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D'Andrea, David, and Salvatore Marino, eds.

Confraternities in Southern Italy: Art, Politics, and Religion (1100–1800).

Essays and Studies 52. Toronto: Centre for Renaissance and Reformation Studies, 2022. Pp. 579 + 101 ill. ISBN 978-0-7727-2220-1 (paperback) \$55.95.

David D'Andrea and Salvatore Marino's *Confraternities in Southern Italy: Art, Politics, and Religion (1100–1800)* is the first English source that explores the medieval and early modern confraternities of southern Italy. The volume is organized in chronological order based on important economic and political environments that shaped the development of confraternities. A substantial number of the essays compiled in this volume focus on the early modern period. This fifteen-essay edited anthology is divided into three parts. Part 1 consists of four essays by Stefano D'Ovidio, Luciana Mocciola, Giovanni Lombardi, and Elisa Novi Chavarría and Ida Mauro, which are dedicated to Naples, the political capital and one of the most populated cities in Europe. Part 2 consists of eight essays by Gemma T. Colesanti and Eleni Sakellariou, Salvatore Marino, Valeria Cocozza, Giulio Sodano, David D'Andrea, Mirella Vera Mafrić, Angela Carbone, and Paola Avallone and Raffaella Salvemini on the southern Italian mainland. Part 3 consists of three essays by Vita Russo and Daniela Santoro, Salvatore Bottari and Alessandro Abbate, and Mariangela Rapetti on southern Italian Islands. The edited volume aims to achieve two goals: to expand the geographical scope of the confraternity studies, and to introduce Anglo-American scholarship to the rich history of southern Italian confraternities.

D'Andrea and Marino claim that one of the main reasons southern Italian confraternities have been neglected from Anglo-American scholarship is the “mythical origins” of modern Western liberal democracies, which was believed to have taken root in northern and central Italian city states, developed in Protestant England, and fully experienced in the United States. D'Andrea and Marino agree with John Marino's argument that the “myth of modernity” has reinforced the dualism of two “Italies, the north and the south.” While southern Italy is included in the study of religious histories, confraternities are excluded from that discussion because of the focus on the institutional church in studies of medieval religious history, and the usual assumption that the north and the south were different. When scholars have paid any attention to the southern confraternities, it is in the context of post-Tridentine missionary work and religious orders. While a lack of interest and purpose are definite contributors

to the neglect of the southern Italian confraternities, D'Andrea and Marino are aware and point out the lack of archival preservation in the south as another reason.

D'Andrea and Marino have chosen essays that cover the themes of art, politics, charity, and religion that dominate the current historiography of confraternal studies. The theme of art is significant to the study of confraternities since it includes devotional practices, rituals, art patronage, and processions. For example, the essays by Mocciola and Lombardi discuss the association of wealthy patrons such as the Durazzo family with the Santa Marta's confraternity and Francesco Pegnatelli, a high-ranking aristocrat with the Pellegrini Confraternity. D'Ovidio's essay explores the role of sacred imagery in religious events of medieval confraternities in Naples. The use of imagery functioned as a unifying factor and created a collective identity for the confraternity members and the community. The theme of politics focuses on the political and social aspects of confraternal studies of the southern regions, which have been neglected until now. Colesanti and Sakellariou's essay portrays the social, political, and cultural importance of small confraternities in the small town of Benevento. The essays by Marino and Cocozzo discuss the complex administrative structures of larger confraternities in Abruzzo and Molise. The essays further discuss how confraternities became a major economic contributor in both the small rural villages and major cities in the south.

The complex relationships between power and art are explored through examining confraternal processional usage of art and confraternity art patronage that shaped a significant part of confraternity identity, social status, and economic power. The essay by Santoro and Russo discusses the disputes of organizers and patrons over procession routes. Confraternities were essentially religious institutions; therefore, most of the essays focus on the devotional and religious practices of the institutions as well, which highlights their good works and the centrality of the goal of achieving salvation of the soul. Sodano's essay discusses the guild confraternities of Aversa that were established for the purpose of benefits for the members. Other confraternities such as the ones in Puglia and Campania explored in the essays by Carbone and D'Andrea focused on providing charity for poor girls.

This collection makes a significant contribution to the study of confraternities and would be of great interest to historians of art, religion, lay practices and rituals, and charitable institutions in Italy as well as the rest of

the Mediterranean. These fifteen essays investigate southern confraternities through a series of interesting case studies by engaging critical scholarly investigations and conversations. They aim to change the debate on confraternities by including the southern region in the discussion and to highlight the importance of confraternity studies to medieval and early modern history of the Mediterranean as a whole. The collection opens the field of confraternity studies to a larger field of inquiry and investigation. It certainly calls for more comparative studies between the northern and southern confraternities of Italy.

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