bibliografici che non solo agevolano la comprensione del testo ai principianti, ma forniscono numerosi e utilissimi riferimenti anche ai lettori più informati. Questo lavoro attento e sensibile di annotazione testimonia con chiarezza la cultura del curatore e la sua profonda conoscenza della critica riguardante il *Ninfale* in particolare e l'opera del Boccaccio in genere. Si è certi quindi che questa edizione del *Ninfale* ne renderà la lettura più accessibile ad un vasto pubblico di studenti e di studiosi, e si crede anche che essa rivalorizzi l'interesse della critica, per la verità già sveglio, sul Boccaccio cosiddetto minore.

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Crossing the Boundaries: Christian Piety and the Arts in Medieval and Renaissance Confraternities. Ed. Konrad Eisenbichler. Kalamazoo, (MI): Medieval Institute Publications, 1991. Pp. x, 274. With illustrations.

The twelve articles in this volume were presented at a conference on confraternities held at Victoria College, University of Toronto, in April 1989. Of the twenty-four papers presented at that conference nine were published in 1989 in *Renaissance and Reformation* (25.1), under the title *Ritual and Recreation in Renaissance Confraternities*. With the publication of the ones reviewed here only three remain to be published, and this will be done by their authors separately elsewhere (8).

As is to be expected in a compilation of conference papers these offerings are of uneven quality, interest, and usefulness. In the introduction the editor does an excellent job of tying together the various contributions. He points out qualities in, and contributions of some of the articles that are not otherwise readily apparent.

There are some chapters which most readers will find both readable and significant: Cyrilla Barr, "From *Devozione* to *Rappresentazione*: Dramatic Elements in the Holy Week *Laude* of Assisi," examines the origins of religious drama as she traces the transformation of Marian laments from acts of piety to entertainment. Kathleen Falvey's "Early Italian Dramatic Traditions and Comforting Rituals: Some Initial Considerations" also examines the boundaries between devotion and entertainment. It is well suited to the undergraduate and non-specialist. Jonathan E. Glixon, "Music and Ceremony at the *Scuola Grande di San Giovanni Evangelista*: a New Document from the Venetian State Archives," also earns good grades for clarity as he fills in gaps in the knowledge of the employment of music in a Venetian confraternity.

Edmond Strainchamps, "Music in a Florentine Confraternity: The Memorial Madrigals for Jacopo Corsi in the Company of the Archangel Raphael" has a long title for a short article. Nevertheless the piece is significant in that it focuses on a useful new discovery, the madrigals composed and performed in commemoration of Corsi's service to music.

Nicholas Terpstra, "Death and Dying in Renaissance Confraternities," grabs the reader's attention with a graphic reference to the activities surrounding the death bed of Eliseo Mamelini in Bologna in 1531: "Eliseo Mamelini was slipping fast. Struck by fever, and conscious of his approaching death, the sixty-nine year old notary called on family and friends for assistance. His sons knelt around the bedside to recite prayers and psalms and to receive a blessing 'like that which Isaac had given to his children'"

(179). Unfortunately the material following lacks the graphic qualities of the initial attention-attracting paragraph.

Presenting clear and readable arguments are four additional papers. Ronald F.E. Weissman's "Cults and Contests: In Search of the Renaissance Confraternity" concludes that sociability must receive as much weight as theology as a motive for the formation of confraternities. Olga Pugliese's "The Good Works of the Florentine *Buonomini di San Martino*: An Example of Renaissance Pragmatism" considers help extended to the "shame-faced poor," i.e. middle class craftsmen and workers fallen on hard times. Jean S. Weisz in "*Caritas/Controriforma*: The Changing Role of a Confraternity's Ritual" traces the movement of one confraternity from acts of full charity to involvement with the Inquisition; and Barbara Wisch's "The Passion of Christ in the Art, Theater, and Penitential Rituals of the Roman Confraternity of the Gonfalone" illustrates the changes of that group's devotion to the point where "the cult of the suffering Christ reached equal status with the cult of the Virgin, the confraternity's original dedication" (253).

The significance of the three remaining articles is less apparent. Nerida Newbigin, in "*Cene and Cenacoli in the Ascension and Pentecost Companies of Fifteenth Century Florence*" (which abounds with untranslated terms), considers the development and subsequent expiration of communal meals and religious drama in two confraternities. Ellen Schiferl's "Italian Confraternity Art Contracts" concludes that confraternity patronage was predominantly corporate in character; and Ludovica Sebgondi, "Religious Furnishings and Devotional Objects in Renaissance Florentine Confraternities," describes some of the objects and furnishings characteristic of fifteenth- and sixteenth-century Florentine confraternity life.

Most of these authors give no English rendering of some key words, phrases, sentences, and even whole paragraphs, apparently on the assumption that everyone interested in what they have written will be familiar with the Italian language. The small additional effort involved in translating these words would unlock this information to a much wider non-specialist audience. However, in spite of this problem, this volume is a useful contribution to the scholarship of the Italian Renaissance.

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Marzia Minutelli. "*La Miracolosa Aqua*". *Lettura delle Porretane Novelle*. Firenze: Olschki, 1990. Pp. 263.

This book examines *Le Porretane* by Giovanni Sabadino degli Arienti from various aspects and relates the work not only to the Bolognese situation but also to the tradition of short stories from the *Decameron* to the sixteenth century. Minutelli points out that *Le Porretane* is the first and only collection to be set completely at baths. Biographical and historical contingencies of the time combined to make Sabadino's choice fall on the baths of Porretta, not least, the memories of the "casa Arienti." In the *Lettera dedicatoria*, Sabadino writes that "una nobilissima e graziosa compagnia de omini e donne" had gone there "a sumere la miracolosa aqua del famoso bagno." Other writers had described baths; for example, Floriano Dolfo had dealt with Porretta. Sabadino recreates a happy time, when men such as Bargellini and Refrigerio lived in peace