies that examine specific communities. A unifying theme here is the monks' relationship to the "desert," both as the physical space that was intended to surround, support, and insulate Carthusian foundations, and as a spiritual ideal imitating the original desert fathers. Excoffon's study demonstrates the way the specific demands of sheep-raising and the need for extended pasture lands tended to cause communities to overrun the boundaries of their original "deserts." Michel Carlat's discussion of Bonnefoy (founded 1159) shows that even as the limits of the community's "desert" expanded, it also acquired lands "hors-désert" in the later thirteenth century. Carlat ends with a side note on the longevity of many Carthusians—a poignant closing indeed, in light of his own death at the age of sixty-eight in the year this volume was published. Michel Wullschleger explores the expansion of Écouges (founded 1116) and Val Sainte-Marie (1144). Already in the twelfth century the lands and rights controlled by these two communities of the Vercors were growing quickly, through gifts and the acquisition of new winter pasture lands. The process continued unabated in the thirteenth century, as Wullschleger demonstrates in great detail. Thus these Carthusians expanded their interests well beyond the limits of their "deserts," "non sans se mettre en contradiction avec les recommandations des *Coutumes*" (p. 91). Alain Saint-Denis next analyzes a different kind of exodus from the desert—the foundation of Vauvert. Louis IX apparently requested the Carthusian general chapter to send brothers to begin a community in the environs of Paris. It agreed, without evident controversy, and in 1257 a small community was begun at Gentilly. But the monks quickly asked to be transferred to Vauvert, just outside the walls of Paris, and in 1259 Louis acceded to their desires. This foundation of a new community on the edge of a major city was a remarkable deviation from established Carthusian practice. What explains this new direction? The author effectively demonstrates why Louis supported such a foundation—he was busy filling up Paris with houses from every order he could find in the 1250s. But why did the Carthusian general chapter foster this "rupture" in the history of their order (p. 103)? Saint-Denis admits there is not enough evidence to answer this question, but speculates that the Carthusians may have decided that the future of the order demanded a foothold in Paris as the emerging center of theological study in Europe. Returning to the themes of expansion and conflict, Silvio Chiaberto rounds out this section by giving a detailed analysis of the kinds of tensions that arose between the expanding Piedmontese community of Montebenedetto and its neighbors, including the counts of Savoy, neighboring religious houses such as San Giusto di Susa, and other local authorities secular and ecclesiastic.

The last two essays concern three thirteenth-century Carthusians who should be better known. Fabrice Wendling presents a study of Hugh of Miramar, an active churchman in Provence who left the world to become a Carthusian at Montrieux around 1237 and authored a *Liber de miseria hominis*, which survives in long and short versions, along with several other works. Wendling examines the short version of the *Liber* here, and draws out several interesting aspects of what at first seems like an unremarkable tract in the *contemptus mundi* tradition. Hugh exhibits an interesting "pessimisme anthropologique" (p. 119) with a reading of Genesis that emphasizes humans' miserable status from the moment of creation (even before the eating of the apple), a precocious personification of death, and a decoupling of the link between sin and death. Hugh's writings are also laced with autobiographic references. Most intriguingly in this connection, Wendling cites the introduction to a treatise that Hugh wrote concerning the number four, showing that it contains a fascinating defense of active authorship in the context of Carthusian contemplation. Finally, Nathalie Nabert puts the spotlight on two Carthusian women, Béatrice of Ornacieux (nun at Parménie, prioress of Eymeux, d. 1303) and her biographer Marguerite of Oingt (prioress of Poleteins, d. 1310). The bibliography on these two is not quite as non-existent as the author makes out [1], but she is surely right that these fascinating women deserve much more study. Nabert analyzes Marguerite's approach as a biographer, and describes Béatrice's asceticism and mysticism as reflections of contemporary trends such as devotion to Christ's humanity and his passion.

Her treatment of Béatrice as an example of particularly Carthusian spiritual themes and her comparison with *vitae* of male Carthusian saints is quite original. Most interesting is Nabert's comparisons of the life of Béatrice with passages taken from Marguerite's other spiritual tracts and letters. She correctly insists that reading this *vie* tells us something about both Marguerite and Béatrice, but beyond the spiritual "link that unites them" (p. 133) she avoids the more difficult issue of the relationship between the hagiographer's program from the lived experience of the subject. Nevertheless this is a welcome article that should not be overlooked by scholars of thirteenth-century women. The "Conclusion" by Pierrette Paravy does an exemplary job of summarizing and linking the volume's articles.

This volume will be useful for those seeking specific information on thirteenth-century Carthusian developments (for instance the chart pp. 10-11 listing all thirteenth-century foundations, male and female). But it also bears the mark of a successful collection in that its sum is greater than its parts. The attentive reader will make connections and perceive patterns that may not have been fully apparent even to individual authors. For instance, after noting both the extent to which general chapters were concerned with issues around the incorporation of female communities and the call issued by the general chapter in 1291 "to help the very poor nunnery of Parménie in its need" (p. 60), one begins to understand some of the larger institutional issues lurking behind Marguerite of Oingt's depiction of Béatrice of Ornacieux. Further, the essays by Hogg and Clark in particular remind us that historians interested in the thirteenth century must often be at home in the world of the seventeenth-century savants as well, and that medievalists cannot afford to operate in isolation from others who study later periods of French history.

The volume contains rather more typographical errors than one might wish, scattered throughout most of the essays. Given the rather dire description of the *Analecta cartusiana's* economic situation announced on the inside of the front cover, however, perhaps it would be charitable to ascribe these errors to budgetary shortfall rather than editorial carelessness, and indeed to heed the editors' appeal and ask our university libraries to purchase this worthy volume.

LIST OF ESSAYS

Daniel Le Blévec "Le XIIIe siècle cartusien."

Cécile Caby, "L'érémisme au XIIIe siècle, entre solitude du coeur et contraintes du droit."

James Hogg, "The *Statuta Jancelini* 1222."

Florent Cygler, "Le chapitre général cartusien au XIIIe siècle."

John P. H. Clark, "The *Chartae* of the Carthusian General Chapter in the Thirteenth Century in the *Transumptum* of Dom Jean Chauvet."

Sylvain Excoffon, "Les chartreux et l'élevage au XIIIe siècle."

Michael Carlat, "La chartreuse de Bonnefoy au XIIIe siècle."

Michel Wullschleger, "Sortir du désert? Les entreprises des chartreux des Écouges et du Val Sainte-Marie au XIIIe siècle."

Alain Saint-Denis, "Saint Louis et la fondation de la chartreuse de Vauvert."

Silvio Chiaberto, "I certosini di Montebenedetto e i loro vicini nel sec. XIII."

Fabrice Wendling, "La spiritualité d'un chartreux provençal, Hugues de Miramar."

Nathalie Nabert, "La vie de Béatrice d'Ornacieux par Marguerite d'Oingt, une biographie à l'ombre de la croix."

Pierette Paravy, "Conclusions."

NOTES

[1] Some bibliography can be found in Sean L. Field, "Agnes of Harcourt, Felipa of Porcelet, and Marguerite of Oingt: Women Writing about Women at the End of the Thirteenth Century," *Church History* 76:2 (2007):298-328, at notes 36 and 39.

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