

Arciconfraternite e confraternite. La società cristiana a Roma e in Italia dalla riforma ai giorni nostri, ed. Antonello Lazzerini. Roma: Opera Madonna del Divino Amore Seconda, 1998. CD-ROM with 95 pp. booklet. L. 99,000.

Produced in time for the 2000 Jubilee, *Arciconfraternite e confraternite* is a multimedia CD-ROM that presents a visually striking history of the twenty-four confraternities and aggregates that currently operate in Italy. Computer-savvy scholars will find this programme, designed by and for experts in the field of Italian confraternity studies, a well-researched and valuable resource.

After a brief introduction, the CD-ROM presents a 1984 sermon given by John Paul II in St. Peter's in honour of the International Jubilee of the Confraternity. The user is then greeted with a map of Italy and is invited to explore one of four regions, each of which breaks down into subcategories of confraternities. Most confraternities give a history, bibliography and a photo essay, and some provide a list of aggregates (as in the Arciconfraternita della SS.ma Trinità dei Pellegrini e Convalescenti in Rome) or a discussion of their activities to the present day (as in the Confederazione Nazionale Misericordie d'Italia in Florence). Scholars of confraternity studies will appreciate text versions of many confraternal statutes; there are also useful historical essays on each of the confraternities featured in the programme, conveniently reproduced in the 95 pp. booklet accompanying the CD-ROM. The photo essays contain impressive images including crucifixes, garments, indulgences, paintings, and city maps as well as interiors and floor plans of confraternal spaces. While the user is enjoying this feast of visual imagery, he or she is treated to one of eleven segments of accompanying sacred music.

While visually and aurally impressive, this CD-ROM is not very user-friendly, and this makes it difficult to access information quickly. This reviewer would have appreciated either a table of contents or a map of what the programme has to offer. It is difficult to manoeuvre about the various modules, as often one must pass the computer mouse over a specific area to realize that one can click on it and go further; this is the case for accessing the photo essays, for example. Also, the main pull-down menu provides a full bibliography of confraternity sources, but the background colour obscures the text and makes reading the menu an exercise in palaeography. These are, however, design and not content problems.

The packaging of *Arciconfraternite e confraternite* proudly proclaims that it is "il primo prodotto culturale per il Giubileo" (the first cultural product of the 2000 Jubilee). Perhaps, then, the best way to approach this CD-ROM is as a pilgrim, certain of the destination but unsure of the path to be followed. In short, one must be open to all the twists and turns of the road while enjoying the sights and sounds of this absorbing journey.

Laura E. Hunt
Centre for Medieval Studies
University of Toronto