Sergio Bertelli, *Ribelli, libertini e ortodossi nella storiografia barocca*. Firenze: "La Nuova Italia" Editrice, 1973. Pp. xviii, 377. Lire 3600.

This is a history of historiography during the Baroque era, i.e., c. 1550 to c. 1700. But the author defines Baroque as more than a chronological period; it signifies an intellectual reaction against Renaissance values, especially those values identified with Florence and its great historians, Machiavelli and Guicciardini. For Bertelli the Renaissance was the lay secular world of the Florentine citizen. But then came the religious thrust of the Baroque with its own creativity and artistic expression, both in Catholic Italy and the Protestant north. Bertelli's history is an account of the historiography (in the broadest sense) of the Baroque in reaction to the Renaissance. But at the same time, he argues, some historians in Italy and abroad continued to write a lay and rational historiography. These are the rebels and libertines whose work led directly to the Enlightenment.

The author devotes about 60% of his narrative to the Italian scene, beginning with the *ars historica* discussion of the mid-sixteenth century. He then turns to Germany where he analyzes Protestant historiography of the Reformation, which he sees as a total reversal of Italian Renaissance historiography. In their efforts to justify the Reformation, Protestant historians became extremely apologetic and turned to a medieval supernatural causality, in Bertelli's judgment. Its counterpart in the Catholic world was the work of Baronius and others, which, despite the important discoveries of antique Christianity and the catacombs, suffered from similar defects. After Baronius and his generation, Italian Catholic historiography degenerated into a kind of sacred localism, i.e., accounts of individual saints, orders, and dioceses. Other Italian developments described by Bertelli include the debate over the history of Trent (Sarpi vs. Pallavicino), the rediscovery of the Italian barbarian past (Carlo Sigonio), the popular historians of the sixteenth century, and the irreverent dissenters, notably Gregorio Leti and Secondo Lancellotti. In Bertelli's judgment, Italian scholarly historiography exhausted itself in the seventeenth century, although the continuing desire for universality, to know what was transpiring elsewhere in Europe, produced some useful journalistic historiography.

Bertelli finds most of the rebels and libertines of Clío's tribe in France, the Netherlands, and England. He analyzes the Gallic historians and a group of English dissenters, including Milton and the Levellers. Bertelli is particularly interested in the development of skeptical histories of Christianity. The mixture of Cartesianism and greater, but not absolute, freedom of expression in the Netherlands provided a hospitable climate for this development. At the same time, Bossuet's history of Protestantism provoked a similar movement in the Protestant world toward an undogmatic and rationalist historiography. Huet, Leibniz, and Spinoza are three key figures who point the way to the great historians of the Enlightenment, Hume and Gibbon, as Bertelli brings his account to a close on the eve of the eighteenth century.

The author provides a real service in this survey of major and minor historians. Criticisms are minor; Bertelli's sympathies are clearly with the rebels and libertines, and perhaps he sometimes fails to give sufficient credit to the orthodox. One can also argue that his distinction between Renaissance and Baroque is overdrawn, that Renaissance historiography was not quite so secular and lay, the Baroque not exclusively religious and clerical. Since this is a survey, the author provides quick sketches and key quotes (always drawn from the primary sources) rather than extended analyses; sometimes the reader wishes for

more information. Overall, the author has accomplished his purpose, that of giving us a reliable survey of a fascinating era of intellectual history.

PAUL F. GRENDLER, *University of Toronto*

Michael Baxandall. *Painting and Experience in Fifteenth Century Italy*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1972. Pp. 165, ill. \$11.95.

The purpose of this concise and tightly written book is to show "how the *style* of pictures is a proper material of social history." Mr. Baxandall's argument is this. Believing that the symbolic structures used by a society at any given moment are reflected in all the modes of expression that appear in that society, Mr. Baxandall is concerned to show how our understanding of painting—which in the Renaissance was an obviously important expressive language—can be enriched by reference to material derived from other areas of activity. And it is a highly rewarding investigation.

He begins with an account of the forms of patronage recorded in the fifteenth century, these being, in his words, the customer's participation in the creation of the work of art. And he concludes with an interpretation of the critical terms to be found in three somewhat different late fifteenth-century texts on art—the *Trattato di pittura* (1509) of Francesco Lancilotti, the *Cronaca rimata* (after 1482) of Giovanni Santi, the father of Raphael, and, most importantly, those parts of the *Comento . . . sopra la comedia di Dante Alighieri* (1481) where the author, Cristoforo Landino, includes a lengthy and modestly ambitious account of the state of the arts in Florence. But it is in the second section of the book, entitled "The Period Eye," that Mr. Baxandall keeps closest to his brief, recalling one by one the assumptions by which the fifteenth-century viewer, while realising with Boccaccio that painting is "actually just a little colour applied with skill to a panel," still wished to interpret the expressive meaning of the panel placed before him. Some of this material might seem to be obvious. We know, of course, of the representational conventions that allowed the structure of space to be defined as it was in the Brunelleschian system of "artificial perspective." And we are aware, if perhaps to a lesser extent, of the religious traditions that the painter, "the professional visualiser of holy stories," could draw upon to express the themes that his commission laid upon him. But the extreme virtue of this book lies in the material that Mr. Baxandall has been able to assemble to give evidence of these conventions, and the acute comment with which he interprets it. We read, for example, in the anonymous *Zardino de Oracion* (1494), of the suggestion that the pious recreate in familiar surroundings the events of the life of Christ, and we might think immediately of a work like the *Pitti tondo* of Fra Filippo Lippi. Or we read, in the *Prediche vulghare* (1491) of Fra Roberto Caracciolo, of the almost pedantically precise analysis of the various stages of the Annunciation by which the varied representations of this subject could be interpreted. We read in the *De arte saltanti et choreas ducendi* by Domenico da Piacenza of a scheme by which we might interpret the language of gesture in Quattrocento painting. And finally, in a commonplace treatise on mensuration like the *De arimethica* (1481) by Filippo Calandri, we read of techniques that seem to speak in more mundane circumstances of the feeling for solids and voids that, in the work of Giotto or Masaccio, was baptised as evidence of a "tactile sensibility."