

This volume is an important introduction to the study of Florentine charitable institutions and a useful contribution to scholarship on the religious, artistic, and social history of the city.

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Domínguez León, José. *La sociedad sevillana en la época isabelina. Una visión a través de la religiosidad (1833–1868)*. Córdoba: Publicaciones obra social y cultural cajasur, 1999. 588 pp. ISBN 84-7959-271-0.

The end of absolute monarchy in 1834 and the triumph of liberalism began a period of political, social, and economic change in Spain that transformed the country. The transition from the absolutist certainties of the past to a society dominated by an emerging bourgeoisie was conflictive and unsettling. Domínguez León provides a comprehensive study of this process in Seville through a detailed and clear analysis of its institutions, its society, especially the family and its religious life in a time of gradual secularization. There is little, however, on the *hermandades* and *cofradías* once so numerous in the city during absolute monarchy when religion and public life were more deeply intertwined than in nineteenth-century liberal Spain. Spanish liberals had little use for brotherhoods and confraternities embodying the class distinctions of the Old Regime and dependent for their survival on endowments of urban and rural property. In 1841, the government of General Espartero struck the final blow by ordering the sale of property of *hermandades* and *cofradías* for the benefit of the public treasury. Some survived, of course, but as associations of private individuals rather than as public and religious corporations ingrained in the fabric of traditional, hierarchical society.

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Fassina, Giuseppe. *Fraternità monzese tra medioevo ed epoca contemporanea*. Monza: Rotari Club Monza Est e Monda Nord/Società di Studi Monzesi, 1999. 256 pp. ill.; no price, no ISBN

The city of Monza, once part of the Duchy of Milan, is not only rich in history and culture, but also of interest to scholars working on lay religious movements. Giuseppe Fassina's study on the confraternities of Monza from the Middle Ages to the present offers an insight into the city and its community by tracing the origins of several of its confraternities and recounting the religious practices in use not only within its confraternities but also within Monzese society.