

St Bernardine of Siena's preaching in Modena that year (pp. 165–173); the vernacular statutes (1450) of the confraternity of S. Bernardino founded in 1450 in the wake of that saint's canonization (pp. 175–195); the vernacular statutes (1501) of the confraternity of S. Sebastiano founded in 1501 during yet another recurrence of the plague (pp. 197–231); the vernacular statutes (1581–1623) of the confraternity of Gesù e S. Erasmo, created in 1552 by the amalgamation of two previous associations by those names (pp. 233–254). The only two confraternities whose pre-Tridentine statutes have not survived are those of S. Erasmo, founded in 1422, and of S. Giuseppe, founded in 1532 from within the guild of carpenters that had existed since 1426.

This nicely unified and well presented collection of pre-Tridentine confraternity statutes from Modena is an important addition to the growing number of statutes now available in reliable scholarly editions. It increases the resources available for future studies and points to yet another fascinating city with a rich and significant history in lay religious movements.

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***Il mercante, l'ospedale, i fanciulli. La donazione di Francesco Datini, Santa Maria Nuova e la fondazione degli Innocenti.*** Eds. Stefano Filipponi, Eleonora Mazzocchi, Ludovica Sebgondi. Florence: Nardini Editore, 2010. Pp. 160 + colour illustrations. ISBN 978–88–404–0020–4 (soft cover) Euro 15.

Renaissance hospitals aimed to heal the soul as much as the body, and in pursuit of that goal they commissioned a wide range of religious art works to adorn internal chapels and mark public spaces. Many now remain the custodians of these artistic treasures even though the wards for whose benefit they were originally commissioned have long since passed away and, in most cases, the institutions themselves have metamorphosed to meet different needs. This volume is the exhibition catalogue produced for an exhibition of artworks originally commissioned for two Florentine institutions: the Ospedale degli Innocenti and Ospedale di S. Maria Nuova. The Innocenti is widely famous as one of the earliest purpose-built and dedicated foundling homes in Europe. S. Maria Nuova is less well-known as Florence's central hospital even though it, unlike the Innocenti, continues to fulfill the same role for which it was established centuries ago.

The catalogue provides an excellent record of the 2010–11 exhibition, which was aimed at presenting some newly-restored artworks and the results of extensive investigations into the architecture and construction history of the two institutions. Before and after photos and technical descriptions demonstrate clearly the extent of the restorations, which in some instances have

been quite aggressive (eg. the sixteenth-century terracotta portrait bust of Cione di Lapo Pollini, founder of the Florentine Hospital of S. Maria della Scala in 1313). Digital technology was employed in the exhibition to recreate stages in the evolution both of the Innocenti's familiar façade, and of the S. Maria della Nuova's important cruciform plan. In both instances, these stages have been conveyed successfully through series of images or through colour separation on plans and elevations. The volume is very richly illustrated, and demonstrates quite well that the two institutions were very richly endowed by pious Florentines who sought the salvation of their souls in the succour of the weak and helpless. More importantly, the volume is free of the sometimes mindless cheerleading articles that often fill up exhibition catalogues of this sort. It includes solid works of well-documented scholarship which were generated in the process of bringing the exhibition together, and which make a valuable contribution to our knowledge of these two very important institutions.

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***I Sacri Monti. Bibliografia italiana.*** Eds. Pier Giorgio Longo and Danilo Zardin. *Bibliografia dei Sacri Monti, Calvari e Complessi Devozionali*, 2. Ponzano Monferrato (AL): Centro di Documentazione dei Sacri Monti, Calvari e Complessi devozionali europei, 2010. Pp. 125. ISBN 978-88-89081-20-4. n.p.

Although not about early modern confraternities, this book will be of interest to scholars working on them for the insights it offers into another form of early modern and baroque piety — the erection of *sacri monti* (literally, “sacred mountains”) and *calvari* (Stations of the Cross) on natural hillsides outside urban centres. The purpose of the *sacri monti* was to encourage the devout to retrace the steps of Jesus’ passion by following a devotional path which, winding up the hillside, brought them past various edifices containing life-sized painted statues in wood or terracotta that graphically captured a moment in the story. By admiring the visual representations, praying in front of them, and meditating on the events depicted, the devout participated in a spiritual exercise not unlike that of travelling as a pilgrim to the Holy Land and visiting the actual sites. In short, the *sacri monti* were attempts, and such was their “declared purpose” (p. 18), to reconstruct ancient Jerusalem in Europe for the benefit of Christians unable to undertake a pilgrimage to the Holy Land.

Not surprisingly then, a number of such *sacri monti* were built under the aegis of the Franciscan order (which, we might remember, has “Custody of the Holy Land”) and with the assistance of recently returned pilgrims. The *sacro monte* of Varallo (in Piedmont), the oldest and most famous such complex in Italy, was founded shortly before 1491 by the Franciscan Friar Minor