

## Reviews

James R. Banker. *Death in the Community. Memorialization and Confraternities in an Italian Commune in the Late Middle Ages* (Athens and London: University of Georgia Press, 1988) xvi, 292 pp.

Through an analysis of activities pertaining to death in lay confraternities of San Sepolcro, Banker details a transformation in devotional practices over a period of two hundred years, that is, from about 1250 to 1450. For Banker, such a study provides a useful key to the understanding of confraternities and addresses a *lacuna* in the current literature.

The first two chapters are a study of relevant thirteenth-century institutions. In the opening chapter, Banker outlines the extent to which religious corporations in San Sepolcro dealt with charity and death, in order to provide a foundation for later discussion of the devotion of the laity; in the second chapter, he focuses on the Fraternity of San Bartolomeo, a large and influential confraternity which, in the second half of the century, assumed a commanding role in San Sepolcro with regard to charitable acts and commemoration of the dead.

In the third chapter, Banker notes the powerful forces of the fourteenth century, including the loss of political autonomy and the Black Death, which contribute to changes in the death practices and then documents the decline of the Fraternity of San Bartolomeo. In sum, the Fraternity is seen to evolve from a broadly-based community actively involved in memorializa-

tion of the dead to an administrative organization funded by few benefactors; the unity of the local society in the Fraternity is replaced by a host of some fourteen smaller confraternities born in the first half of the century.

Banker portrays the rise of these new confraternities as a reponse to the changed needs of the people in San Sepolcro. In the fourth and fifth chapters, he explores two different kinds of confraternities, the *laudesi* and *disciplinati* respectively. The former are exemplified by the Confraternity of Santa Maria della Notte; because little information on the latter has survived, Banker characterizes the objectives and activities of the *disciplinati* with reference to several confraternities.

Following the conclusion, Banker includes the texts for the 1268 statutes of the Fraternity of San Bartolomeo (in Latin), the 1441 statutes of the Confraternity of Santa Maria della Notte (in Italian), and the 1364 statutes of the Confraternity of Santa Croce (in Italian). The endnotes, substantial bibliography and index reflect the same attention to detail which is evident throughout this fascinating study.

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*Le confraternite pugliesi in età moderna*, ed. Liana Bertoldi Lenoci (Fasano, BR: Schena, 1988) 638 pp. Lire 38,000. ISBN 88-7514-321-8. For a list of the contents, see the entry in "Publications Received."

The volume contains the proceedings of the first conference on confraternities in the Puglia (Italy), organized by the Centro