

Schmidt that is the most in-depth account of Girolamo di Benvenuto's career to date.¹ The latter lacuna is particularly grave, as Schmidt actually transcribed payment records for the Compagnia di San Girolamo frescoes and noted that the confraternity purchased a painted crucifix by Girolamo di Benvenuto in 1502.

Much more work remains to be done before we will understand better the career and *oeuvre* of Girolamo di Benvenuto. Fortunately, the discovery of this beautiful and well-documented series of frescoes should stimulate more interest in the painter and his ambient. Indeed, the fascinating images painted by Girolamo di Benvenuto in the oratory of the Compagnia di San Girolamo are likely to engage scholars interested in Renaissance art and religion for years to come.

Trinita Kennedy
New York University
New York, NY

L'archivio della Misericordia di Rapolano. Inventario della Sezione storica, ed. Doriano Mazzini. Siena: Edizioni Cantagalli, 1997. 58 pp.; *L'Oratorio della Misericordia di Rapolano Terme. Vicende storiche e artistiche*. Siena: Edizioni Cantagalli, 2000. 63 pp.; Mazzini, Doriano. *Gli statuti della Misericordia di Rapolano Terme*. Siena: Edizioni Cantagalli, 2002. 166 pp.

The Pia Confraternita della Misericordia in the Tuscan town of Rapolano Terme has recently published three volumes documenting its history, drawing the information from documents found in the archives of the town. The confraternity currently serves as volunteer centre providing emergency first aid and other social services for the less fortunate. The present sodality is an 1864 amalgamation of two previous confraternities, each with their own oratory: Santa Maria delle Nevi and San Sebastiano, both from Rapolano. The former was located within the city walls and the latter on the outside. Of the two, Santa Maria delle Nevi was more prominent since it possessed a fair amount of land.

The two earlier confraternities had been suppressed in 1785 when Grand duke Peter Leopold banned all such lay religious organizations. Their records and property were then surrendered to the diocese. When Peter Leopold returned to his native Vienna to assume the throne left vacant by the death of his older brother, the ban on confraternities was partially lifted. Two years later the two confraternities of Santa Maria delle Nevi and of San Sebastiano were once again re-established. However, having lost all their property, they were unable to rebuild on

a Siena agli inizi della reggenza lorenese: luoghi pii laicali, contrade e arti" *Annuario diocesano* (1996–1997), pp. 245–248. These studies also provide references to documents and early manuscript sources on the confraternity.

1 V. Schmidt, "Bemerkungen zu zwei toskanischen Tafelbildern der Renaissance im Stadel," *Stadel Jahrbuch* 16 (1997), pp. 207–226.

their own, so they agreed to unite under one confraternity called the Pia Confraternita della Misericordia Rapolano Terme. In the process of merging and rebuilding, the seat of the association was moved permanently to the oratory of Santa Maria delle Nevi, and the oratory of San Sebastiano was turned first into storage space, then into an office and finally into living space. The brief Napoleonic interlude in Italy again forced the closure of most confraternities, but this suppression also proved temporary. With the unification of Italy, the two confraternities were recognized as a single organization, which had been the case since some time before, and placed under the new legislation for charitable institutions (*Opere Pie*). Though the confraternity was now recognized by the State, it was kept under close surveillance. This last intervention by the State deprived the once wealthy *Pia* of all its estates, leaving it to devote itself completely to works of charity.

The first volume of the three volumes, *L'archivio della Misericordia di Rapolano. Inventario della Sezione storica* (1997) is a catalogue of all documents pertaining to the Misericordia found in the archives of Rapolano. The cataloguing was carried out by a group of volunteers starting in 1994 and sought to record all of the sacred property once belonging to the Confraternita della Misericordia. The catalogue was then published by Dorian Mazzini who used the documented sources for his research on the history of the confraternity. After a brief introduction there is a 36 page inventory of statutes from 1729 to 1993, debates of the administration from 1804 to 1957, a series of recorded duties and services for members and a list of correspondence from 1923 to 1959.

The second volume, *L'Oratorio della Misericordia Rapolano Terme. Vicende storiche e artistiche* (2000) focuses specifically on the oratory of Santa Maria delle Nevi. It begins with a series of introductory essays beginning with the confraternity's current role as a charitable institution but then goes back to examine the confraternity's history. Two essays by Maria Mangiavacchi and Dorian Mazzini seek to present the confraternity's history, pointing out its earlier duties in caring for invalids, alms giving and caring for the burial of the deceased. The second half of the volume consists of essays focusing on the interior of the oratory, giving detailed information on the artwork and artifacts it contains. This section is enriched by illustrations of some of the items.

The final and longest of the three volumes (2002) is dedicated entirely to the statutes of the Pia Confraternita. Dorian Mazzini provides an extensive study of the organization based upon various statutory sources from 1729 to 1993. Mazzini thus recreates the administrative history of the confraternity, offering a detailed description of its governing structures and procedures.

Although most of the documentation dates from the eighteenth century to the present, there are a few sources from earlier periods (15th to 17th centuries) that may interest scholars working on early modern religious organizations.