Edilizia residenziale medievale dell'Appennino Reggiano (secoli XI–XIV). Maestranze, committenti e ambienti tecnici. Contributi di Archeologia Medievale 15. Premio Ottone d'Assia e Riccardo Fancovich). By Federico Zoni. 21 x 29 cm. 192 pp, 162 b&w pls and figs. Florence: All'Insegna del Giglio, 2019. ISBN 978-88-7814-950-2 (ISSN 2035-5424). Price: €44.00 pb.

Federico Zoni here examines residential buildings in the High Middle Ages in Apenninic northern central Italy, centred on the Reggio Emilia province. Most studies on medieval domestic dwellings and their social, economic and even political implications have tended to focus on earlier periods; relatively few regional analyses have tackled the built environment after AD 1000, unless in urban contexts (eg Lucca, Padua). This well-structured and systematic research (a prize-winning 2018 University of Bologna PhD) aligns with the latter strand of studies; concentrating on a relatively remote area of medieval Italy, Zoni successfully weaves together different datasets to build a coherent image, merging archival sources with archaeological ones, and linking these to an analysis of built elevations alongside the development of pre- and post-industrial human landscapes.

From this multi-disciplinary approach Zoni considers the dynamics linked to the social role of the workers involved in the formation and evolution of settlements in this part of the Apennines, while also reconstructing in good detail the range and succession of building techniques and their relationship with the technological/technical capabilities of the actual workers.

Chapter 4 in particular provides a set of well-illustrated case studies, accompanied by building/structural, geological, historical and archaeological analyses which form the solid basis for establishing the various typologies of residences set out in the following chapter, where Zoni outlines the different identified types, including *case solariate*, *palatia*, fortified houses and residential towers; these become narrative elements of a society in continuous evolution, where the clients flaunt their social status, while political realities alternate by showing off different architectural forms.

Zoni coins the phrase 'archaeology of the architectural landscapes' to define stratifications of building activities that can be observed with certain trends in a wider political landscape; if analysed correctly, these activities hint at the various passages and palimpsests of societies that produced them, intertwined in the architectural patterns of medieval residences.

Overall, this publication not only adds significantly to the construction of typological atlases of late-medieval residences, but it also allows us to historically and socially understand a specific territory through its architecture; furthermore, it should stimulate a wider goal of a much-awaited synthesis on Italian late-medieval residential architecture.

ALESSANDRO SEBASTIANI (*University at Buffalo — SUNY*)