had a rather long and successful rule. The elite was able to make reforms such as the introduction of the long-awaited catasto. However, the elite was limited by their native Florentine conservatism — they could not break away completely from private associations and demands. The result was the development of factions replacing the old corporate allegiances. However, the Medici proved to be the most able manipulators of these new factions and not the members of the regime.

Brucker's primary tool of analysis is the pratiache, the debates held by the regime in determining policy. In them he finds political sophistication and rationalism — a dependence on logic and the force of rhetoric — displayed in attempting to determine what choices to make. In debating their future the valid needs of the Republic constantly came to the fore. Reasoned, independent policy rather than old allegiances were presented as the motive force for governmental action. Brucker knows this source well and handles it with ease.

Brucker's Florentine elite is not as well defined as might be desired. He avoids an in-depth study of its economic and social makeup and how it differed from that of the guild rulers. Of course, Brucker and other scholars, especially Witt and Kent, have been analyzing the constitution of the elite in specialized studies. However, an expanded discussion of the background of the elite members and their bases of power would have been helpful. Brucker handles a complex narrative well; however, the picture is at times a cluttered one, with events tending to run into one another. Although Brucker is not concerned directly with the intellectual history of Florence, he has valuable things to say about the use of the humanists' rhetorical tools in the actual debates involving the actions of the government. In so doing, he sees the changes which Baron has outlined emerging a decade later.

Brucker's book is a valuable continuation of his own work as well as that of other scholars. In chapter one he sums up well the recent historical studies on the social and political relations within Florence and tries to provide a careful over-all picture in the body of the book. He avoids polemics and concentrates on the flow of events. This book will be required reading for the understanding of the dynamics of Florentine society on the eve of the Medici.

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Recent research into the European witchcraft crisis of the early modern period has been concentrated on the social and cultural aspects of the problem, and is based primarily on trial records and popular folklore. This approach has tended to ignore the well-known witchcraft tracts of the period which long constituted the main source of information on the witch "craze." The Damned Art is composed of ten essays on this literature that are written by eight English scholars, most from the universities of Sussex and Wales. All the essays are well written and interesting and, as a group, give us an informative new look at this important literature.

Sydney Anglo, known for his work on English court festivals, edited this work and wrote two of its chapters. In the first essay, he effectively demolishes the
Malleus Maleficarum, one of the earliest and most influential witchcraft tracts. He exposes the authors’ “monkish mysogeny,” the “feebleness” of its arguments and their sexual obsessions as “scholarly pornography.” This is, however, not a difficult feat for a modern scholar. Many questions are raised by this essay. Was the Malleus, with all its sexual obsessiveness, a shaper of views or did it simply reflect larger social concerns? If the work is so transparently feeble, how does it seem to have been so influential for almost two centuries?

The most controversial aspect of this collection concerns the 16th-century German physician, Johan Weyer, long considered a courageous defender of the innocent, who recommended gentle care to help cure supposed witches of their delusions. But Christopher Baxter describes Weyer's book, De Praestigiis Daemonum (1563), as clumsy, inconsistent and biased. Weyer was a firm believer in the devil and thought that, while witches could be cured, magicians should be burnt at the stake. Weyer's book backfired, succeeding only in stimulating controversy over witchcraft and, in Baxter's words, “exacerbated, far more than it relieved, the tensions which contributed to the European witch craze” (72).

Jean Bodin's important treatise, Da La Démonamie des Sorciers (1580), which included a devastating attack on Weyer, is also discussed by Baxter. He contrasts the clumsiness of Weyer with the brilliance of Bodin, but does not entirely succeed in rehabilitating the Démonamie. Baxter gives the impression that this work was an essentially dry academic study. He passes over Book Four, which deals with the judicial approach to witchcraft, in only three pages. But for many contemporary readers this was the key section. Bodin stated, for example, that “in this enormous and occult situation I am of the opinion... that to apply the question [torture] one reliable and irreproachable witness is sufficient” (Démonamie, 176v). In order to prevent this “execrable impiety” from going unpunished, he was willing to admit testimony from known evil doers even if they agreed on no detail but that the accused was a witch (177v). Bodin advised that normal procedures be suspended: “One must be sure that the crime of witchcraft is not treated like other crimes, but one must pursue a different and extraordinary way” (180v). He discussed the proofs for witchcraft at length, stressing the reliability of presumption and conjunctural proof (175v) and stating that in these cases “common rumor is almost infallible” (189v).

Bodin was a leading intellectual of his time. His approach in this work was sober and unsensational, and his intellectual rigor is still impressive. But because of this, Bodin's responsibility for stimulating the persecution of witches was much greater than that of most other writers. He certainly had a greater impact than did the highly sensational Pierre de Lancre, whose Le Tableau de l'Inconstance des Mauvais Anges et Demons (1612) is well described by Margaret M. McGowan in another chapter of this book.

Alan Macfarlane, author of Witchcraft in Tudor and Stuart England (1970), contributed an essay on George Gifford, a late 16th-century Puritan. Gifford held that, while witches could not harm men, they should be put to death for dealing with the Devil. Macfarlane does a fine job of placing Gifford in a context of social change and tension. This essay was written some ten years ago and gives us no idea of Macfarlane's development since his book appeared.

An especially interesting essay is Stuart Clark's discussion of King James' Da-

As little as five years ago, one could receive a doctorate in Renaissance drama without quite knowing whether the depictions of women and the issues concerning women in those plays — the forced marriages and tyrannical fathers, the escapes in disguise — were grounded in reality or merely flights of fancy. Virtually all primary sources on women were inaccessible, few secondary sources were available, and no one raised the questions anyway.

But the emergence of Women's Studies as an academic discipline has highlighted the need for answers; and Pearl Hogrefe's two recent books on women of Tudor England bring within the grasp of every teacher of Shakespeare a resource to supply this background. Not studies of the drama, like Juliet Dusinberre's *Shakespeare and the Nature of Women* (1975), nor serious inquiries into the issues concerning women that dominated their contemporaries (their education, matrimony, their autonomy within the family, their role in the church), Hogrefe's books nevertheless show the range of activities women engaged in — from virtually the only role previously studied in depth, that of queen, to artisan, translator, and even highway robber.

This collection of short biographical studies of nine real women supplements Hogrefe's earlier *Tudor Women: Commoners and Queens* (1975), a discussion of varied aspects of women's culture of the period. Six of the figures, in relation to their impact on religion, have also been treated by Roland H. Bainton in his *Women of the Reformation in France and England* (1973) and *Women of the Reformation from Spain to Scandinavia* (1977). Three, by virtue of their positions in the royal