dence which contradicts the commonly accepted notion of a preponderant Italian influence on English drama. He argues that the Italian dramatic texts that can be positively identified as sources used by the English playwrights are so few as to raise serious doubts about their purported impact. For similar reasons, Orr is inclined to minimize the role usually assigned to Italian theorists like Cinthio in shaping English drama. Instead, he would propose the old theory that the Italianate plays are not necessarily of Italian derivation but a consequence of the lesson learned from Plautus, Terence, and Seneca without Italian intermediaries. Thus, in both countries, comedy and tragedy exhibit similar structural patterns because the same models were followed. But can the same be said to explain the emergence of new types like tragicomedy and pastoral drama? Orr’s answer is that even these hybrid forms can be viewed as products of similar preconditioning forces operating in both countries, namely, medieval religious and popular drama.

Appealing as this novel approach may be, one has the distinct feeling that, owing to its positivist orientation, it overlooks the elusive nature of cultural interrelations, which often defy statistical evaluation. The validity of the author’s findings seems to be lessened, furthermore, by his partiality to authorities who lend support to his viewpoint at the expense of the exponents of Italian influence, often rejected without sufficient reason. More objectionable is the uncritical acceptance of obsolete source-studies whose information is very frequently erroneous. Such a procedural flaw tends to render even more provisional the character of the author’s conclusions. More careful proofreading might have helped reduce the numerous misspellings in the Italian texts and the bibliographical inaccuracies that mar this otherwise provocative book.

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The increased interest of students, at both the graduate and undergraduate level, in the history of art has persuaded publishers that there is a market for books on art that go beyond the simple, illustrated biographies of artists and periods. The volume under review, by Dr. David Chambers, Lecturer in Renaissance Studies at the Warburg Institute, is just such an example of the newer, more academic publications. Published as one in the series “History in Depth,” it takes as its subject documents, and documents on a problem that clearly could be, or should be, a crucial element in our understanding of the development of Renaissance art. Such a subject is mired in problems. Beside the art of the Renaissance, or the material provided by the writings of the Renaissance, what documents can tell us is often meagre and frustratingly unhelpful on the very points that are of most interest. What Dr. Chambers has provided, and it is an achievement that should by no means be underestimated, is a collection of such material that is not only comprehensive but that can serve to indicate what and how much we have of such documentary evidence about the working of artists in the Renaissance.

Dr. Chambers divides the material into four general categories – clerical, guild, civic and what is called “princely and private patronage” – that, to quote the author “have been gov-

The classic biography of Machiavelli by marchese Roberto Ridolfi is generally credited with having destroyed definitively the myth of Machiavelli’s immorality. Ridolfi’s view of Machiavelli as a poet-politician, whose analysis of Italy’s political tragedy is intimately bound up with his personal tragedy on losing his secretaryship in 1512, has been developed in a recent biography in English. The author, Professor Charles D. Tarlton, stresses to an even greater degree, the human plight of Machiavelli, seen by him as an innocent victim caught in Fortune’s circle.

Sensitive to the general imaginative structure of Machiavelli’s works, Tarlton sees the symbol of Fortune, in particular, not only as a central force in Machiavelli’s concept of history, but as the pivotal point of his life experience as well. In each chapter of his biography he provides a cross-section of Machiavelli’s life from a different standpoint (for example, that of Machiavelli “The Loyal Public Servant,” of the relationship between Machiavelli and “Conspiracies,” and between Machiavelli and “Women”), and in each of these separate discussions he inevitably focusses on the trauma brought about by Fortune in 1512. Professor Tarlton has thus replaced the traditional and arbitrary organization according to external chronology with a dissecting structure by means of which he is able to magnify the events that are truly significant for Machiavelli’s inner life.

In the preface to this impressionistic psychograph, Tarlton explains his methodology as one which discards absolute objectivity as an impossible goal. Insights into Machiavelli the man then are to be derived from his writings, rather than from historical data (as, for example, in J.R. Hale’s biography), for Machiavelli’s political and literary works, based as they are on experience, must consequently be autobiographical. However these works do not simply reflect their author. For Tarlton they are repeated instances of a therapeutic self-analysis by means of which Machiavelli endeavoured to explain to himself his own