

lasted after his demise. The sin of blasphemy against the Virgin would have been particularly offensive given the fervent spirituality of the time. Cases of informal lynching for blasphemy may well have influenced and possibly intimidated the court into passing its harsh sentence on Rinaldeschi. In fact, records tell that Rinaldeschi himself feared the mob, preferring immediate execution to the possibility of mob lynching.

Connell and Constable note the differences between civil and religious law, with the Church tending to be more forgiving than the state. Although some jurists argued for the sentence of death for such crimes as gambling, blasphemy and attempted suicide, most recommended being more merciful. Roman law itself required two eyewitness accounts for a conviction—in Rinaldeschi's case there was only one. They note that in Florence the Eight of the Balìa was at that time flexing its muscles and testing its limits against the jurisdiction of the Podestà of Florence and other sources of power, and this case may have been chosen to set an example. Nevertheless, Rinaldeschi's obvious remorse, full confession and subsequent acceptance of his death give the impression of a martyr's death rather than the death of a criminal.

This impression is borne out by the painting itself. While it depicts devils influencing the drunken gambler to commit sacrilege, it depicts angels accompanying him at his death by hanging. Closely associated with this, the key figures depicted in the scenes of his confession and absolution are his comforters, in this case the Company of Blacks, members of a Florentine confraternity who attended criminals at their execution in order to support and comfort them in their final hours. The San Miniato Codex kept by the Company of Blacks recorded Antonio's case and is therefore one of the important sources both for the story of Rinaldeschi and for the role that this confraternity played in attempting to save the souls of convicted criminals and comfort them in their final moments.

This extensively researched and well-written book examines the case of Antonio Rinaldeschi from a variety of perspectives, thus providing the general reader with a profound and fascinating insight into this case. Scholars of early modern confraternities will be especially interested in the volume's description and discussion of the comforting ritual that attended the unfortunate victim of Florence's justice.

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David M. D'Andrea. *Civic Christianity in Renaissance Italy. The Hospital of Treviso, 1400–1530*. Rochester, NY: University of Rochester Press, 2007. Pp. xiii, 214, b/w images. ISBN 978-1-58046-239-1. US\$ 75

Studies of brotherhoods and confraternities in Medieval and Renaissance Italy are becoming a not secondary part of scholarly examinations of this historical period. David M. D'Andrea's book on a confraternity in Treviso, a city just north

of Venice, joins this collection in an effective and brilliant way, contributing an important piece to the mosaic that is Renaissance Italian devotional, charitable, and social life.

After reviewing the most recent and important contributions to our understanding of religious life in Renaissance Italy, and the consequential importance of confraternities and brotherhoods to that life (see the book's Introduction and notes), the author outlines his field of research and his 'leading' guide—the historian Brian S. Pullan who, in fact, is at the basis of D'Andrea's interest in the Venetian republic and its charitable institutions. As the author acknowledges early in his book, "the idea of studying religion, charity, and political subjugation in the Veneto came from one of Pullan's observations that the efficient and successful system of charity in Venice [based on the *Scuole Grandi*, the most important Venetian religious brotherhoods] was not exported outside the lagoon. Subject cities were left to make their own provisions—which he leaves to others to explore" (5). D'Andrea thus investigates Treviso's largest confraternity (*Santa Maria dei Battuti*) and its hospital, certain that this present study "will make a significant contribution to our understanding of charity on the Venetian *Terraferma*" (6), which it does. Pullan's theory about the rulers of Venice—a small minority of men able to govern for centuries a city of thousands and thousands inhabitants without any substantial political and social problems—was in part connected to the charitable initiatives of the *Scuole Grandi*. D'Andrea proposes that the same phenomenon observed in Venice "also functioned in the relationship between a ruling and a subject city, where local elites turned to confraternities and charitable organizations as surrogates for direct political power" (6). D'Andrea points out that this did not apply only to Venice and the Veneto, but could be found elsewhere in the peninsula—and here he points to Nicholas Terpstra's studies of Bologna's confraternities in the sixteenth century.

Treviso was a crucial town and territory for the Venetian republic, so the *Serenissima* imposed strict political as well as religious control over the town and its population. As D'Andrea points out, "we still lack a monograph that examines this crucial piece of Venice's mainland state" (7); nonetheless, an examination of the "history of Treviso's largest confraternity and its hospital will make a significant contribution to our understanding of charity on the Venetian *Terraferma* and the development of territorial states" (6). What the book brings to our attention, and to the historiography of Renaissance Italy, is the fact that although the highest political and ecclesiastical structures of Treviso were firmly in the hands of Venice, "the local Trevisan elite turned to its pre-eminent civic institution, the confraternity of *Santa Maria dei Battuti* ... And it is the study of this hospital that offers a new perspective on Christianity and the Renaissance state" (10). The local nexus among charity, confraternity, and civil government in Treviso sought to maintain a local identity within an integrated, larger political entity.

Along with a brilliant and well focused review of the current re-appraisal of the impact of religion in the Renaissance, the author uses a wide range of documents,

from Treviso's and Venice's secular and ecclesiastic archives, together with other sources, to illustrate and analyze, with rigorous scholarship, the life and impact of the local confraternity hospital on Treviso.

