

Vavra, die die Hinweise auf Spielmaterialien in Latrineninhalten zusammenträgt und so noch einmal unterstreicht, dass Klosterleben und Spielkultur im Mittelalter tatsächlich zusammen gehörten.

Teil 4 vereinigt unter der Überschrift „Synthese und Ausblick“ zwei Beiträge: Jörg Sonntag („Erfinder, Vermittler und Interpreten. Ordensleute und das Spiel im Gefüge der mittelalterlichen Gesellschaft“), Nicolangelo D’Acunto („Ludus e disciplina. In margine e un convegno su gioco e vita religiosa“). Anhand origineller Einzelbeispiele resümiert Sonntag, wie Spiele aus der ‚Welt‘ in das Kloster gelangten, dort im Rahmen des monastischen Lebens neu interpretiert wurden und ihren Weg mit dieser neuen („verchristlichten“) Konnotation zurück in die Welt fanden. Tatsächlich fungierte das Spiel im Mittelalter als ein wichtiges Verbindungsstück zwischen Welt und Kloster: „Die Erforschung des religiosus ludens und seiner ‚Ausstrahlung‘ stößt in das Herz eines ständig erneuerten intragesellschaftlichen, kulturtragenden Kreislaufs von Adaption, Transformation, Kommunikation und Re-Adaption vor“, wie Sonntag in einem einzigen Satz die divergierenden Einzelaspekte der vorangegangenen Aufsätze gekonnt zusammenführt.

Kurz und knapp: Alle Beiträge dieses spannenden Sammelbandes zu einer kulturgeschichtlich vorwärtsweisenden Thematik sind streng themenbezogen, in der jeweiligen Argumentation methodisch klar und im inhaltlichen Ertrag reichhaltig. Nicht zuletzt spiegelt der zudem anregend illustrierte Sammelband die engagierte Entdeckerfreude und die organisatorisch wie wissenschaftlich gleichermaßen zielorientierte Durchschlagskraft des Herausgebers wider. Einmal mehr bringt sich Sonntag hier als mediävistischer Grenzgänger zwischen Kloster und Welt überzeugend ins wissenschaftliche Spiel!

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ALKUIN VOLKER SCHACHENMAYR

**Augustine Roberts, *Finding the Treasure. Letters from a Global Monk* (Monastic Wisdom Series 34 [Cistercian Publications], Collegeville 2011) 257 pages, 22 cm. € 22 ISBN 978-0-8790-7034-2. Paperback.**

Roberts has served in many influential positions in the Trappist Order since entering St. Joseph’s Abbey at Spencer Massachusetts in 1953. He is an experienced abbot, retreat master, procurator general, and involved with many abbeys, from a new foundation in Argentina to trouble-shooting in scandal-beleaguered

European abbeys of our day. His father was an Episcopal (Church of England) bishop, his mother and brother converted to Catholicism before him. The book is arranged in nine letters dated 2009 and addressed to “Eddie” (a monk from Spencer), their subject matter begins well before Roberts’ entry at Spencer, ending with two appendices. The book contains two black and white photographs near the end.

Similar to Merton’s famous autobiographical accounts, Roberts describes his continuing intellectual conversion after entering the novitiate in Spencer, Massachusetts. Lectures at Spencer were given by Dominican Friars sent there to teach; Roberts’ deeper exposure to St. Thomas and Etienne Gilson gave him a bold new way of understanding Catholicism and rebuking much of secularized modern thought. He claims to have benefitted from his early theological studies to this very day (94-99).

Although the book is primarily an autobiography (the fact that the book takes the form of nine letters is not really relevant), there are also passages about spirituality, to some degree it is also the story of a soul. Near the end he describes his prayers as an older monk: “Just you (Jesus). Your kingdom. Your mercy. Mercy on your people. Glorify your name. Your will” (239). Roberts regrets having discovered Pope John Paul II’s teaching on the Theology of the body so late in life, because Church teaching on the body had been missing in his own monastic formation and he would have had many good uses for it (233).

Roberts recounts his impressions of Papal Audiences under each of the popes from John XXIII to Benedict XVI. The latter impressed him particularly: “I have very seldom met anyone as sincerely cordial and as totally present to the person being spoken to” (229-230). Revealingly, Roberts corrected Pope Benedict when the pontiff addressed him during the audience as a Cistercian. Roberts considers himself a Trappist and refers to himself that way throughout the book. This choice in nomenclature points toward fidelity to the Romantic school, a time when Trappist vocations were flourishing and Rancé’s sanctity was widely respected. Since then, many Trappists have distanced themselves from Rancé because of his image as a brutal, strong-minded and stubborn ascetic.

One of the fascinating things about Roberts’ life is its span across such diverse epochs and sites. As a student at the elite and Protestant Yale University, he finds his way to Catholicism in WASP culture, convinced that there is only one Church founded by Jesus Christ and that it is alive and well today under the

pope. He converted for all the 'right' reasons, being intellectually informed and spiritually sincere. His love for the Church remains unbroken today. Yet things have changed. Where is the Church's center today? In a postmodern sense, he claims there is no longer a single center, and the same applies to the Trappist Order (212). Indeed, he has seen a lot: As an American, he had to go to the Belgian Abbey of Scourmont in 1996 to help the community recover from an abbot who misappropriated funds for years and then left the order to spend them (196). These passages are a contrast to the convert's enthusiasm back in 1953, but the book's tone is never cynical.

An appendix written by Roberts' mother in 1950 describes her own reasons for converting to Roman Catholicism a few years before her son did: The Real Presence, Catholicism as the one and only Church founded by Jesus Christ, devotions to the Sacred Heart and the Rosary (241-254). Dorothy Roberts' story is intriguing in itself because her conversion caused her husband many problems as an Episcopalian bishop; some would even say it ruined his career. Yet they persevered in their marriage and respected each other's religious freedom to the end. Augustine Roberts himself, after becoming abbot, lived in fear of becoming a Catholic bishop for seven years, since he had heard that the Apostolic Nuntio had his eye on him to be an auxiliary bishop for the Archdiocese of Boston (174-175). This information is of interest to historians of American Catholicism, because it was very rare indeed in the USA for a Trappist to become a bishop.

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ALKUIN VOLKER SCHACHENMAYR

**Janet Burton and Julie Kerr, *The Cistercians in the Middle Ages* (Woodbridge [Suffolk, UK] and Rochester [New York, USA] 2011) viii + 244 pages, 4 pages of plates. 25 cm € 25 ISBN 978-1-8438-3667-4. Hardcover.**

This general introduction is well-structured and rigorously edited. The authors have used recent scholarship and succeed in conveying their enthusiasm about the order of Cîteaux as it developed up until the close of the Middle Ages. Each chapter is about 25 pages long and covers a precisely limited subject area. The first chapter is on the foundations in Cîteaux, then follows a chapter on the expansion and early success of the Order, the third is about the typical abbey's physical plant, its sites and buildings. Chapter four is devoted to the administration of the Order. The next studies daily life in the monasteries. Chapter six presents the lay brothers, granges and Cistercian economy and the eighth, closing