

Theses Completed (Abstracts)

Carlsmith, Christopher Henry. *Schooling and Society in Bergamo, 1500–1650*. Ph.D. thesis, University of Virginia, May 1999. xxxvi, 325 pp. Co-supervisors, Professors Duane J. Osheim and Anne Jacobson Schutte.

Italy's contributions to the development of education span the centuries: the medieval universities of Salerno and Bologna, the humanist academies of the Renaissance, the Jesuit colleges of the Catholic Reformation, and the elementary education of Maria Montessori. This dissertation explores the interaction of schooling and society in northern Italy from the early sixteenth through the mid-seventeenth century. This analysis of civic, ecclesiastical, confraternal, and family records not only provides a detailed portrait of how pre-university schooling functioned in Bergamo, but also draws comparisons with instruction offered in neighbouring cities of the Veneto and Lombardy. Bergamo's experience exemplifies critical developments in the history of early modern Italy and allows us to identify and understand the impact of Renaissance humanism, Tridentine Catholicism, and Venetian domination. This dissertation challenges traditional stereotypes about Renaissance schooling, rural literacy, ecclesiastical-lay conflict, and the relationship between centre and periphery in the Venetian Republic. It goes beyond prior scholarship in the field by combining a comprehensive overview of schooling with "thick description" and local context. A study of schooling extends beyond mere intellectual history. Through an analysis of the skills, ideas, and behaviours that parents wished to transfer to their children (or that rulers wished to impose upon their subjects), we can obtain a clearer sense of the dominant concepts and values in a society. Thus an analysis of schooling provides a window into the collective *mentalités* of a society in any age.

In Chapter 1 this dissertation analyzes the efforts of the commune of Bergamo to instruct local youth by hiring renowned humanists, founding an independent college, conducting joint ventures with the bishop, and hiring religious orders of men as schoolmasters. In Chapter 2 it considers the myriad actions of lay confraternities, especially those of the Misericordia Maggiore, which founded schools, hired teachers, offered scholarships, and provided books. Chapter 3 focuses on schooling promoted by institutions of the Catholic Church, including Schools of Christian Doctrine, clerical academies, Jesuits and Somaschans, and the Seminary. Chapter 4 discusses parental efforts to educate their own children. Chapter 5 compares Bergamo's experience with those of Brescia, Vicenza, and Verona.

Readers of *Confraternitas* will find Chapter 2 of greater interest to them. It describes the multiple actions of lay confraternities in support of education in Bergamo from the fifteenth to the seventeenth century. Much of the chapter is devoted to exploring the role of the Misericordia Maggiore (MIA), Bergamo's largest, wealthiest, and most powerful charitable organization (Roisin Cossar's abstract in the Spring 1999 issue of *Confraternitas* discusses the structure,

membership, and activities of the Misericordia Maggiore in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries). Beginning in the fourteenth century, the MIA distributed scholarships to deserving students; by 1610 it had assisted hundreds of pupils to study grammar, rhetoric, law, theology, and medicine. The MIA also dispensed subsidies in kind (grain, clothing, firewood) to needy students, and also loaned books and provides housing for teachers. In 1506 the MIA established a day school to train aspiring priests, followed by a residential Academy of Clerics in 1566. In 1531 it founded a small residential college in Padua exclusively for Bergamasque students who wished to study at the university. In addition to the MIA, half a dozen other lay confraternities supported education by establishing neighbourhood schools and hiring teachers. The confraternities of S. Alessandro in Colonna, S. Alessandro della Croce, S. Lorenzo, and S. Spirito each contributed in diverse ways to the expansion of schooling in sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Bergamo.

This dissertation reveals the array of educational options that existed in Bergamo, as well as the surprising degree of cooperation among various institutions that promoted education. Confraternities worked closely with the commune and with the episcopate to encourage schooling for both lay and ecclesiastical students. It further shows that, with two important exceptions, Venice granted its subject cities a good deal of autonomy in local educational matters. Although schooling in Bergamo displayed certain idiosyncrasies, the city's educational network can serve as an example of educational resources available in many small and medium-sized provincial Italian cities during the Renaissance.

D'Andrea, David. *Civic Christianity in Fifteenth-Century Treviso: The Confraternity and Hospital of Santa Maria dei Battuti*. Ph.D. thesis, University of Virginia, May 1999. Supervisor, Professor Anne Jacobson Schutte. vii, 283 pp.

Fifteenth-century Italy constitutes one of the watersheds in western civilization: city-states became territorial empires, population growth and new learning transformed the urban landscape, and a new religious spirit changed the dynamic of civic life. This dissertation investigates these transformation by examining a confraternity and civic hospital in Treviso, the first city of the Venetian mainland empire. Treviso formed the essential link in Venice's chain of *terraferma* cities that transformed Venice from a trading power to a territorial state. Political and social policies established in Treviso formed a template for the Venetian empire, admired by all of Europe for its stability and longevity. At the same time that Venice was extending onto the mainland, religious changes were sweeping all of Italy. A new awareness of Christian responsibility for the present world was added to the traditional medieval emphasis on contemplation, asceticism, and penance. This new "civic Christianity" was the product of an urban society imbued with humanist learning, a society where civic leaders sought to honour God, their city, and their families through public charity and devotion.

Elites of Trevisan society did not cease political posturing once Venice had eliminated the power of communal bodies, and the confraternity of Santa Maria