

examines the statutes of the confraternity of San Rocco, drawn up along the lines of the 1468 statutes of the Paduan confraternity by the same name, and the confraternity's prayer book (125-138). After a brief conclusion (139-144), two appendices present the statutes of both the Padua and the Villa del Bosco confraternities of San Rocco—typeset in parallel columns to facilitate a comparative study—(145-162), as well as a chart outlining the saints to whom confraternities appealed for intercession (163-168). An extensive index of names and subjects concludes the volume (169-184).

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Life and Death in Fifteenth-Century Florence. Eds. Marcel Tetel, Ronald G. Witt and Rona Goffen (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 1989), xiv, 254 pp., illustrations [for a complete list of contents see below under Publications Received]

The ten essays in this collection were first presented at a conference held at Duke University in October 1986. The purpose of the conference was to examine the effect on fifteenth-century Florentine life and culture of the fifty preceding years of the Black death. The demographic tragedy of the plague created a severe economic contraction which, according to Ronald G. Witt in his preface to the collection, slowed social mobility and accentuated class distinctions. In Florence, the relative political stability which followed encouraged the bureaucratization of daily life, one example of which was the newly instituted practice of recording deaths and births. From primarily historical, art-historical, and literary perspectives, the essays in this collection examine a culture in which, they argue, the experience of death was a major shaping influence.

The collection opens with Alberto Tenenti's survey of the changing role accorded death as an historical force in the

writings of Florentine historians from 1350-1550. The analysis of contemporary views continues with Salvatore I. Camporeale's examination of the writings of the Dominican Giovanni Caroli, which present an insider's view of the crisis of monasticism. Medical historian Ann G. Carmichael offers an interesting study of the health status of Renaissance Italians, concentrating on non-plague illness. Beginning with a case study of the Medici family and moving to the detailed records of morbidity available in Milan, Carmichael demonstrates the high incidence of chronic illness among younger and middle-aged adults and concludes that tuberculosis was a major killer.

Moving from historical to more literary methodologies, William J. Kennedy offers a new historicist reading of the poetry of Lorenzo de' Medici, exploring Lorenzo's use of the Petrarchan mode to reflect and reinforce his own political agenda. John McManamon surveys contemporary funeral oratory, drawing out the shifts in emphasis in its underlying program of humanist goals and values. And Donald Weinstein looks at popular religious attitudes, contrasting the theological complexity of Savanarola's Latin works with his vernacular sermons and questioning the extent to which the simplicity of the latter did full justice to lay piety.

The only paper in the collection devoted explicitly to confraternities is Cyrilla Barr's study of the singing confraternity the Company of St. Agnes. Using the detailed inventory of confraternity possessions put together by its *sindaco*, the artist Neri di Bicci, Barr provides a detailed sketch of possible "performance practices" in the confraternity functions of burying their dead and singing *laude*. Like other *laudesi*, the Company of St. Agnes was exempt from the sumptuary laws governing burials, and Barr traces the increasingly public nature of the Company's activities which this exemption encouraged. Of related interest is Sharon T. Strocchia's investigation of issues concerning family relations, status, and honour raised by burial rites; her study is based on descriptions of funerals in diaries, household account books, and the sumptuary licenses sold by the commune.

The collection concludes with two art history papers. Sarah Blake McHam examines the political meaning and influence of Donatello's monumental tomb of Pope John XXIII in the Florentine Baptistry, and Creighton Gilbert explicates the humanist iconography of a Castagno fresco cycle in a villa near Florence.

The collection is provided with a general index.

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Luisa Proietti Pedetta, *Le confraternite di Assisi tra Riforma e declino (secc. XVI-XVII)* (Assisi: Accademia Properziana del Subasio, 1990), 216 pp., illustrations.

This is the second volume in a projected three-volume study of the confraternities of Assisi. The volume discusses the socio-religious aspects of Assisi confraternities from the time of their efflorescence after the Council of Trent to their decline in the eighteenth century, with special reference to the impact of the politico-historical environment in which they thrived and waned.

After some informative introductory remarks by Salvatore Vivona (pp. 7-8), a "Presentazione" by Rita Chiachella (9-11), and the author's own introduction (13-16), the reader is presented with Part I, "Le confraternite di Assisi in età moderna (secc. XVI-XVII)", which presents the author's own historical investigations. This first section is divided into four chapters and enriched with many plates of the confraternities' rich artistic patrimony as well as with tables pertaining to various aspects of their administration. The first chapter, which deals with Assisi under the rule of the Papal States, investigates the local context (21-29), and the area's rural geography (29-36). The second chapter focuses on the activities of the confraternities during their periods of relative autonomy and on the intervention of the Bishop, Filippo Geri. The intercessions of the Bishop and the