book of novel but persuasive balance, that conveys a coherent and broadly convincing picture of the development of Galileo's scientific thought. There are seven chapters, on his debt to Archimedes, work on hydrostatics, sunspots, the comets of 1618, and a detailed analysis of the Dialogue Concerning the Two Chief World Systems (The End of the Aristotelian Cosmos; The World in Motion; and The Physical Proof from the Tides). The emphasis throughout is on Galileo's methodology, and Shea's demonstration of the significance of geometry therein is particularly cogent. Thus, for example, Galileo is represented as declaring himself in favour of the Copernican system only after he had succeeded in using mathematics in dismantling the latest published argument against the motion of the earth, and his proof of the earth's motion from the behaviour of the tides is presented in terms of a derivation from geometrised physical postulates.

Shea is convincing whenever he is dealing with particular texts or particular sequences of argument and experiment, and, for example in his careful use of manuscript revisions, exhibits a fine historical sense. His generalisations and attempts to portray Galileo in the world picture of his age are, on the whole, less happy, perhaps because less fully documented. The appeal of Copernicanism to young intellectual radicals is postulated but inadequately substantiated, and Galileo's relations with Renaissance humanism and Platonism are alluded to but not made apparent. Shea enters with zest into the debate on Galileo's Platonism, claiming that "Galilean science was not so much an experimental game as a Platonic gamble," but this claim is weakened by his use of Platonism to indicate merely the use of mathematics in science, and the application of reason to experience to educe knowledge. In view of the clear recognition of Galileo's skill in rhetoric, the uncritical acceptance of Galileo's use of Plato's name as evidence of subscription to Platonism is disappointing. Shea's research supports Koyre's position that "Galileo conducted most of his experiments in his head and on paper," but recent scholarship indicates that this is far from being a settled issue. Also in relation to the Platonic controversy, the presentation of circular inertia and perfect circular motion as cornerstones of the heliocentric theory is weakened by Galileo's own counter-statements (e.g. p. 90) and Shea's arguments that Galileo regarded astronomy as a science of description and representation. Yet these controversial points are clearly and forcefully argued, and Shea's book is an original and valuable addition to the literature. It is supplemented by a brief but well-chosen bibliography and helpful index.

T.H. LEVERE, University of Toronto


Professor Molho has given us the fiscal history of a brief, but turbulent, period in the political life of Florence which encompassed both a decade of relative peace and stability and a decade of war and defeat. As a result, the study benefits from the opportunity to contrast the commune's fiscal policy under varying conditions and to observe her capacity to respond to intense crisis. A highly condensed chapter on communal expenditures, mainly for military purposes and debt service, is followed by a short chapter on the regular sour-
of income, taxes on the contado and the gabelles. Since income, even in the best of
times, was inadequate to cover expenses, the next two chapters are devoted to forced
loans as a device for meeting the deficit and to the economic and political consequences of
attempts to cut costs and to increase revenues. Failure to balance income against ex-
penses led inevitably to the liquidity crisis of 1431-33; the book concludes with a highly
suggestive, though cautious and responsible probe into the possible connections between fiscal difficulties and subsequent political and constitutional mutations.

Despite the fact, which Molho himself clearly acknowledges, that the uninventoryed re-
cords of the Monte would have provided substantial additional documentary material, the
book presents much that is original. Further, the statistical matter is normally set forth in
clear and lucid form in a number of tables and several valuable appendices—an accomplish-
ment that no one who has worked with late medieval fiscal and monetary records will
lightly dismiss. The book, therefore, would seem an indispensable point of departure for
future political or economic studies of Florence and indeed a useful reference for urban fiscal history on a more general level.

Some areas remain cloudy, however. The attempt to compare the relative burdens of
taxation on Datini, Palmieri, and the Medici (pp. 94-102) suffers from the non-comparable
nature of the records. Varying accounting practices and the relative disparity in political
power among the three make the comparison more impressionistic than statistical. The
Datini figures, for example, seem to suggest a rough order correlation between the rate of
interest and the amount loaned. Such a result might occur either because the interest rate
rose when fiscal demands were heaviest or because Datini was capable of protecting him-
self from forced impositions unless the return was sufficient to entice him to risk his funds.
Some consideration of these alternatives would have been welcome. Again, Appendix D
which gives the silver value of the florin from 1389 to 1432 would seem to require adjust-
ment for the changing gold content of the florin as it is discussed on p. 131. In the same
vein, the mechanism by which a heavier florin might be expected to enhance Florence's
position in international trade requires development; the size of a gold coin is normally
less significant than its integrity and stability, while the impact of a strengthened coinage
on imports might well, under certain circumstances, differ from that on exports.

In essence, however, such criticism is of minor importance. Professor Molho has given
us an extremely useful and original study of Florentine finance, and in his final chapter,
an agenda for future work that makes one anticipate further studies of the same high
quality.

HARRY A. MISKIMIN, Yale University

Julius A. Molinaro, ed. Petrar ch to Pirandello: Studies in Italian Literature in Honour of

In "A Bibliography of the Published Works of Beatrice Corrigan," which is the concluding
tribute (J.H. Parker's) in the volume that honours "one of Canada's truly outstanding
scholars in the humanities"—the geographical limitation seems unjust to me—those who
have followed the "dolce guida e cara" through so many areas of Italian and foreign letters
can find the summation of her interests. It is hardly necessary to stress her many compara-