ing a resurgence of the Dante-cult.

This well researched and documented collection with a special emphasis on Canadian content fully achieves the goal of showing Dante's influence on the visual media of cinema and television, thereby demonstrating that, despite the chronological gap between Medieval Dante and the visually and technologically inclined audiences of the modern days, the cult of Dante and Dantemania continue to grow and will likely thrive in the virtual media as well.

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Louise, Bourdua. *The Franciscans and Art Patronage in Late Medieval Italy*. Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press in association with The British School at Rome, 2004. xiv, 242pp.; 74 b/w illustrations. ISBN: 0-521-82158-4. \$75 US.

In this well-researched book, Louise Bourdua examines the complex and multi-faceted ways in which Franciscan friars interacted with artists and with lay patrons or benefactors in the artistic embellishment of their churches during the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries.

St. Francis of Assisi himself espoused and embodied the ideals of poverty and simplicity, so it is not surprising that the Constitutions of the Franciscans forbade the handling of money by friars. Very quickly, however, strong tensions developed between these ideals and the need for large churches for preaching and the celebration of mass, not to mention the commissioning of rich and expensive works of painting and sculpture to decorate them and to educate the faithful. One of Bourdua's main interests is the ways in which the Franciscans managed to circumvent the strictures against actually handling money and how they became involved to varying degrees in the management of decorative cycles in their churches.

The book's introduction includes a useful outline of the literature on Franciscan patronage and the developments in Franciscan iconography from about 1250 to 1400. An important area of inquiry over the past thirty years has been the extent to which the Franciscans deliberately used wall paintings as propaganda for the Order. Bourdua reviews in some detail the argument made by Dieter Blume (*Waldmalerei als Ordenspropaganda*, 1983) that the frescoes in the Order's mother church, San Francesco at Assisi, became the dominant models for all other Franciscan churches, and that the mother church actually controlled the painted decoration of other churches so as to provide a consistent image of St. Francis and of the Order itself. The second major aspect of Bourdua's book is a critique of Blume's proposal by testing his findings against the churches whose decoration forms the core of her study. These are three important churches in the Veneto: San Fermo Maggiore in Verona, San Lorenzo in Vicenza, and the basilica of Sant'Antonio (the Santo) in Padua. The churches are chosen in part because of the wealth of surviving archival documentation and in part because focusing on

the Veneto allows the author to avoid becoming entangled in the issues of dating and attribution that plague studies of Franciscan artistic cycles in Umbria and Tuscany, especially at San Francesco in Assisi and Santa Croce in Florence.

Chapter 1 provides a useful review of the history of the settlement of the Franciscan Order in the Veneto and, even more importantly, a review of attempts made in the first century of the Order's existence to help it overcome the poverty rule. In 1230, only two years after the death of Francis, Pope Gregory IX outlined a compromise in his bull, *Quo elongati*, which allowed the Franciscans to use the property they received from benefactors without actually owning the property themselves. Though the mechanics of this arrangement underwent a few changes, the compromise remained essentially in place until 1322 when Pope John XXII (in *Ad conditorem canonum*) denied the distinction between use and ownership and decreed that Franciscans could now own goods, though they still were not allowed to touch money. Over time individual friars were allowed to enter the Order with some possessions; they were allowed to accept small gifts; they were permitted to accept legacies in the name of the Order; and they could receive financial compensation for serving as executors. This background is particularly important, as Bourdua's remaining chapters grapple with the question of whether individual Franciscans could themselves be benefactors and artistic patrons.

The nave frescoes of San Fermo Maggiore in Verona are the subject of Chapter 2. This church, dedicated to a martyr whose relics had been translated to Verona, initially belonged to the Benedictines, but the Franciscans gained control of it in the mid-thirteenth century. By 1350 the church had been newly decorated with frescoes on typical Franciscan themes, including a cycle of the life of St. Francis whose similarities to the scenes in the upper church of San Francesco at Assisi formed part of Blume's argument for the intervention of the mother church in all subsequent Franciscan churches. Bourdua argues, instead, that the similarities between the two cycles are distant (especially stylistically) and can be explained by the reliance of both cycles on Bonaventure's life of Francis, the *Legenda Maior*, and that the Verona frescoes include two scenes not present in Assisi. As the frescoes at San Fermo Maggiore are not well known, it is helpful for readers that several black and white illustrations of them are included in the volume. Unfortunately, some of the photographs are slightly blurry, leading one to wish that the printer could have done something about the poor contrast in order to make the scenes more legible. A lack of documents means that Bourdua is left to speculate concerning the precise extent to which the decorations were influenced by the lay patron, Guglielmo Castelbarco, and by Fra Daniele Gusmerio, both of whose frescoed donor portraits are displayed prominently on the triumphal arch. On the other hand, their very prominence argues that the decoration of the church reflects at least to some extent their own interests and those of the local congregation.

