

In a few pages at the end of his book, Sachet describes how Cervini and Antonio Blado, a Roman publisher connected to the papacy, helped Ignatius of Loyola found a modest printing press in the Roman College to print in-house Jesuit works. In time, the Society of Jesus would establish relationships with commercial presses, persuade princes to finance publications, and produce works that would make the Society a major publishing force. The Jesuits wrote popular works in the vernacular that Cervini and his collaborators did not produce.

This book successfully combines the history of the book and religious history. It presents an abundance of detailed information about the people and processes of publication harvested from a wide range of archival, manuscript, printed books, and secondary scholarship, and presents the results in clear prose and detailed footnotes. It is an excellent and original study.

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Petrarch's War: Florence and the Black Death in Context. William Caferro.
Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018. xii + 228 pp. \$99.99.

This book examines the two military campaigns that the city of Florence waged against the Ubaldini clan in 1349 and 1350 in the upper Mugello region of Tuscany near the border with Romagna. The conflict was instigated by Francesco Petrarca, who had lost two friends to Ubaldini raiders, and was waged in the aftermath of the bubonic plague's devastation of the city. It represented the city's investment in safe travel across the Apennines through Florence to Rome for the Jubilee.

The book's title hints at its engagement of intellectual, social, and military history, but it elides the fact that the book is primarily concerned with money. A work of economic history, *Petrarch's War* challenges received notions about the growth of wages in the aftermath of the bubonic plague in Florence. It also has much to say in favor of revising assumptions about the greed and lack of loyalty of foreign mercenaries. Furthermore, Caferro's careful work highlights the perhaps contradictory involvement of Petrarca in promoting conflict.

The book also documents Caferro's assessment of his own methodology in relation to more marketable methods of history writing, which focus on the *longue durée* and seek to "answer big questions and provide 'pragmatic counsel' to modern day readers" (14). Caferro's study reminds historians that they need to "get their facts straight" before trying to be relevant (15). Caferro's attention to the complexity of his data, however, does not hinder his efforts to tell a compelling story.

The first chapter looks at the birth of the conflict from a letter Petrarca wrote to Florence, calling on the city to control the Ubaldini family with force, after two of

his friends had been murdered in an ambush orchestrated by the family. Caferro juxtaposes Petrarch's bellicose stance with the representation of the poet as a champion of peace, although the Ubaldini affair seems more like local housekeeping than the internecine warfare that Petrarch decries in "Italia mia." Consonant with recent work on Petrarch and Boccaccio, the chapter highlights the well-known political roles and motivations of the two poets. It also shows how the life and works of Dante were an important point of reference in Petrarch's letter to the city. Finally, Caferro links the conflict to the city's effort to establish a university, where it would later invite Petrarch to teach, adding complexity to a pivotal moment in the city's history.

The focus of the second chapter is on the conflict itself and on the Florentine army. Caferro follows the army's trail, providing a detailed account of the movements of supplies, weapons, and soldiers during both campaigns. The chapter also analyzes the composition of the army, showing that there was a surprising level of continuity of service and professionalism and that the city often turned to the same men for multiple campaigns. In the third chapter, Caferro reconstructs how Florence paid for the two campaigns. He examines the use of the *drittura* tax, a deduction on all financial transactions intended to help maintain the cathedral and to pay for the city's university, but also of fines on citizens, loans from the confraternity of Orsanmichele (made rich by the bequests of plague victims), and the *estimo* and *gabelle* taxes.

The fourth chapter assesses the wages of the infantry and cavalry in the socioeconomic context of the public labor force of Florence in 1349–50. Caferro shows that there was no spike in wages following the plague, as earlier studies have claimed, not even for the often-maligned mercenaries. He contextualizes the notion of compensation in medieval Florence by linking it to questions of honor and social distinction, but also to benefits that certain positions brought with them. The fifth chapter contextualizes the question of wages addressed in the previous chapter by scrutinizing the variations in the currency in which public servants and military hires were paid and the kinds of taxes to which their wages were subject or from which they were exempt. Caferro again finds that wages in this period were stagnant, but reminds the reader that occupation and compensation in medieval Florence were different from today. The conclusion to the chapter explores this difference by looking at the use of low-level Florentine civil servants as ambassadors during 1349–50. In the epilogue, Caferro cautiously extends his inquiry to include wage data from 1345–54. He notes that the results are not inconsistent with his analysis of the shorter period.

Although Caferro reminds his readers that answers to questions presented by archival evidence are often not readily apparent—the terms *unclear* or *not clear* appear twenty-nine times—he is able to offer plausible and nuanced interpretations and to compose a rich and useful narrative about this fascinating moment in Florentine history.

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