

Pier Luigi Gardella, *La Confraternita di S. Chiara di Bogliasco* (Genova: Scuola Tip. Sorriso Francescano, 1990), 177 pp.

Dr Gardella, himself a member of the Confraternity of S. Chiara, presents us with a short, but detailed monograph on this Ligurian confraternity. His work is based on the confraternity's rich private archive, which spans the period 1591 to the present.

After a description of the resources of the confraternity archive (pp. 9-18), Gardella gives a brief resumé of the confraternity's beginnings (pp. 19-20)--it was founded in 1403, in the wake of the processions of the Bianchi. There follows a summary of the 1582 Apostolic Visit by Mons. Francesco Bossi (pp. 21-23), a description of the confraternity's administrative structure (pp. 25-27), its membership (29-31), its pilgrimage sites (pp. 33-34), its relationship with nearby confraternities (pp. 35-36), its most notable benefactors (p. 37), and its work of mercy (visiting the infirm, p. 38). Fausta Franchini Guelfi intervenes with a brief article on the confraternity's artistic patrimony (pp. 39-41). Gardella then continues with short chapters on the construction and decoration of the oratory (pp. 43-48), its decor and fittings (pp. 49-59), and the confraternity's processional equipment (pp. 61-70). After a brief note gathering divers "Curiosità" (pp. 71-72), there is a listing and description of the feasts celebrated by the confraternity, be they peculiar to S. Chiara (pp. 73-78), common to all Ligurian confraternities (pp. 79-84), or characteristic of the parish (pp. 85-92). The last section, "Pagine di storia" recalls the impact on the confraternity of the 1657 plague (pp. 93-94), the 1745 passage of Spanish troops (p. 94), the Napoleonic interlude of 1797-1814 (pp. 95-97), the unification of Italy (pp. 97-98), the First World War (p. 98), the Fascist Regime (p. 99), and the Second World War (pp. 99-100).

In the concluding sections there are two poems in dialect by Piero Bozzo, one describing a fresco in the confraternity (p. 103), the other explaining that the "passion for the Oratory" is something that defies description ("l'è quarcosa che spiegâ no se pœu") (p. 104). There is a chronological listing of major events in the confraternity's life from 1403 to 1974 (pp. 105-106). After 32 full-page illustrations (some in colour), there is an appendix that contains a list of the confraternity's priors from 1591 to 1989 (pp. 143-149), the "Libro de Capitoli e Regole per l'Oratorio" (pp. 151-162), the report of the 1582 pastoral visit (pp. 163-166), a glossary of terms (pp. 167-171), and a brief bibliography of cited texts (pp. 173-175).

Konrad Eisenbichler
University of Toronto

