

of women, and the age's conception of charity, among other issues. In short, this is a comprehensive and interdisciplinary work of research that will become soon a crucial reference in the field.

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La chiesa di San Giorgio a Montemerano. Arte, storia e fede. Eds. Cristina Gnoni Mavarelli, Ludovica Sebgondi, Ulisse Tramonti. Firenze: Edizioni della Meridiana, 2000. 175 pp., illustrations

This volume gives credence to the aphorism that good things come in small packages. It offers an enthrallingly enjoyable, detailed historical look at the church of San Giorgio, consecrated in 1430, in the town of Montemerano (Tuscany). Through the ages, some very prominent artists have contributed their talent to this church's decorations, including Sassetta, Lorenzo di Pietro (known as Vecchietta), and several artists of the *Scola senese*. The artwork itself consists of a surprisingly ample collection of paintings, murals, frescoes, stuccos, brass work, as well as carvings in wood, marble and stone. The volume is divided into two sections; the first consisting of four essays by Adorno della Monaca, Ulisse Tramonti, Ludovica Sebgondi, and Christina Gnoni Mavarelli, highlighting various aspects of the building's history; the second being a fine compilation of photographs of the church's artwork and artefacts.

The first essay, by Adorno della Monaca, begins with a reference to Marshall McLuhan's dictum that "the Medium is the Message", in order to highlight the fact that the Church, in order to propound its doctrine, has oftentimes had to change the media it uses so as to continue successfully to spread the word of God in a fashion that appeals to the varying sentiments of its public. Della Monaca discusses how this particular church very effectively employed various elements of mass appeal and how it applied widely recognized religious and secular iconography to its multi-media approach to religious pedagogy. Ulisse Tramonti then provides a fascinating and informative history of both the church and the town of Montemerano itself. Synthesizing archaeological and documental evidence, Tramonti presents a detailed analysis of the architectural history of San Giorgio from its inception to the 20th century. Ludovica Sebgondi supplies a very interesting and detailed chronology of the numerous renovations and restorations the church has undergone between 1382 (when it already carried the name of San Giorgio but was not yet consecrated as such), and 1999. She identifies Bartolomeo di Giovanni as the person to whom is owed the church's importance, magnificence and prominence amongst the churches of the Maremma. Sebgondi shows how Bartolomeo di Giovanni was solely responsible for bringing to the church the distinguishing honour of a pontifical consecration with elaborate ceremony that was rarely used, as well as being the primary instigator of the artistic tradition that sets San Giorgio apart from the rest of houses of worship in the Maremma. Her analysis is narrated in discursive fashion, containing many

items of added information that make reading her article both informative and pleasurable. Cristina Gnoni Mavarelli picks up where Sebreghondi left off, providing us with a final word on the restoration techniques, both good and bad, used in the past and how these techniques have impacted contemporary efforts to replenish fully the beauty of the various works of art. Mavarelli then delineates some of the contemporary restoration techniques used in San Giorgio and closes her article with an outline of the proposed curative projects for the coming years.

The photographs in the latter part of the volume are exquisitely prepared, with sharp, clear close-ups that bring into prominence the richness of the colours as well as the bold textures of the various art objects and artefacts. The excellence of the gloss (in English and German) and the commentaries that accompany each photograph accomplish their intended task of inspiring the reader to pay a first-hand visit to this church that is as small in size as it is large in historical religious significance.

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Pátková, Hana. *Bratrstvie ke cti božie. Poznámky ke kultovni činnosti bratrstev e cechů ve středověkých Čechách* (Praha: KLP, 2000) p. 213.

For a long time, Hana Pátková's research has revolved around the origins and activities of religious brotherhoods in Bohemia during the Middle Ages. Not only has Pátková published many articles on this topic, but also an impressive volume on Czech painters. We now have a monographic study from her that analyses the religious activities of brotherhoods and guilds in Bohemia during the Middle Ages. Pátková has limited her study geographically, concentrating only on the Bohemian lands, thereby excluding Morawskie and Śląskie brotherhood groups from her research interest.

Activities of the oldest brotherhood groups in Bohemia can be traced and documented in the sources from the 1330s onward. During this period, brotherhoods dedicated to the maintenance of a hospital located next to the Franciscan monastery in Prague, which soon gained the status of an independent red star Holy Cross monastery, have been noted. Other groups can be traced from the fourteenth century, which the author has set as a starting point for her research (the year 1520, on the other hand, corresponding to the beginning of the Reformation, has been selected as a *terminus ad quem*).

The purpose of Pátková's study is to investigate the religious activities of brotherhoods and guilds and to distinguish their principal forms of functioning. The author pays particular attention to the terminology associated with brotherhoods and guilds. Guilds are conceptualized as organizational corporations organized primarily by artisans who were involved with production and trade. The term "brotherhood" has been conceptualized, instead, as a more heterogeneous organization of members not limited to one particular type of profession nor to one