

MANUSCRIPT 58

Razzi, Serafino, 1531-1611

Vita di Fra Girolamo Savonarola del Ordine de
Predicatori, scritta nel 1590. Dal Padre
Serafino Razzi dell' ordine sopradetto con
ogni cautela.

MS 58

Italy

Ca. 1675??

The Chicago codex is a copy, produced at second or third hand, of Razzi's holograph original, which is today MS 2580 in the Biblioteca Comunale of Lucca, Italy. The title of the original is "Narrazioni della vita e morte del servo di Dio Jeronimo Savonarola e scritte da Fra Serafino Razzi in questo presente anno 1590 [etc.] . . . con una altresì breve narrazione della vita di Papa Alessandro VI." Razzi was a prolific writer, but of his 90 or so works only about 30 saw the light of print. The Savonarola biography, which was written almost a century after the death of Savonarola (in 1498), was apparently based on the biography by Giovanni Francesco Pico della Mirandola, and on an anonymous biography usually attributed to Pacifico Burlamacchi. The Razzi biography, although it has never been printed, circulated in MS in Italian religious houses and was quite popular. There are at least 10 extant MS copies of the work in Italian collections (in Florence, Rome, Bologna, Fiesole, Lucca, Pisa, Poppi, and Prato).

Razzi, who was a Dominican friar, enjoyed writing biographies of saints, and of members of his own order-- see for instance his Istoria degli huomini illustri... del sacro Ordine degli Predicatori (Lucca, 1596). His unpublished writings include not only numerous biographies, but also many commentaries on Aristotle and Aquinas, records of journeys, and devotional works. For full bibliographical information and an account of Razzi's life Vita di Santa Caterina de' Ricci (Florence, 1965). On pp. cxxv-cxxvi there is a list of the MS copies of the Savonarola biography. In Goodspeed, Descriptive catalogue, pp. 71-2 (where the codex bears the number 62), there is a description of the Chicago codex, and a report on an attempt to collate it with MSS in Florence, with the conclusion that the Chicago text "does not, however, fully agree with either of the Florence manuscripts we examined, and seems to be a different treatment of the same general subject by the same writer." Actually the Florence MSS do not contain the original holograph copy, with which the true collation has yet to be made. The Chicago text probably originated several decades after the death of Razzi, or possibly much later, and may be a poor text. Bound in with the Chicago codex, written in the same hand but on much smaller sheets of paper, there is a work entitled "Costumi e morte di

Papa Alessandro VI [de Medici (an obvious error, which has been crossed out)] contrario al P. F. Girolamo Savonarola da Ferrara del Ordine de Predicatori." This is probably a poor copy of Razzi's "Breve narrazione della vita di Papa Alessandro VI," which is appended to the original MS 2580 in Lucca.

Folio, 29 x 20 cm.

634 numbered large pages (27x19 cm.) and 24 numbered small pages (19x13 cm.), or 329 leaves in all.

Original vellum binding, in poor condition.

Fair copies in a single unidentified hand, with no marginal annotations and very few corrections or erasures. With a table of contents, but no index. On the inside front cover is written the name of an unidentified owner: "Mayerhoff."

Part of the Berlin Collection.

15 February 1968
T. Bentley Duncan