Fortunately the artistic projects for the two churches examined in the following chapters have extensive archival documentation, which Bourdua examines closely. Chapter 3 follows the interesting records of the creation of the stone portal for the church of San Lorenzo in Vicenza by the Venetian sculptor Andriolo de Santi from 1342–5. In this case, the archival records reveal that the Franciscan friar

Pace da Lugo acted as the administrator of the project, paid for by a bequest in the will of Pietro da Marano (whose portrait is included on the portal's tympanum). Because Marano was a Venetian citizen, the procurators of San Marco oversaw the distribution of the allocated funds. Pace drew up lists of expenses, which were taken to Venice by the sculptor Andriolo. The procurators released funds to Andriolo, who then brought them to Vicenza. These elaborate arrangements were presumably made to enable Fra Pace to avoid traveling and handling money, and yet he was effectively in charge of the administration of the entire project. The documents also reveal the interesting fact that one of the friars, Brother Nicolò, actually executed some of the relief sculpture and was paid for his work. Archival documents can be frustrating when they fail to tell us the sort of detail that we most achingly wish to know—such as, who was in fact responsible for the design and iconography of the portal? However, Bourdua argues convincingly that the models for the portal were local (including tomb monuments, Giotto's frescoes in Padua, and relief decorations from San Marco in Venice). Clearly, whatever the precise nature of their involvement, the friars at Vicenza, the patron, and the chief sculptor all acted quite independently of the mother church in Assisi.

The fourth chapter studies the lay patronage of chapels at the basilica of the Santo in Padua, showing that here the friars were more interested in the formalities of administering endowments than with the actual decoration of the chapels. Bourdua begins with a history of the transformation of the church into a massive pilgrimage basilica and the relationship of the Franciscan friars at the Santo with the commune of Padua, which provided annual funding for the fabric of the church. She then examines the documentation for the endowment of three chapels in and adjacent to the church, finding that the friars had certain expectations of the families who had rights of single usage to the chapels (for example, that they must provide all the necessary equipment for the mass), but that they seem to have had little involvement with the distribution of funds to the artists employed. Likewise, an analysis of the visual evidence of the frescoes suggests that the friars had little interest in the subjects chosen or the manner in which they were painted; it was the lay patrons, instead, who seem to have exercised considerable control over the decoration. The contract for the decoration of the Chapel of San Giacomo, for example, indicates that the Franciscans were mainly concerned that the chapel match its surroundings, including the Chapel of Sant'Antonio that stood opposite it. The paintings by Altichiero, from the life and miracles of St. James the Greater, reflect almost solely the interests of the patrons, Bonifacio Lupi and his wife, Caterina dei Francesi, whose portraits and those of their friends and allies are liberally sprinkled throughout. The family focused, unusually, on the tribulations of St. James caused by a wicked queen named Lupa, who later converted and (like the Lupi family) endowed a foundation dedicated to the saint. Similarly, little Franciscan imagery can be found in the Oratory of San Giorgio, decorated by Altichiero with fresco scenes from the lives of Sts. George, Lucy and Catherine, favoured saints of the lay patron, Raimondino Lupi. A patrilineal procession of family members occupies most of the upper register of one of the long walls, suggesting again that the lay patron almost entirely controlled the subject matter.

Through an exemplary combination of archival documentation and visual

analysis, Louise Bourdua fulfills her two primary goals. She shows that there is little evidence for the direct control of the decorative schemes in Franciscan churches by the mother church in Assisi and then reveals how the concerns of local friars, lay patrons, and artists are paramount—though it can be difficult, given the vagaries of documentation, to ascertain precisely how much responsibility any of these parties had for the resulting appearance of the commission. What does become clear is that, despite the constraints placed upon them by their rule, the Franciscans found creative ways to accommodate some financial dealings with patrons, benefactors, and artists and thus to operate effectively in a less than ideal world.

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Jill Caskey. *Art Patronage in the Medieval Mediterranean. Merchant Culture in the Region of Amalfi*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004. Pp. xiv, 327, 93 ill. ISBN 0-3218-1187-2. £55.

Jill Caskey's 2004 study *Art and Patronage in the Medieval Mediterranean: Merchant Culture in the Region of Amalfi* examines the art and architecture of the former duchy of Amalfi during the late eleventh, twelfth, and thirteenth centuries. What may initially appear as an eclectic collection of the artistic products of artists and patrons in that region, is really a product of a "coherent yet shifting late medieval culture that was both specific to the region and indebted to various forces well beyond its boundaries" (4). Caskey examines the heterogeneity of the art and culture in this coastal region by analyzing it in terms of the people who commissioned it, namely those involved in the act of *mercantantia*.

This framework was borrowed from Giovanni's Boccaccio's *Decameron* which described the people of Amalfi as being very proficient and consequently successful in this economic enterprise. *Mercantantia*, however, not only refers to trade and the principles that guide it, but also "evokes the broad cultural framework of a commercial society and a variety of activities that take place within it" (5). From the act of *mercantantia* the author introduces the art of *mercantantia* where monuments can be seen as a testament to a culture shaped primarily by commerce. The influence of *mercantantia* can be observed in everything from the materials made available to the artists to the works themselves being guided by the "concepts and ethics derived from the practice and discourse of *mercantantia*" (6).

For her study Caskey examines the art and architecture associated with two generations of the Rufolo family (the historical source for Boccaccio's tale of Landolfo Rufolo of Ravello) who served in the administration of the Kingdom of Sicily. They held various positions as merchants, tax collectors, and inspectors of ships and ports, thereby amassing a great amount of wealth that permitted them to commission "daring works" (6), especially during the 1260s and 1270s. What these works demonstrate is an Amalfitan taste that was wide ranging and reflected various artistic movements and ethnic diversity. This ethnic diversity derived from a Southern Italy whose inhabitants included peoples of Latin, Greek, French,