

speak out as an American, which he had become. His not-so-secret ally in this cause was President Roosevelt, whom he met while in Princeton. Here political activism joins high fiction: FDR is famously the model for 'Joseph the Provider', the last part of the tetralogy written alongside the BBC broadcasts to Germany, 'Deutsche Hörer!' Surely no writer has ever led so demanding and crucial a double life.

A much fuller account of Mann's whole time in America is Hans Rudolf Vaegt's 'Thomas Mann der Amerikaner', to which Corngold pays due respects. But for non-readers of German, these tales from his hometown are a good beginning.

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Italian Studies

Simboli di rinascita nella Basilica di San Miniato al Monte di Firenze: Da Gioacchino da Fiore a C.G. Jung / Rebirth Symbols in the Basilica of San Miniato al Monte in Florence: From Joachim of Fiore to C.G. Jung. By Riccardo Bernardini. Bergamo: Moretti & Vitali, 2022. Pp. 303. €20 (pbk).

Standing above the city of Florence, the basilica of San Miniato al Monte is dedicated to Saint Minias, a third-century saint venerated as the first Christian martyr of Florence for having refused to sacrifice to the Roman gods, suffering numerous torments, and finally being beheaded (although legend claims he picked up his own head and returned to his hermitage on another hill, Monte di Firenze). In the second *Cantica* of his *Divine Comedy*, Dante compares the steep wall leading to Cornice II of Purgatory to the flights of shallow stone steps heading up the hill after one crosses the Rubaconte Bridge (p. 117; cf. Canto XII, ll. 100-102). The basilica is recognized as one of the masterpieces of Tuscan Romanesque architecture, but it is also, as Riccardo Bernardini explains in this short, dense, yet highly rewarding study (published in Italian and English) a fine example of medieval symbolism and, more specifically, of how 'the soteriological mystery enclosed in the symbolism of the Basilica [. . .] can be understood only within the framework of Christianity attentive to the themes of Platonism, Neoplatonism, Neo-Pythagoreanism, Hermeticism, and astrology' (p. 171). In short, this study is a kind of handbook to an almost forgotten world of symbolic significance in Western architecture.

Bernardini is not alone in recognizing the importance of this basilica, and his work builds on earlier studies by Fred Gettings (1937–2013) and other aficionados of systems of astrological symbolism. It goes beyond existing research, however, by proposing five aspects of the basilica's iconography for close analysis from an analytical psychological perspective: the marble zodiac of the nave and its two solstitial entrances; the Holy Door facing the East; the Theriomorph (a representation of the divine in a combination of allegorical animal forms) carved in marble column supporting the lectern of the ambon; the glyph of Pisces on either side of the presbytery entrance; and the steganographic (i.e. secret or concealed) inscription in marble, written in three leonine hexameters (a form of Latin verse characterized by an internal rhyme between the last word in the line and the word just before the middle caesura), in the second panel of the nave floor (p. 120). Through detailed analysis of these features, Bernardini uncovers what he describes as 'millenarian anguish and eschatological hope' in the Romanesque architecture of the basilica, linking it – as the subtitle of this study suggests – to a prophetic tradition that

runs from Joachim of Fiore (c. 1135-1202) to C.G. Jung (1875-1961). On this account, walking through the basilica from the entrance to the tabernacle is a kind of virtual kinesthetic meditation (p. 168), and it has to be said that reading this study, enriched with beautiful black-and-white photographs, reproduces this effect.

One might consider Bernardini's approach to be too esoteric, were it not for the scrupulous endnotes and extensive bibliography with which he supports his case. Moreover, by acknowledging that his essay can be read as a 'form of "contemplative" practice', Bernardini is making an important contribution to the ongoing methodological discussions in the arts and humanities, and in this respect alone this study deserves to find a wider readership as not simply explicating a rich, intellectual past but also pointing to the future of humanities research. One does not have to agree with all (or any) of his interpretative conclusions to find Bernardini's study of immense value (although, based on the evidence presented, this reviewer finds them extremely persuasive).

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