The first chapter is emblematically entitled "The city of God" and opens with a quotation from Girolamo Savonarola: "The tyrant ... prohibits congregations and assemblies, so that men will not form friendships among themselves, out of fear that they will conspire against them". This observation is followed by a comment by a seventeenth-century Trevisan chronicler, Domenico Vettorazzi, who says that "Having seen in the growth of the Great Hospital, the creation of a new city built on religious mercy, which one could call the City of God, the universal Council of the City of Treviso resolved with a generous spirit to leave it free; thus having an independent Government, the hospital enjoyed in civil liberty the prerogatives equal to its noble purpose" (13). So, the Battuti "acted as a surrogate for local political power in the city" (*ivi*). In this first chapter D'Andrea outlines the history of the confraternity of the Battuti from its foundation during the flagellant movement of the 1260s, through the middle of the fifteenth century when the "hospital had emerged as a minicommune within the city". The second chapter ("The Confraternal Family") explores the organization of the confraternity, its social composition, and the duties required of its members. Membership in the confraternity crossed various social and economic classes and included both men and women. However, although the Battuti "were a mixed-gender confraternity", the leadership was firmly in the hands of an elite of lay men, an elite which reproduced, within the confraternity, the political power which had been stripped from them by the Venetian domination. Chapters 3 to 5 (3, "The Bonds and Bounds of Charity"; 4, "Medical Care and Public Health"; 5, "Instruction for This Life and Next") examine the various activities and services provided to the community by the hospital and the confraternity, from health care to religious training. The sixth and last chapter ("Crisis and Reform") analyzes the crisis that struck the confraternity during the sixteenth century, the investigations carried on by the Doge Andrea Gritti (r. 1523–38) and the issues related to this internal crisis, although "the loyalty of Treviso saved the Venetian territorial state, and Venetian supervision protected the integrity of local institutions" (12). In the final chapter the author discusses the role of the confraternity during the Renaissance from a wider and more general point of view "with an emphasis on its role as a surrogate for direct political sovereignty" while Venice, concerned with maintaining stability in its realm, "respected the confraternity".

While exploring the life of this confraternity from the 1400s to 1530s, D'Andrea also provides a strong, as well as brilliant and updated, vision of the state during the Renaissance and of the role of confraternities within that state. As a result, his book takes its rightful place in the roster of the recent well documented and innovative studies on Italian confraternities, all the while setting this analysis within a wider historical perspective (the history of the Venetian empire and its territories) and this

is, among its other credits, one of the most important and interesting achievements of this work.

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*Il Laudario Assisano 36 (dall'Archivio di San Rufino). Edizione critica, note linguistiche e filologiche, appendici, indici*, ed. Maurizio Perugi and Gina Scentoni. Perugia-Assisi: Deputazione di storia patria per l'Umbria / Accademia Properziana del Subasio, 2007. Pp. liii, 532, ill. 14. ISBN 978-88-95331-02-7.

The flagellant confraternity of Santo Stefano of Assisi, founded in 1324, has left us a rich corpus of documents that are currently housed in the Archivio di San Rufino in Assisi. Among them, the confraternity's statutes, datable to the early 1320s, are an important document for the history of confraternities in Umbria—in fact, they quickly became a sort of model for those of other confraternities in the area, such as the confraternity of San Lorenzo in Assisi or of the SS. Crocifisso in Gubbio. Not surprisingly, these statutes have recently been the object of various studies. Aside from this fundamental text, the confraternity has also left us an *Ordo ad faciendam penitentiam* datable perhaps to before 1329 that describes the flagellation ritual as carried out by the brothers in their private oratory. We also have the confraternity's membership rolls (*matricole*), prayers, account books, inventories, and two collections of *laude*: the Laudario Assisano 36, which is the subject of the current publication, and the Laudario "Illuminati" transcribed by Angela Maria Terruggia but not yet published.

The current volume is a careful and integral edition of five "fragments" bound in a single volume now at the Archivio Capitolare di S. Rufino in Assisi (ms. 36/A), partly in paper and partly in vellum, datable between the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. The "fragments" contain poetic and dramatic *laude*, mostly unpublished. The first "fragment" (ms. As<sup>1</sup>) contains three dramatic *laude* from Perugia. The second (ms. As<sup>2</sup>) contains seven *laude* "Pro defunctis", mostly from the Assisi tradition, that have already been published in 1925 by A. Del Pozzo in the *Giornale storico della letteratura italiana*. The third "fragment" (ms. As<sup>3</sup>) contains five more *laude* in the Assisi tradition. And the fourth, (ms. As<sup>4</sup>), compiled by Luca di Ercolano, a canon of S. Rufino sometime after 1381, contains 58 *laude* arranged according to the liturgical calendar; these are mostly dramatic *laude* and are similar to those produced by the flagellant brotherhoods of Perugia. The fifth "fragment" (ms. As<sup>5</sup>) contains several *laude* for the deceased composed in the fifteenth century.

There is no need to underline the importance of such fundamentally important editorial work, useful not only for the history of religion, devotions and confraternities, but also for the history of language, literature, and theatre. The two editors of the current volume are to be highly commended for their high scholarly