

other religious processions, can be traced to the imitation of the great wooden sculptures imported from Venice and Naples. Although they represent a unique regional cultural heritage, amidst the great artistic patrimony of Italy they are often relegated to second class status. Their importance to Pugliese confraternities, however, is indisputable and the photographs of these figures, in particular that of the dead Christ on p. 176, are a haunting reminder of the religious devotion out of which the confraternity movement was born.

Margherita Latorre's closing essay "I restauri" (The restorations) provides a ray of hope consistent with the Pio Monte's faith in the restorative power of Purgatory. The detailed account of the continuing efforts to repair the damages of water, insects, time, and neglect in an effort to restore the church to its Baroque glory suggests that the role of confraternities may be changing. Its new role as guardian of the past may breathe new life into an organization whose membership over the past decades has been waning considerably. The combined efforts of its members to preserve a part of their history echoes what Tiziana Luisi called "committenza confraternale" and may revive the confraternity's sense of social relevance.

The purpose of this book is not, however, to speculate about the future of lay societies, but rather to document one particular case of lay religious association and trace its evolution in all of its dimensions. Accordingly, the appendices include the original enabling legislation, the statutes of the confraternity, the statutes of the "Consorelle della Vergine dei Sette Dolori" (The Sisters of the Virgin of the Seven Sorrows), the sister society of the Pio Monte, the Diocesan statutes of the confraternity, lists of the brothers and sisters of the Pio Monte, and an index of notable names, places, and subjects. This volume will be an invaluable research tool and source document for anyone interested not only in the Pugliese variant of confraternal association but also in studying the activities, organization, and evolution of a confraternity that spans three centuries.

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Eisenbichler, Konrad. *The Boys of the Archangel Raphael: A Youth Confraternity in Florence, 1411–1785*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1998. 474 pp, illustrations.

This richly documented study by Konrad Eisenbichler is a significant contribution to a number of scholarly fields. In the first place, it helps to fill the significant gap in narrative descriptions in English of confraternity life. Eisenbichler's choice of subject, the Compagnia dell'Arcangelo Raffaello in Florence, with its impressive membership, theatrical performances, and artistic possessions, is a particularly rich subject for such a study. Furthermore, by examining a lay religious organization for the young, he addresses many questions of interest to those studying children and youths in early modern Europe. Finally, Eisenbichler's interdisciplinary approach

allows him to place the Arcangelo Raffaello and its young members in a variety of civic, religious, cultural and social contexts, thus giving a remarkably complete picture of what it was like to be a young person in Medicean Florence.

Before proceeding with the narrative history of the Arcangelo Raffaello, Eisenbichler provides a discussion of the recent historiography of confraternity studies. Founded in 1411 by an anonymous Florentine *battiloro*, or gold-leaf worker, the Compagnia dell'Arcangelo Raffaello (sometimes described in documents as the Compagnia della Scala or Compagnia della Natività) was originally intended to be a confraternity for male youths aged thirteen to twenty-four, with only two adults, the guardian father and the father corrector, involved in its operations; however, over the years, the average age of the brothers increased. The confraternity quickly gained papal approval, in 1430 and grew in status and membership to become the confraternity of the elite, counting Grand Duke Cosimo II and his Medici descendants as members. Eisenbichler pinpoints three phases of the confraternity's development: from its establishment in 1411 to the loss of its rooms and oratory on the Via della Scala in 1529; the move to Piazza Santa Maria Novella and the Arcangelo Raffaello's subsequent rebirth and prosperity in the sixteenth century; and a slow decline in interest and membership, culminating in the confraternity's suppression by grand-ducal decree in 1785. Interwoven into the narrative history are individual chapters addressing thematic subjects such as recreation, theatre, art, membership, and religious observance.

Eisenbichler's own research has concentrated in part on the pageantry of confraternity life, and he dedicates much of *The Boys of the Archangel Raphael* to discussions of the processions and musical and theatrical performances given by its members. According to the author, these theatrical performances began as recreation for the young men, but post-Tridentine reforms and other forces caused a shift in emphasis from activities designed by its young members for the edification and education of a young Christian soul to performances created by elders specifically for theatrical and public display.

In his narrative, Eisenbichler places a great deal of emphasis on certain key events in the confraternity's history. For instance, Christine of Lorraine, wife of Grand Duke Ferdinand I de' Medici, was so impressed by her visits to the Arcangelo Raffaello in 1590 and 1591 that she enrolled her seven-month son Cosimo II in the confraternity. The event was certainly significant, for although Cosimo II does not appear to have attended confraternity events, his presence on the roster attracted other scions of the civic elite, which in turn increased membership in, and patronage of, the Arcangelo Raffaello. The emphasis on this incident does become somewhat repetitive, although such repetition is perhaps necessary as a result of the partially thematic structure of the book, which enables the same incident to be viewed variously through political, cultural and religious lenses.

The descriptions and illustrations in the book are well chosen and give added insight into the life of the confraternity. The detailed discussion of the facade and the lavishly decorated rooms of the building on Piazza Santa Maria Novella are especially notable (pp. 58–70). Maps depict the Via della Scala and Piazza Santa

Maria Novella locations from the sixteenth to the eighteenth centuries. Previously unpublished watercolours of the confraternity insignia, the Archangel Raphael with Tobias, are reproduced from the confraternity's *ricordi*, or record books, while an example of the lush illumination of the Arcangelo Raffaello's statute books is provided through a seventeenth-century drawing by Valerio Spada. The appendix consists of rosters of the two adult administrators of the confraternity; a list of the chapel masters; the musical and theatrical performances performed by the confraternity; and the works of art held by the Arcangelo Raffaello.

In short, *The Boys of the Archangel Raphael* is an informative, engaging and often witty read for specialists in confraternity studies and non-specialists alike. Eisenbichler has set a high standard for future historians of confraternities.

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Storia della Chiesa di Bologna, ed. Paolo Prodi and Lorenzo Paolini. 2 vols. Istituto per la storia della Chiesa di Bologna. Bologna: Edizioni Bolis, 1997. xiii, 402, 670 pp., ill.

This two-volume work focuses on the history of the Church in Bologna from late antiquity to the present and includes a substantial collection of essays in various disciplines. The illustrations are excellently reproduced, very informative, and could be considered one of the salient features of the work. The two-volume format allows for a difference in approach to the extensive subject matter; more specifically, the second volume narrows the wider perspective laid out in the first.

The purpose of the first volume is to prepare the historical field of analysis, provide the necessary information, and trace the history of the Bolognese Church over times. There are articles by Amedeo Benati on the Bolognese Church from its beginnings to the High Middle Ages, by Augusto Vasina for the 12–15th centuries, Umberto Mazzone for the 16th century to Napoleon's rule, and by Giuseppe Battelli for the 19–20th centuries. Vasina's essay illustrates how Bologna grew and expanded her territory during the Middle Ages up to the year 1400. This was primarily an urban growth that resulted in economic growth and consequently favoured the expansion of the Church and, especially, of the diocese. Along the same line, Mazzone points out how Marian confraternities flourished from 1500 on, and how belonging to a confraternity was a sign of distinction and a re-affirmation of social status. Both articles also parallel the history of the Church with the political history of Bologna, clarifying many points of intimate connection between the Church and Bologna's oligarchic government. The chronological approach followed by the two authors is summarized in three appendices, the first on the organization of the diocese from the Middle Ages to the 20th century, the second is a list of the city's bishops, and the third a point-form schema of the principal moments in the history of the Church and the city.